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equipped to deal
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Sarah Riehl of Kinzers stands outside Georgetown United Methodist Church before a prayer service on October 3 attended by 150 people from the area of West Nickel Mines School. Riehl came to the prayer service at the church after spending the day with the family of 7-year-old Naomi Ebersol, who died in the incident. Photo by Suzette Wenger, Lancaster Intelligencer Journal.

Healing comes to Nickel Mines in the wake of tragedy

By Andrea Brown*

A district superintendent new to "Amish country" guarded the door against intrusive TV cameras as a young United Methodist pastor and seminary student offered words of hope to worshippers shaken by a tragedy at a nearby schoolhouse a day before.

Georgetown United Methodist pastor Michael Remel, who lives two doors away from the man who shot 10 girls at the Nickel Mines School in southern Lancaster County on October 2, told those who had gathered, "This event will change all of us greatly. But we can get through it together." He offered the assurance that "God's love is still in our midst."

Meanwhile, the Rev. Jim Todd, who became superintendent of the Southwest District in July, stood in the narthex of the white clapboard church and kept a guarded eye out for cam-

eras that might intrude. Remel had promised to keep cameras away so that Ruben Fisher, an Amish elder, and his wife could feel free to worship there that night. The Fishers' granddaughter, 13-year-old Marion Fisher, was one of the victims.

"I said, 'Look, don't you worry about the news cameras, Mike. I'll take care of that. You get ready for the service,'" Todd recalls.

So in both spiritual and practical ways, United Methodists became deeply involved in the healing work that followed in the wake of the school tragedy. The response of local churches has included ecumenical efforts to bring comfort, congregational efforts to interpret the event theologically, and individual efforts to reach out to those who are grieving.

The tragedy drew an official response from Bishop Marcus Matthews, who had written a pastoral letter just a few days

earlier about gun violence in Philadelphia. Now, he noted in a new letter, we are reminded once again that guns hurt children everywhere—from big cities to tiny rural villages.

Matthews had received letters of support from near and far—including the United Church in New Brunswick, Canada.

For members of Georgetown Church, just a mile from the school, the event felt very close to home. Remel said of the Amish and non-Amish in the area, "We live so close together that we share each others' lives." Despite a religious separateness practiced by the Amish, they do interact regularly with their "English" neighbors, so everyone in the community was deeply affected.

The prayer service at Georgetown drew together

continues on page 10

Without a vision, the people perish

By Lillian Smith*

God has a vision! Can you see it? Sometimes the vision has seemed obscured by some distracting clouds. Without God's vision for direction, we find ourselves a little off track every now and then. Even with the clouds, God's vision is present and continues to call us.

At the Bishop's Days on the District, Bishop Marcus Matthews is visiting with clergy and laity of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference to talk about God's vision for each church to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." In response to God's call for churches to 1) invite people into relationship with Jesus Christ and 2) equip Christian followers for ministry, Bishop Matthews is calling each congregation to grow by 10% by 2012.

The last edition of New Spirit detailed more information about the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference commitment to "Making Disciples for the Transformation of the World." The EPA Conference is entering into an 18-24 month consultative relationship with the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD). Beginning in January 2007, GBOD will resource monthly workshops for teams of laity and clergy from each congregation, so that United Methodist congregations in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference can grow and thrive.

A team of at least 6 people from each congregation is invited to attend the monthly sessions. Each Congregational Ministry Team should consist of clergy and laity. Additional members of the teams could include the lay leader, lay member to annual conference, SPPR Chairperson, Church Council Chair, Christian Education Chair, UMYF President or other Youth Leader, Young Adult Leader, etc. The team should represent a cross section of generations and people.

Topics to be addressed in 2007 include:

• Transformational Spiritual Leadership

continues on page 9

Conference Calendar

NOVEMBER 18

Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner at Haws Avenue United Methodist Church from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Admission for adults is \$9, for children 3-10 is \$4.50, and children under 3 are free. Takeout price is \$9. **Served Family Style!** Tickets will be sold at the door. For more information, please contact Haws Avenue United Methodist Church at 610-275-1283; 800 West Marshall Street, Norristown, PA 19401.

NOVEMBER 26

UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY - 2006

For information, worship resources, and items you can use to promote United Methodist Student Day, Sunday, November 26, 2006, in your congregation, go to:

<http://www.umcgiving.org>. See page 6.

NOVEMBER 28

UNITED METHODIST MEN'S FELLOWSHIP DINNER

7:00 PM at Rigby Hall at St. Mark's UMC, Broomall. Italian Dinner reserve by November 21, 2006. Guest Speaker: Rev. Russell Atkinson, speaking about mission opportunities to the Caribbean. Cost of dinner is \$9.00 per person and love offering. This dinner meeting will be our Holiday Dinner Meeting to begin the Advent and Christmas season. Make checks payable to: St. Mark's United Methodist Church, and mail to Attention: Rev. Kenneth E. Gelzhiser, 2220 S. Sproul Road, Broomall, PA 19008.

DECEMBER 2

Innabah's Christmas Open House 2:00 - 5:00 pm (Snow Date - Dec. 9th) \$3.00 a person. Tree Trimming, Caroling, Candy Cane Hunt, Appetizers, Crafts, Cookie Decorating, Gingerbread Houses, Door Prizes & More! Overnight lodging available for the weekend. \$125.00 per family: includes 2 nights lodging, 3 meals, and admission to open house. Advance reservations required for overnight lodging. \$25.00 discount if only 2 people in a room. RSVP not necessary, but very helpful! Contact Innabah for more information: 610-469-6111 or innabahdirector@aol.com.

DECEMBER 10

Quiet Christmas

Hempfield United Methodist Church is offering a Christmas service for anyone that has ever lost a loved one. The holidays mark a time of cheer, celebration and joy for many. For others, a shadow of sorrow fills the season as the absence of a loved one brings an almost unbearable heaviness to the surface. We desire to extend to you "The Gift of Peace" . . . a service held Sunday December 10, 2006, to honor those you have lost in this season of hope and renewal. HUMC will be hosting a 2:30 PM service that will include candle lighting, communion, lighting of the advent wreath, placing of white ribbons on a Christmas tree, accompanied by special music. We extend the invitation to all within the community and desire to share hope in their journey through grief. Childcare will be available, pre-registration is recommended. Please call 717-285-5156 with any questions or to pre-register for

childcare. For more information: <http://www.humc.ws/>

JANUARY 20

Connections - A United Methodist Learning Experience

9:00am - 1:00pm, at Wayne United Methodist Church, 210 South Wayne Avenue, Wayne, PA 19087
WORKSHOPS: Sharing Your Faith - Becoming a Magnetic Methodist - Rev. Drena Miller; Preparing and Presenting the Church Budget - David Napoleon; I'm a child and I'm here now - Preaching to Children - Rev. Misty Fuller. Please send registration fee of \$10.00 per registrant to along with each registrant's name, address, telephone, church and district to: EPC - Connections, P.O. Box 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0820. (Please make checks payable to EPA Conference.)

JANUARY 20

Oasis Ministries for Spiritual Development announces a workshop, "Exploring Spiritual Direction" on Saturday, January 20, 2007, 9:30AM to 3:30PM at St. David's Episcopal Church, Wayne, Pa. The leader for the workshop is Glenn Mitchell, Director of Training and Program for Oasis Ministries. He has a private practice of spiritual direction and retreat leadership in State College, Pa. Participants will explore both the receiving of spiritual direction as a part of an individual's spiritual walk as well as what is involved in a ministry of offering spiritual direction. The day will include quiet reflection along with presentations about spiritual direction. Information about Oasis Ministries training program, Spiritual Direction for Spiritual Guides will be available. The workshop cost is \$65-\$95 (the cost is on a sliding scale as participants are able). Register by Jan. 6, 2007.

For more information or to register, please contact Betsy Keller (betsykeller@oasismin.org) at Oasis Ministries, 419 Deerfield Rd., Camp Hill, PA 17011 or call 717-737-8222. More details can be found at www.oasismin.org.

For more information or to register, please contact Betsy Keller (betsykeller@oasismin.org) at Oasis Ministries, 419 Deerfield Rd., Camp Hill, PA 17011 or call 717-737-8222. More details can be found at www.oasismin.org.

JANUARY 26

Oasis Ministries Offers Opportunity for a QUIET WINTER RENEWAL During this 24 hour retreat, we will reflect on winter's gifts of a slowed PACE and quiet darkness, and bring these gifts to our time together. We will experience the beautiful "spareness" of the season when nature is at rest, and find a time of rest for ourselves. There will be a gentle rhythm of quiet time and group sharing. Persons are welcome to come earlier or stay later working out those details with Mariawald. Leader: Nancy Bieber is a spiritual director and retreat leader from Lancaster PA. A graduate of Shalem Institute, she is on the teaching staff of Oasis Ministries. She is a member of Lancaster Quaker Meeting, and has led retreats at Pendle Hill for many years. Nancy has a particular interest in the spiritual renewal of individuals and communities. From 4:30 p.m. Friday, January 26, 2007, until 4:30 p.m. Saturday, January 27, 2007. Mariawald Retreat Center, Reading, Pa. FEE: Recommended range, \$160-195; price includes supper

Friday, a single room for Friday night and breakfast and lunch on Saturday. Register by Jan. 6, 2007

APRIL 18, 2007

ANGER MANAGEMENT FOR CLERGY

An Advanced Sexual Ethics Workshop on Wed., April 18th, 2007, 9 a.m.-3p.m. at Cornwall Manor, Cornwall, Pa. Directions: cornwallmanor.org. Cost: \$30. Topic: Addressing Anger Before It Address You: Anger management and the vulnerable minister. Using case studies and group discussion of the stressors encountered by Ministers, the basics of anger management will be illustrated with direct application to the professional role of ministry as well as to the personal life of the individual. Opportunities for discussion of pastoral issues will be provided. Leaders: Ronald J. Karney, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist, Kelly Counseling & Consulting; Paul J. Ashton, D.Min., Psy.D. Candidate, Kelly Counseling & Consulting. Registrar: Rev. Bronwyn Yocum, Revumcmom@comcast.net, 865 South Main Street, Phoenixville, Pa 19460 610-933-5936.

AUGUST 3-5, 2007

24th Annual Academy for Laity Sheraton Park Ridge Hotel, King of Prussia PA. "Sharing our Faith" in the Church, in the Community, and in the World. Offering the Basic Course for beginning Christ Servant Ministers, Advanced Courses for Certification in Leading, Communicating and Caring, And additional courses to be announced. Open to all laity in Eastern PA Conferenc. The Academy for Laity is sponsored by the Conference Board of Lay Ministry. NOTE THE DATE AND LOCATION. MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

UPCOMING EVENTS WITH UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

February 10-11, - 2007 - Girls on the Go Retreat for girls ages 12 to 18 at Camp Innabah

April 20- 22 , 2007- Spiritual Life Retreat - "Resurrection Women" - at the Days Inn and Conference Center in Allentown

July 20 - 22, 2007 - UMW School of Christian Mission

October 20, 2007 - 34th UMW Annual Meeting

Upcoming Healing the Wounds of Racism Workshops

Nov. 17-19, 2006, Port-O-Call Hotel, Ocean City, NJ

Mar. 18-20, 2007, Daylesford Abbey, Paoli, Pa.

Aug. 13 to 15, 2007, Daylesford Abbey, Paoli, Pa.

Aug. 17 to 19-07, Daylesford Abbey, Paoli, Pa.

For more information or to register, contact Rev. Hilda Campbell, director of Human Relations and Leadership, 1-800-828-9093, ext. 224 or hilda.campbell@epaumc.org.

APRIL 13-17, 2007

Youth Workers Network

Attention all youth workers! The NEW! Youth Workers Network is planning a youth worker retreat.

WHO: for all paid and volunteer youth workers in Eastern Pennsylvania Conference churches

WHEN: April 13 to 15, 2007

WHERE: Gretha Glen Camp and Retreat Center

PROGRAM: workshops on youth ministry topics, inspirational speakers, worship, and resources for youth ministry
Save the dates!

Look for more information in the December issue of NEW Spirit and on www.epaumc.org.

Sign up now!
Interested in information, programming, and resources for youth ministry? - Sign up for the Youth Workers group email.
Go to: www.umcom.org and click on "Sign up now!" to join the EPA Youth Workers group email.



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Valley Forge Event Equips UMC Leaders To Deal With Current Reality

By Jacqueline Campbell*

Bishop Marcus Matthews and local church volunteers offered “the sisterly and brotherly love” of the Philadelphia Area to about 400 bishops, district superintendents, clergy, and lay leaders from across the Northeastern Jurisdiction who came to the Philadelphia Area last month for The Great Leadership Event. The gathering was designed to give clergy and lay leaders a realistic look at the current state of the church and build spiritual strength, support and strategies to make new disciples for the transformation of the world.

“It’s my hope that this event will enlighten you to the best practices offered by the many speakers and presenters and equip you with the skills necessary to take your leadership position to the next step,” Bishop Matthews said.

Bishop Matthews’ statement that Philadelphia “has long been considered the cradle of United Methodism” brought friendly debate from Bishop John Schol of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, but both bishops agreed on the importance of the event in supporting leaders and churches in their common goal of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

“I think it’s really important to bring together strong leaders from this jurisdiction to share ideas and information,” said Bishop Schol, who chairs the NEJ Vision Table. We’ve gotten some outstanding information and inspiration and had great networking opportunities. It has really been powerful.

“Clearly we have some real challenges before us in the Northeastern Jurisdiction in terms of how we are going to lead in an area that’s growing in its diversity,” he explained. “The challenge is in leading the church into health and growth. This isn’t going to happen by sitting in our own silos.”

Offering “A Reality Check for the NEJ,” the Rev. Larry Homitsky, director of connectational ministries in the

Western Pennsylvania Conference, presented statistics showing the UMC in the Northeast lost the equivalent of 54 members per day between 1973 and 2003. Worship attendance dropped by 90 every week.

Population, on the other hand, increased by 5.79 percent between 1990 and 2000, Homitsky said, and is continuing to grow, but the population is shifting, with only about one-third of the zip codes accounting for the growth.

“Our churches must get to know their own communities to develop effective ministry,” Homitsky said. He cautioned against using “selective demographics.”

“We get into trouble when we make the mistake of seeing our communities only through our own eyes,” he said, telling what he called “The Parable of the Eat ‘n Park.”

Older adults who go to the Eat ‘n Park restaurant in his neighborhood at 9 a.m. or 5 p.m. get one view of the community,” he explained. “But it looks a whole lot different when I go there around 11 at night to pick up my kids.” He urged participants to use reliable assessment tools to know their ministry area.

“Begin research to find the greatest needs in your community with demographics and interpretive materials,” he said. This is available through Conference offices or the General Board of Global Ministries.

“Familiarize yourself with the General Board of Discipleship’s Church Vitality Indicator or programs with similar assessment tools and see if it is appropriate for your congregation,” he added. “Look at ways to make your church healthy.”

In addition, Homitsky said, “Know your ministry partners.” Collaborating with businesses or other churches in the community can make a big difference, especially for smaller congregations, he said.

“Take Courage!” Homitsky said. “We have the keys. We just have to take responsibility and tomorrow these people will know the name of

Jesus Christ and they will know the face of God.”

Dr. Lovett Weems, director of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary, offered a look at how to lead when the world changes.

“Leadership,” he noted, “is always about change. The way things are now can never be deemed synonymous with God’s ultimate will.”

The reality is that there are growing populations in the NEJ and that the population has been getting younger and more diverse, Weems said. He noted that leaders must help the people discern God’s vision, and develop concrete action steps to move towards it.

“Saying we’re going to pray more and worship more to get there is like saying we’re going to save Western Civilization,” he said. For each action step, he said, there should be an expected outcome.

“We are going to do this, SO THAT — so that, those are the two most important words,” he explained. When people reach toward specific goals, he said, “energy develops and all of a sudden things begin to change.”

The Rev. Rodney Smothers, associate council director for Congregational Development in the Baltimore-Washington Conference, gave examples of how congregations adapted to change, developed vital new ministries and experienced growth. Among them: programming worship services on days other than Sunday; communicating through new forms of media; focusing on spiritual formation more than fellowship; shifting from teaching to learning by experience, and moving from classrooms to small groups.

“One challenge for us as United Methodists today,” Smothers said, “is that we are not spiritually mature — we don’t have the wherewithal to

invite people. We have to elevate the level of education if we are going to elevate the level of transformation.”

The new shape of ministry is collaborative, Smothers said. “We need to stop worrying about district lines or conference lines and connect people with something in common so that we can work together.”

Everyone can benefit when churches collaborate with community organizations, government and businesses. “There are opportunities all around for this if we will look beyond ourselves,” he said.

Smothers said he learned while starting a new church in Atlanta years ago that, “Our impact on the community is not dependent on what happens in these pews on Sunday morning,” he said. “Ministry happens between Sundays.”

*Jacqueline Campbell is a communications staff writer for the Western Pennsylvania Conference.



Bishop Marcus Matthews welcomes bishops, clergy and lay persons from Northeastern Jurisdiction to the Great Leadership Event in Valley Forge on October 13.

Bishop Matthews inspires crowd at city-wide revival

By Albert D. Mosley*

They came from every corner of the city — north, south, east, and west. Persons of all ages and walks of life — some in street clothes, some who still had on their uniforms from work, and some who had donned their very best church attire. Despite their vast differences, they had all gathered to celebrate their oneness in Christ at the City-wide Revival sponsored by the Missionary Baptist Pastors Conference of Philadelphia and Vicinity. Leading in the celebration was our own bishop, Marcus Matthews.

At what was deemed “Methodist Night,” Bishop Matthews challenged the filled-to-capacity crowd at north Philadelphia’s Bright Hope Baptist Church to consider what it really means to be one in Christ. Several members of the cabinet joined Bishop Matthews at the event, including dean of the Cabinet, the Rev. Ralph Blanks, who presented the bishop to the waiting crowd. Also present were other leaders of the Eastern PA Conference, including Dr. Mary White, Conference

Lay Leader; Royal Pinder, chair of the Episcopacy Committee; and many pastors and lay persons from the greater Philadelphia area.

Taking his cue from the revival’s theme, “By One Spirit,” the bishop shared with the responsive congregation, “Despite our many differences, our many peculiarities, and our many ways of approaching God, we are all made by the same God, and we are all sustained by the same Spirit.” This point, as the bishop noted, is especially significant in a world that is broken and fragmented along so many different lines. Regardless of our race, class, or gender, we each play an indispensable role in transforming the world for Christ.

“Our diversity,” said Bishop Matthews, “is part of what makes our witness to the world so powerful and so convincing. What is even more powerful is our ability to serve those who are different, and our willingness to be in conversation with those who may not think the way we do. In so doing, the church offers to the world a powerful proclamation of what can be

done when we are bound one to another by God’s spirit.”

Bishop Matthews shared with the congregation that “Christian unity neither requires uniformity nor encourages it. For Christians to be different is not only acceptable, but it is expected, and even necessary for the richness, wholeness, and vigor of the body. Being one in the spirit in no way suggests that we are one in approach, one in style, or even one in thought. Rather, it suggests that the same spirit empowers and enables each of us in our uniqueness and in our distinctiveness as we attempt to do the work of making disciples for Jesus Christ.”

Bishop Matthews’ message inspired those present in the sanctuary of Bright Hope Baptist Church that “by one spirit,” we each can do our part in living as the body of Christ, modeling



Rev. Ralph E. Blanks (left) introduced Bishop Marcus Matthews as the lead speaker for the City-Wide Revival on October 24.

Christ-like community, and sharing the story of Christ with the world.

*The Rev. Dr. Albert D. Mosley is pastor of Janes Memorial United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, PA.

In The Nation

Death penalty continues despite church's 50-year opposition

By Tom McAnally*

Fifty years ago, delegates to the Methodist General Conference granted full clergy rights to women. Action by that top legislative body of the denomination prompted anniversary celebrations across the United Methodist Church this year.

Delegates to the 1956 conference in Minneapolis took another historic action that has received little attention. For the first time, delegates put the church officially on record as opposed to the death penalty.

Each Methodist and United Methodist General Conference since that time has reaffirmed its opposition to capital punishment. Meeting every four years, these assemblies are the only bodies that can speak officially for the denomination.

In plenary debate at the 1956 conference, lay and clergy delegates debated several issues related to a proposed update of the church's Social Creed. They discussed the role of the United Nations and argued at length about war and conscientious objection to military service. They talked about capitalism and communism and whether the church should bless any particular economic system. And, as might be expected, they talked about

abstinence from drugs and alcoholic beverages.

One thing they didn't debate? at least in the body as a whole? was the addition of a new statement condemning the death penalty. Perhaps all the wrinkles were ironed out in a legislative committee before being sent to the entire body for consideration. Or perhaps a majority of delegates were opposed to the practice and no debate was needed.

Between the 1952 and 1956 Methodist general conferences, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg died in the electric chair, the first civilians to be executed for espionage in the United States. They had been found guilty of conspiring to share atomic secrets with the Soviet Union and were executed June 19, 1953. What influence, if any, their widely publicized trial and executions had on the 1956 delegates is not known. Debate over the Rosenberg trial and their guilt or innocence continues to this day.

The 1956 Methodist statement opposing the death penalty included two short paragraphs in a section of the Social Creed titled "Treatment of Crime."

"We stand for the application of the redemptive principle to the treatment of offenders against the law, to reform of penal and correctional methods, and to criminal court procedures. For this reason we deplore the use of capital punishment.

"We recognize that crime, and in particular juvenile delinquency leading to crime, is often a result of bad social conditions. Christian citizens and churches have a special opportunity and responsibility for creating those conditions of family life, wholesome recreation, vocational training, personal counseling, and social adjustment by which crime may be reduced."

While women clergy have generally prospered within the denomination since 1956, the new statement deploring the death penalty has apparently had modest influence on



Opponents of the death penalty rally outside the New Jersey Statehouse in Trenton. The year 2006 marks the 50 year anniversary of the Methodist Church officially taking a stand against the death penalty. Delegates at the 1956 Methodist General Conference in Minneapolis approved a statement condemning the death penalty for inclusion in the denomination's Social Creed. A UMNS photo by John C. Goodwin.

governmental policies in the United States.

In an interview with United Methodist News Service, Bill Mefford, director of civil and human rights for the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, said change on the issue has come slowly. "Seeking to abolish the death penalty is a slow and unpredictable process. One can't just look at this issue and say that A plus B equals C."

The long-term challenge is not so much the changing the minds of individual politicians as it is changing the "winds" of public opinion, he said. "We want to further the idea that all of life is worth defending. Church people can do that."

While progress may seem slow to some, opponents celebrate the fact that the annual number of death sentences has dropped dramatically from a total of 300 in 1998 to 125 in 2004.

Mefford, a United Methodist layman, is a graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary where he is currently working on a doctor of theology degree. He joined the Washington-based Board of Church and Society staff in February. A native of Tennessee, much of his adult life was spent in Texas, a state

which ranks first in the number of executions since 1976 (375) and second, behind California, in the number of inmates now on death row (404).

Mefford is working to reinvigorate "United Methodists against the Death Penalty," a network of death penalty opponents started by one of his staff predecessors. "Capital punishment is an issue being dealt with state by state, but we want United Methodists to know that as they work for change, we at the national level are interested in them and want to offer encouragement and resources."

Today, 38 of the 50 states allow the death penalty. According to the Death Penalty Information Center in Washington, 1,045 individuals have been executed since 1976. The largest number in a single year was in 1999 with 98 executions. As of September, 41 individuals have been executed this year.

The church's Social Principles, found in both the 2004 [United Methodist Book of Discipline](#) and 2004 [Book of Resolutions](#), include a succinct paragraph calling for elimination of the death penalty from all criminal codes.

**McAnally, retired director of United Methodist News Service, lives in Nashville.



Figures representing Julius and Ethel Rosenberg and a Cold War-era electric chair dominate an exhibit at the New York Historical Society Museum in this 2002 file photograph. The Rosenbergs were executed in 1953 for conspiracy to aid the Soviet Union. A UMNS photo by John C. Goodwin.

The Nation in Brief

•Students from United Methodist-related Bennett College for Women, United Methodist-related Duke University and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, gathered on the Bennett College campus Oct. 25 to formally announce their alliance in the Millennium Village Project, a community-driven approach to eradicating poverty. The project aims to raise \$1.5 million within the current academic year for the sponsorship of a Millennium Village in Africa.

•United Methodist Communications has launched Web Ministry 101, an online tool at www.web.umcom.org to help local churches develop Web sites and Web ministries that are helpful and inviting, and that provide opportunities for spiritual growth. Web Ministry 101 provides 25 how-to steps to guide a person from the

purchase of a computer to launching a church Web site.

•The Alaska Supreme Court has ruled that a building that once housed the 60-member St. Paul United Methodist congregation is owned by the Alaska Missionary Conference and former members who claimed the property are liable for trespassing. Almost eight months after the case was argued before the five justices on Jan. 25, the Supreme Court affirmed the decision of Alaska Superior Court Judge Richard Savell to award the disputed property of St. Paul Church to the Alaska Missionary Conference. The five-member state Supreme Court affirmed Oct. 13 the historic "trust provisions" of the United Methodist Church.

•The United Methodist Higher Education Foundation approved a

total of \$1.8 million in scholarship funding for all 2007-2008 academic year programs. This funding will provide scholarship support for more than 1,000 students and is an increase over the 974 scholarships totaling more than \$1.4 million awarded during the 2005-2006 academic year.

•Belmont University in Nashville, TN, has been chosen as the site for the 10th national gathering of United Methodist Men July 9-12, 2009. The men's commission, the agency that plans the national gathering, voted Sept. 16 to move the quadrennial men's conference from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., to Nashville in response to requests for a more family friendly locale, better access to an airport or metropolitan area, and more confined spaces for workshops and other options.

•The United Methodist Campus Ministers Association is working to raise \$170,000 to repair Wesley Foundation buildings damaged by Hurricane Katrina and to support campus ministries in Louisiana and Mississippi. \$115,000 is needed for construction and renovation of the Wesley Foundation buildings at Tulane University and Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. An additional \$55,000 is needed for programs at these schools and at Dillard University. Donations can be made to the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation. Checks designated in the memo line for Katrina Campus Ministry Recovery and sent to the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation, 1001 Nineteenth Ave. South, Nashville, TN 37212-2130.

In The World

Nothing But Nets campaign raises money to fight malaria

By Deborah White*

More than 100,000 insecticide-treated bed nets will be delivered to Nigeria in November as part of a new malaria prevention campaign called Nothing But Nets.

Partners in Nothing But Nets include the United Methodist Church, the United Nations Foundation, Sports Illustrated, the National Basketball Association, Millennium Promise and the Measles Initiative. The United Methodist Board of Global Ministries and United Methodist Communications are coordinating the church's participation in the campaign, which will include a major initiative for youth groups.

The goal is to raise funds to eradicate malaria in Africa, where the mosquito-borne disease causes the



Rick Reilly

death of one-fifth of all children under 5 years old. Hanging nets over children while they sleep is a simple,

inexpensive way to kill the mosquitoes or keep them from biting.

The idea for Nothing But Nets came from *Sports Illustrated* columnist Rick Reilly, who encouraged readers to donate money to the U.N. Foundation after he learned that 1 million children die from malaria each year and that bed nets could save lives. In a May 5 column, he wrote, "If you've ever cut down a net, jumped over a net, watched the New Jersey Nets, worn a hair net, surfed the net, or loved fishnets, send 10 bucks and maybe you could save a life."

In just a few months, more than 17,000 people sent \$1.2 million. Reilly plans to join a delegation from Nothing But Nets to distribute nets in Nigeria and to meet children who will benefit from them.

The U.N. Foundation asked the United Methodist Church to join Nothing But Nets because of its community health work, including the new Community-Based Malaria Prevention Program of the Board of Global Ministries. The most recent project, started in Sierra Leone last December, focuses on community-based primary health care, education and creating a "net culture."

"All of this work makes the denomination a natural partner for the Nothing But Nets campaign," said Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton, president of the Commission on Communication, which governs United Methodist Communications. "Not only do we want to eradicate malaria, but we also want to get our young people involved in mission work."

United Methodist Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton outlines the denomination's participation in the Nothing But Nets initiative to combat malaria during a session before the annual meeting of the United Methodist Association of Communicators in Indianapolis. Bickerton is president of the United Methodist Commission on Communication and leads the



Working by the light of two bare light bulbs, Cristiana Alberto Martins, 13, arranges a mosquito net over her bed at an orphanage operated by the East Angola Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in Malanje, Angola. Forty-six percent of all the deaths in Malanje are related to malaria. Nothing But Nets is a partnership that includes the United Methodist Church, the United Nations Foundation, Sports Illustrated, the National Basketball Association, Millennium Promise and the Measles Initiative. The goal is to raise funds to supply insecticide-treated bed nets to communities in Africa, where the mosquito-borne disease causes the death of one-fifth of all children under 5 years old. A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose.

denomination's Pittsburgh Area. He spoke at an Oct. 18 event held by the communications agency the day before the association's meeting. A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose.

United Methodist youth groups that raise money for Nothing But Nets will be eligible for prizes at Youth 2007, an international event for United Methodist youth in Greensboro, N.C., July 11-15. The event is sponsored by the United Methodist Board of Discipleship. Fund-raising awards will include a trip to Africa to distribute bed nets, a trip to New York to tour the United Nations and a variety of NBA gear.

A cell phone text-messaging network will provide campaign updates to youth. They can send a text message to 47647, type "Nets" in the text field and hit "send" to be added to the network.

"One of the benefits of being a partner in Nothing But Nets is that we're giving a tool to congregations that may be struggling to reach youth. This is an avenue that will speak to youth," Bickerton said.

"In sports, we're always dealing with nets. It struck me as the simplest way to save lives," Reilly said in an interview. "I think it's so cool the church is involved."

More information is available by going to the United Methodist Church section of nothingbutnets.net or the denomination's official Web site at umc.org.

*White is associate editor of *Interpreter* magazine. This report first appeared in slightly different form in the magazine. Both *Interpreter* and *United Methodist News Service* are ministries of United Methodist Communications.

Nothing But Nets

The World in Brief

•Differences in polity and theology among three denominations are causing division at an ecumenical seminary that trains clergy and laypeople in Cuba. A nine-member delegation under the auspices of the United Methodist Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns visited the Methodist Church in Cuba Oct. 7-12 to strengthen relations with the church and its people. During the trip, the delegation learned about the role of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in training theological leaders in Cuba, and the group investigated a schism that has developed at the school since July. The seminary receives support from the United Methodist Church through the Advance for Christ and His Church, a second-mile giving program.

•United Methodist mission centers in rural eastern Zimbabwe are helping feed, clothe and educate children, many of whom are living with HIV/AIDS or otherwise come from disadvantaged backgrounds. A significant ally in the church's work is the Zimbabwe Orphans Endeavor, founded by the Rev. Greg Jenks of Clayton, N.C. Working with the United Methodist Church, ZOE provides school materials and food during school hours to disadvantaged pupils in rural communities.

•Patrick Chamusso, a former prisoner on South Africa's Robben Island with Nelson Mandela, spoke and worshipped at Munger Place United Methodist Church while visiting Dallas as part of a promotional tour for the movie "Catch a Fire," which debuted in U.S. theaters Oct. 27. The

movie tells the story of his life and his struggle against apartheid in South Africa. The Rev. L. Charles Stovall, pastor of Munger Place Church, invited Chamusso and the movie's cast and crew to the church after learning they would be promoting the film in Dallas. Stovall represented the United Methodist Church on the Ecumenical Monitoring Team for South African's first multiracial election.

•The United Methodist Committee on Relief is helping the United Methodist Church in the Philippines with recovery efforts following Typhoon Milenyo, which tore through the archipelago the last week of September. The relief agency is supporting two projects that help those left most vulnerable by the typhoon. Donations should be designated for UMCOR's

International Disaster Response, UMCOR Advance #982450, and placed in local church offering plates or sent directly to UMCOR, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 330, New York, NY 10115. Credit-card donations can be made by calling (800) 554-8583.

•Since 1990, the United Methodist Church's mission agency has developed 400 new congregations through 11 mission initiatives in parts of Asia, Africa, the northern tier of Eastern Europe and Honduras. New work also has started in the southern region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Work in Thailand will begin soon. Directors of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries received that information during their Oct. 9-12 annual meeting in Stamford, Conn.

Congo Missionaries visiting Conference Churches

by James S. Holton*

While raising three fingers and saying, "Jesu ni Bwana Wa Wote," and requesting the same response, the Rev. Dr. David and Mrs. Lorene Persons, and the Rev. Dr. Kongolo shared the traditional greeting between United Methodists in South East Congo at four conference churches in October: West Chester, Hempfield, Jenkintown, and Jarrettown. This greeting symbolizes "Jesus is Lord of All."

The Persons and Dr. Kongolo serve our church at the United Methodist Seminary at Mulungwishi, Katanga in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This seminary trains ministers and leaders for six United Methodist Conferences in Central Africa. The United Methodist Church has taught

local people at this location since 1910. Our early missionaries' goal was to "Plant churches and raise local leadership." The early schools, staffed by United Methodist missionaries, today have grown to include all ages, from primary and secondary schools to a university and a graduate seminary now staffed by local leadership.

The United Methodist seminary, Faculte Methodiste de Theologie (FMT), was started in 1951 by Rev. Bartlett (Lori's father) and has trained Africans past 20 years. Recently the seminary became part of the University of Katanga. The faculty of theology has the unique distinction to have more Ph.D.'s than any other United Methodist Seminary on the African continent. In early

October, Dr. Kongolo became Dean of the Seminary, allowing David Persons to step down and become a faculty staff member. Dr. Kongolo is a product of local United Methodist schools and colleges in the Congo.

The United Methodist Church has ordained Congolese pastors since before WWI, giving a local United Methodist heritage going back nearly a century. When Congo Independence came in 1960, Katanga Province contained only 20,000 United Methodists in one Annual Conference. The church has grown at an astounding rate, so that now six Annual Conferences have more than 500,000 United Methodist members. Most of the United Methodist bishops in the Congo are graduates of FMT, as are many of the District Superintendents. Since the area's primary language is French, the Conferences now send missionaries to other French speaking parts of Africa.

When a pastor comes to the seminary for training, so does his family. While the pastor works toward his degree, the wife receives three years of training and education at the "Doris Bartlett Women's School" (founded by Lori's mother) and the children attend Mulungwishi's primary and secondary schools.

The seminary faces challenges – some are challenges similar to those faced by U.S. schools, plus a few that are unique to the region. The major challenge is paying the costs for the students and faculty. A family scholarship - for pastor, wife and children - is \$2,500 a year. The Conferences can afford fewer than 45 scholarships per year for new and current students. That allows only about 14 new students per year from over 400 applicants, each of whom was recommended by their local

congregation and District.

Each member of the Congolese faculty received their Ph.D. training around the world and returned from affluent Western countries to serve at much lower salaries in order to train pastors in their homeland. The seminary needs our ongoing financial support.

The Congo has suffered under previous governments, and has now lost many of the roads, utilities, and industries that it had 40 years ago. Many parts of the Congo over the past 10 years were battlefields in what is now called "Africa's First World War." Katanga and Mulungwishi, while not in the area of heavy devastation suffered by areas a few hundred miles north, subsequently became a haven for many displaced people. This human challenge puts stress on the area and its schools.

Dr. Kongolo was asked at one local church, "What is the greatest challenge today for the Congo and the seminary?" His answer was simple: "Peace. We need peace to start rebuilding using our Hope in Christ." The Persons, who grew up in the Eastern U.S., said "While our United Methodist Church members in the Congo live the very hard lives of poverty, we are humbled by their faith."

Through the support of local congregations, districts and annual conferences, funds and missionaries have served to develop local Congo leadership and its training institutions. The seminary continues its work to spread the Gospel, made possible by our financial support. Advance Specials: Mulungwishi Theological Seminary Scholarships # 05773-A and Mulungwishi Women's School # 08112-A.

*James S. Holton is an active lay member of West Chester United Methodist Church.



The Rev. David and Mrs. Lorene Persons are missionaries of The United Methodist Church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

United Methodist Student Day is only weeks away: November 26.

By Suzy Keenan*

The Office of Loans and Scholarships Office of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry reports that fifty-three students from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference received scholarships and loans made possible by the generous gifts of United Methodists to the Student Day offering.

Thanks to our connectional system and the people called "United Methodist," more than 3,000 students have received a scholarship or loan to attend undergraduate or graduate school this fall. Sadly, some of the home congregations of these students do not even observe United Methodist Student Day.

Please promote this special Sunday in your church

My 19-year-old daughter, Katie, a student at West Chester University in West Chester, PA, is a recipient of a scholarship. Firsthand, we know what a tremendous difference her scholarship makes. This is helpful financially to bear the heavy burden of college tuition. Most of all, though, Katie knows that her United Methodist

church "family" cares about her, and encourages her as a young adult disciple of Jesus Christ. Our family gives thanks for this support and encouragement.

I will participate generously when the offering plate is passed in my local church (West Chester UMC) because I know how much it means to Katie and students like her.

As you share the news of United Methodist Student Day and the other five church-wide Special Sundays with offerings, be aware of a new resource available for your promotional efforts. The new Special Sundays planning guide will be posted online soon at www.umcgiving.org. Each Sunday has a two-page spread with the same human-interest story featured on the 2007 resources, basic information and NEW worship resources for each Sunday.

In addition to the quickly approaching United Methodist Student Day November 26, 2006, here are the 2007 Special Sunday dates:

- Human Relations Day, Jan. 14
- One Great Hour of Sharing, March 18
- Native American Ministries Sunday, April 22

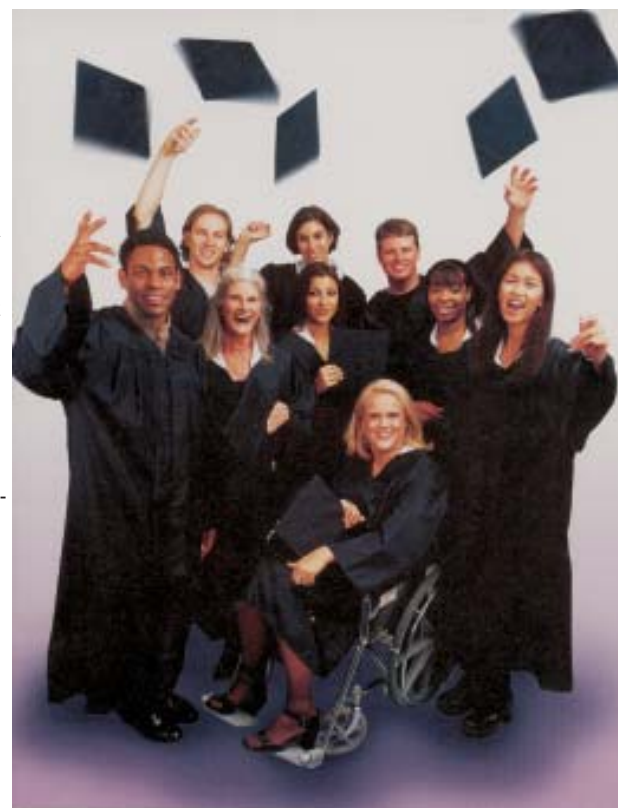
- Peace with Justice Sunday, June 3
- World Communion Sunday, Oct. 7
- United Methodist Student Day, Nov. 25

Please note that church-wide Special Sundays with offerings may be observed on alternate dates if a local church has a conflict on the designated Sunday.

Please encourage students in your congregation by directing them to resources on the conference website for United Methodist loans and scholarships: www.epaumc.org. Click on the Business and Finances folder and then on Scholarships and Grants.

Thank you for generous support United Methodist Student Day on November 26!

* Suzy Keenan is director of communications for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.



College Students and Youth Encounter Math – Hands On!!

By Lynn C. Jaeger, M.S., and the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Leonard

College students and at-risk youth together discover the excitement of hands-on science and math for the third year in a collaborative effort between the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Office of Urban and Global Ministries and Temple University.

Seven Temple University Education students are partnered with students attending the *Alternative Learning Community for Youth*, housed at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church (UMC) under the auspices of the North Philadelphia Cluster of UMC congregations. The students include Julie Friedman, Denise Gillespie, Akiba Gregg, Ilana Grubin, Eun-Kyong Lee, Mindy Salyards and Jaime Schall, who work under the direction of conference Deacon, the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Leonard, associate professor of Mathematics at Temple. Together, they are having a great time exploring the application of the scientific method and mathematics concepts as they pertain to flight.

The *Alternative Learning Community* consists of about 20 students, ages 14-18, referred to the program for its one-on-one instruction and self-paced approach because, for a variety of reasons, regular public school was not meeting their needs. Attendance is voluntary – and enrollment is contingent on consistent attendance and participation, so that the student makes progress toward his or her academic goals.

In recent days, the students have learned about sampling methods – they cut up and identified the components of a number of variously-composed “moon rocks”, and then decided, based on the proportion of contents,

what sort of “minerals” they had sampled. Concepts related to flight (altitude and attitude, lift, force, air flow, etc.) were directly tested by building and testing tetrahedral kites and two different kinds of Styrofoam gliders. While making geysers of different brands of soda and varying amounts of candy mints, students learned to use the scientific method, and also learned a little chemistry. All of these concepts came together in a hands-on rocketry project involving paper tubes fins and nosecones, empty film cans and Alka-Seltzer!

Temple students said: “I was anticipating a lack of motivation and probably feelings of resentment towards anyone “forcing” the students to be there. They immediately proved my theories wrong. I was fully expecting that they would ignore or barely acknowledge me. Strangely enough, I think that I gained more in the way of acceptance and encouragement from the students than they gained from me during our first day together.” “They were very inquisitive and tried many times to fly their airplanes. They attached a paperclip to see if this would help the airplane go far. They seemed to enjoy this activity, and flew their planes at the end.”

Ms. Betty James, educational director at the Mt. Zion UMC learning site, offers patient support, clear rules, and high expectations for success. Instructional materials come from a home schooling provider. The pairing of college students with enrolled youth is generating commitment, enthusiasm, and lots of questions about how math can make a difference, for collegians and youth alike. One difference that is apparent already: everyone involved has been empowered through their increased understanding and direct application of mathematics, and



Kevin Pettit, a student at the Alternative Learning Community for Youth at Mt. Zion UMC, holds up a Styrofoam glider he made to test flight characteristics.

through the relationships being formed.

Funding for the *Alternative Learning Community* comes from a variety of sources: the Department of Human Services of Philadelphia, Metropolitan Christian Council of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth Prudential Foundation, the North Philadelphia Cluster, and the

Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, through the Conference Advance. To support this educational ministry by volunteering or offering instructional materials, call Maudell Dixon at 215-684-1811; to assist financially, you may send a check payable to Mt. Zion UMC (write “Truancy Program” on the memo line), 1530-38 North 11th Street, Philadelphia 19122.

Africana Worship Book Meets Long-Standing Need

The General Board of Discipleship has released a new worship resource called *The Africana Worship Book*.

This rich resource contains calls to worship, liturgies, prayers, litanies, offertory prayers, doxologies, choral readings, creeds, chants and benedictions. The resources are based on Year A of the Revised Common Lectionary, yet organized by worship element for ease in use.

A 2004 consultation exploring the liturgy needs of African-American United Methodist congregations revealed that these congregations could no longer think of themselves as being solely African-American.

When African-Americans gather for worship, worshipers of African descent come from places such as the continent of Africa, the Caribbean Islands or the Americas.

Clearly there was a need for 21st century Africana liturgy that addresses the ethos, traditions, and innovations of United Methodist worshippers of African descent.

The term “Africana” embraces and affirms this rich diversity and heritage of persons attending worship each week.

Published by GBOD’s Discipleship Resources, *The Africana Worship Book* and CD-ROM were birthed as a

result of this needs assessment and discernment process.

Congregations may use the accompanying CD-ROM, which is included with the book, in the preparation of printed orders of worship. All the worship resources in the book are available in a cut and paste format for ease of use.

“We use a lot of the liturgies, calls to worship, and prayers of confession. It’s important for us to have this wonderful resource,” said the Rev. Gloria Roach-Thomas, pastor of Camphor UMC in Saint Paul, Minn.

“We’re the only African American UMC in the state of Minnesota. It’s a wonderful way for my congregation to connect with the greater United Methodist Africana liturgies and people. We’re not working in isolation,” she said.

The liturgies are presented in language that resonates with worshipers. Roach-Thomas has found “*Sin Don’t Lost its Grip*” and “*Feed Me ‘til I Want No More*” particularly popular with her congregation during worship, communion services, and Bible studies.

“They almost get down in our bones! It’s wonderful! We love it and we use it,” she exclaimed.

“They [the liturgies] connect us to our daily lives. All of us can relate. I don’t care who you are—African,

African-American and other groups—they are so real and practical and authentic. It’s truly a wonderful resource!”

Worship resources for special days like Black History Month, Martin Luther King Day, and Watchnight are also included.

“*The Africana Worshipbook* offers high quality resources that help revitalize and renew Africana congregations and, indeed, all faith communities,” said the Rev. Karen Greenwaldt, GBOD general secretary.

General Editor of the *Africana Worship Book*, the Rev. Dr. Valerie Bridgeman Davis teaches preaching and worship and Hebrew Bible at Memphis theological Seminary. Associate Editor, the Rev. Dr. Safiyah Fosua is the director of invitational preaching ministries at the General Board of Discipleship.

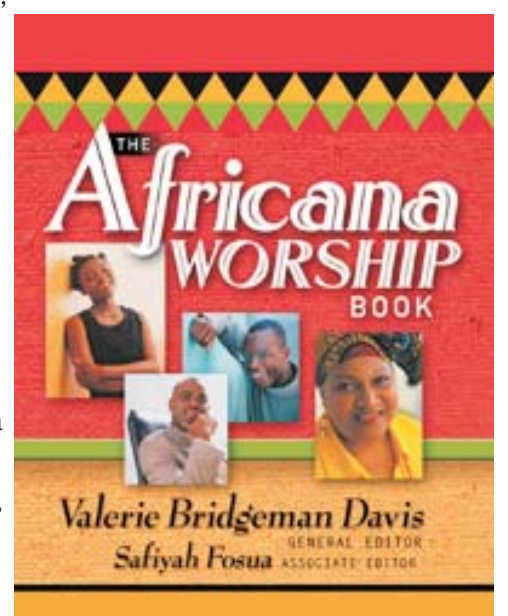
William B. McClain of Wesley Theological Seminary wrote the foreword. In addition to the editors, contributors to this collection are Eugene Blair, Carolyn Dandridge, Joseph Daniels, Junius Dotson, Catrina Harrison, Sherrie Dobbs Johnson, Kwasi Kena, Toni Payne, Tony Peterson, Ciona Rouse, Lillian Smith, Marilyn Thornton, Tim Warner, and Stacey Cole Wilson.

For more information about *The Africana Worshipbook*, visit

www.gbod.org,

www.africanaworship.org or contact Safiyah Fosua at 877-899-2780, ext. 7084.

The General Board of Discipleship’s mission is to support annual conference and local church leaders for their task of equipping world-changing disciples. An agency of The United Methodist Church, The General Board of Discipleship is located at 1908 Grand Avenue in Nashville, Tennessee.



Denomination launches resources to increase church vitality

The United Methodist Church has launched a cutting-edge resource that helps church leaders focus time and energy on areas of ministry that have the most potential for strengthening, reshaping and moving congregations forward.

By using a congregational assessment and planning process called the **Church Vitality Indicator™**, church leaders discover where and how to invest their congregation's energy and passion for the future.

The Church Vitality Indicator™ helps focus a congregation's resources on the areas of ministry that will yield the most results.

Betsey Heavener says the CVI is more than a fill-in-the-blank survey. Heavener is a member of the congregational leader development team in the Discipleship Ministries Division.

"The emphasis isn't on technology. It's the combination of survey and discernment that lead churches in a powerful planning process," she says.

The Nebraska Annual Conference has purchased the resource for the entire conference to aid churches in developing discipleship plans that focus on leadership development for clergy and laity. Church leaders in Nebraska believe the CVI will help

them evaluate their current ministry situation and provide a process for developing their own discipleship plans.

"CVI will help local congregations focus their energy and creativity on what ministry they do best and that, in turn, will have a positive impact on their other ministries," said the Rev. Nita Hinds-Park, associate director of connectional ministries and director of congregational development for the Nebraska Annual Conference.

"As a result of this process, there should be a 'rebirth' and renewal of the Gospel story as told in 'the United Methodist way' in Nebraska," Hinds-Park says.

The 400 congregations that make up the Nebraska Annual Conference began using CVI in September. Later this fall, they will complete the assessment and begin strategic planning.

What Nebraska is doing is important because "First and foremost, we have a Story to tell and a world waiting, sometimes in agony, to hear the Story. Telling the Story is who we are and what we do," said Hinds-Park. The CVI will help us be more effective and creative in our "Story Sharing."

"Secondly, it will generate a renewal and growth in the Nebraska United

Methodist Churches, which in turn will allow us to touch more lives through more missions, more ministries and more outreach," Hinds-Park said.

The CVI evaluates the intersection of a congregation's energy, interests, and current ministry to guide leaders to the congregation's **indicators of vitality**.

Created for leaders interested in revitalizing their churches, the Church Vitality Indicator™ is an affordable, customized, interactive online assessment tool and discernment process that can help congregations of all sizes and in all settings.

According to Hinds-Park, the General Board of Discipleship's creativity in integrating the CVI with Nebraska Conference's Signs of Discipleship has made this an invaluable assessment tool for the churches and the conference.

The conference's vision is for every congregation to take part in the connectional joy and commitment that is part of the heart and soul of The United Methodist Church evinced in—

- practicing radical hospitality;
- offering heart-warming worship;

- providing opportunities for vital faith formation;
- being involved in risk-taking mission; and
- practicing gracious generosity.

"CVI will transform the spiritual life of our churches as they begin the journey to a more dynamic congregational life and ministry," said the Rev. Karen Greenwaldt, top executive for the General Board of Discipleship.

What makes this tool so powerful is that the results are tailor-made to specific congregations. It's like having access to a ministry consultant 24/7.

For more information about the Church Vitality Indicator™ and other resources for renewal and new church starts, contact Betsey Heavener at 615-340-7295, or visit the Web site <http://www.cvindicator.com>.

The General Board of Discipleship's mission is to support annual conference and local church leaders for their task of equipping world-changing disciples. An agency of The United Methodist Church, The General Board of Discipleship is located at 1908 Grand Avenue in Nashville, Tennessee. For more information, call the Media Relations Office toll free at (877) 899-2780 Ext. 7017.

Conference pastor ministers to Nickel Mines community

By Andrea Brown*

For Mike Remel, a 32-year-old student at Palmer Theological Seminary, and the pastor of Georgetown United Methodist Church, the Oct. 2 shooting at Nickel Mines Amish school was a "baptism by fire" for him as a pastor, as a father, and as a neighbor.

Yet Remel was never so powerfully aware of God's presence as in this moment.

Though the incident was overwhelming, he said, "I don't know that it would be any different for an older pastor" since the strengths that were called for were less his than God's.

"I have really relied on God and on my prayer life," he said. Whenever he became exhausted, "I felt the refreshing of the Spirit sustaining me and uplifting me and allowing me to move on to the next task that had to be done."

One of those tasks was sharing the news with his 5-year-old son, Shawn.

Shawn is a friend and preschool classmate of Bryce Roberts, the 5-year-old son of Charles Carl Roberts IV, who shot 10 girls at the school before taking his own life. Remel lives two doors away from the Roberts family.

"On a personal level, we know the Roberts children; we know Marie," Roberts' widow, Remel said. He said he didn't know Charles himself well because they had opposite work schedules.

"They're doing as well as can be expected," he said. "She's back in their home with the kids. They're receiving ministry and counsel. The kids are back in school. There have been, praise God, no incidents of any of Marie's three children being singled out or picked on by their peers."

As for Remel's son, he said, "We told him Bryce's dad died, and Shawn said, 'Well, Bryce must be very sad.' And we said yes. And we said, 'All of

Lancaster County is sad because there were some Amish girls shot in a schoolhouse.' We did not connect the two events. He has since seen news coverage and has connected them himself," Remel said, but Shawn continues to do well.

"One of the things in our family is, we've never shielded Shawn from death, whether it was an aunt or an uncle or a loved one or a friend," Remel added. "We have tried to teach him that death is a natural part of life but that death is not the end—that God makes a promise to us of eternal life."

Including children in funerals and other mourning rituals helps them to have such assurance, Remel believes.

In addition to his wisdom as a parent, Remel showed wisdom as a pastor and community leader in dealing with the swarms of media that came to the area.

"We were just inundated," he said. Humility is a strong value for the Amish, and though they read and produce newspapers, they are wary of the effects of having their image reproduced in photographs and on film.

Remel had many conversations with camera crews and found this to be the most stressful part of the situation, "just trying to get them to understand that the most respectful way to film this event was don't do close-up shots of their faces. Many were respectful, some certainly were not."

While Remel closed his church to cameras during the prayer meeting held there in order to protect the Amish, the same motive led him to open the church to reporters as an unobtrusive site for viewing the solemn procession of dark buggies headed to funerals for the girls who died.

Still, in the midst of the stresses were many blessings.

"One of the things that was absolutely astounding was of the Amish forgiving as quickly as they did. And



Worshippers enter Georgetown United Methodist Church for a prayer service following the tragedy at the West Nickel Mines school. Photo by Suzette Wenger, Lancaster Intelligencer Journal.

it wasn't just the Amish. It was this community," he said.

"There was a need for forgiveness, to embrace each other and not push each other away. I saw God working in those situations where we were being drawn together."

What's more, he said, "I've seen God in the well wishes from all across the United States and internationally. It's a message of how they've been inspired by the care and faith of the community and of, 'We're praying for you. We're caring for you.'"

"This is in some ways—I don't know how to put it—I feel very humbled by the experience, and I have learned lessons about Christian love and care from people in my community through this tragedy, and just to see the level of care that is going to everyone involved in this because, you

know, both the Amish and the Roberts family are seen as victims in this.

Four days after the incident, he added, "when the first girls were buried and Marie Roberts attended the girls' funerals and then on Saturday when Charlie Roberts was buried in the cemetery behind Georgetown Church" and he looked out the window to see that the families of the little girls were there, "that was just an overwhelming, humbling experience."

Anyone who questions where God has been in the midst of the tragedy at Nickel Mines School has only to talk to Pastor Remel.

* The Rev. Andrea Brown is associate pastor of Grandview United Methodist Church in Lancaster, PA.

with wonders of His love



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Time to look ahead to Lent!

Need help advertising? Need help with the cost of advertising?

Igniting Ministry can assist you! Applications for Lent 2007 are being accepted November 1-December 1, 2006. The application form is available to download at <http://www.ignitingministry.org/matching/overview.aspx>.

One million matching dollars (\$1,000,000) are available to local churches each year to assist with TV/cable, radio, cinema or billboard advertising. By using our professionally created commercials and collateral advertising, we have also saved the church design dollars that can be used in other ministries. Take a look at all of our advertising on the Media Warehouse at www.mediawarehouse.org.

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2nd Step: Download and complete the application.

3rd Step: Download and complete the "narrative" outline.

4th Step: Submit to Igniting Ministry, Matching Grants, P O Box 320, Nashville, TN 37202 by December 1, 2006.

If you have questions regarding any part of the process, we are here to serve you.

Jackie Vaughan
Director, Media Grants and Services
<mailto:jvaughan@umcom.org>
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Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church

Without a vision, people perish

continued from page 1

- Preparing and Implementing Your Congregation's Ministry Action Plan
- The Importance and Power of Prayer
- Living as Christian Disciples: The Means of Grace and the Ordinances of God.
- Telling Your God Story: Faith Sharing and Evangelical Recruitment
- Vibrant and Transformative Worship

This understanding of God's vision is not just from Bishop Matthews. Just from reading the responses from persons who attended the Bishop's Day on the East District, it is evident that this vision is the yearning of people in this conference. When asked to respond to the question, "Imagine it is the year 2012, what do we want it to look like," EPA United Methodists said the following:

• We will be an active community-assistance church dedicated to leading souls to belief in Christ.

• I imagine in 2012 that each and every church will have a larger and more active group. I see them involved in leading other youth - encouraging their friends that do not know Jesus Christ to come join with them and worship with them. I can see them being more active in services on Sunday - feeling a sense of belonging, to be involved on a deeper level. I can see the older youth being mentors to the young children.

• Whatever the Holy Spirit sees for us: My Local Church will at least

double its attendance/membership by reaching out effectively to a multicultural, multiracial, multi-religious community with the offer of Christ for the Holy Spirit to convict those who come to faith in Christ, as we do everything in prayer, asking, waiting and doing according to God's will. We need a Holy Spirit revival in the Conference, District, Local Churches and America!

Visit the Conference website to see more of what people of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference are saying about God's vision. The urging related to God's vision for churches to make disciples was a recurring theme at The Great Leadership Event: Taking the Next Step in Leadership Development, held October 13-15, 2006, in Valley Forge, PA, sponsored by The Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference.

Larry Homitsky, director of Connectional Ministries for the Western Pennsylvania Conference shared demographics of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Conferences at the Great Leadership Event. The numbers were staggering. In 1973 the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference had

545 churches
173,236 members
65,478 in worship attendance.

In 2002/2003 the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference had:

468 local churches (2002)
130,738 members (2003)

54,453 in worship attendance (2003).

Homitsky asked the attendees, "It's not really about numbers, is it?" In response he added, "Yes, it is actually about the numbers." He encouraged participants to take courage, name the goal, and then work to achieve it. "We are to reach more people, younger people, and more diverse people," Homitsky added.

Beginning in November 2006, best practices in ministry will be distributed via email and posted on the web page. You are invited to post and share your ministry best practices, as well. The best practices information and the workshops are provided to help each Eastern Pennsylvania Conference United Methodist and congregations strengthen ministry to people of all ages and stages. If you have an idea about best practices or want more information, let us know. The trainings will be held throughout the annual conference to ensure that all congregations - even those with financial challenges - can participate.

God has a vision! Can you see it? It's time to live into it!

*Lillian C. Smith is Director of Connectional Ministries for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church. She can be contacted at Lillian.smith@epaumc.org or 800-828-9093, ext. 230.

Workshops at Annual Conference 2007

We had another record year attendance at the Annual Conference Workshops in 2006. We read your comments, listened to what you had to say and will do what we can to make 2007 even better. The Leadership Resource Team promises to make 2007 another banner year for training and education. Thanks for all of your support and your feedback.

Please note your calendars for the following learning experiences and stay tuned for more information:

January 13, 2007

Staff Parish Relations Seminar

January 20, 2007

Connections: A United Methodist Learning Experience; Worship, Learn and Connect

June 13-15, 2007

Workshops at Annual Conference 2007

If you have questions or have an interest in presenting a workshop, please e-mail me at

brendatildon@aol.com

Brenda Tildon
302-836-8553

Healing comes in the wake of tragedy

continued from page 1

the nearby Presbyterian and Lutheran congregations with this small United Methodist family, and the presence of the Amish couple, as well, made those who had gathered especially aware of their powerful oneness in Christ.

In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, Georgetown UM members swung into action, cooking breakfast, lunch and dinner for emergency workers and visiting and praying with their Amish neighbors.

"I have an excellent congregation," Remel said. "There was not even a question. As soon as we heard what had happened and where it was, the church was immediately open for prayer, and it stayed open for about three days. We had people from all over the county praying in our sanctuary."

Since then, he said, cards, flowers and stuffed animals have been pouring in from all 50 states—"Hawaii and Alaska started coming in this week"—and the church has made it its mission to distribute them appropriately.

"This has added so much to what they're trying to do down there," Todd noted about the Georgetown congregation, which typically has 35 in attendance for Sunday worship. "Just all of the teddy bears alone!"

What's more, he said, Remel is personally screening mail sent to the family of Charles Carl Roberts IV, who took his own life after shooting the schoolchildren, to assure that that mail is comforting and not hurtful.

Christiana Church, just a bit farther from the Nickel Mines School, called every member on the day of the tragedy and announced a prayer service for the following evening, according to the Rev. Allan T. Sumerfield, Sr. He noted that many members have Amish neighbors and so felt blessed to have an opportunity to pray for them.

The church sent \$500 that night to the fund established for both the Amish families and the Roberts family.

Summerfield, with Remel, is part of an ecumenical group providing ongoing counseling to relieve post-traumatic stress.

A number of pastors spoke of ecumenical work in response to the tragedy. For instance, Lancaster's First Church participated in prayer services of the Downtown Ministerium, in addition to responding to the events as a congregation in worship, in the church's weekly email, and through care of extended family members and friends of Mr. Roberts.

Senior Pastor Kent Kroehler noted that the church also interpreted the good that was able to shine through in the midst of the tragedy, including the appearance of the word "Christian" in national and international media, "without any reference to power politics or scandal."

The Mountville ministerium sought a fitting way to reach out and decided that a simple one would be appreciated by a people who value simplicity.

The Rev. John Cordes, pastor of St. Paul's Church, was tapped by the group to write a short letter to the Amish pastors—a letter from one community to another.

"The way you've responded continues to be a witness," he planned to write. "Your example of being peacemakers has blessed us."

Grandview Church sought a similarly simple gesture—this one reaching from one United Methodist church family to another. To let the Georgetown UM congregation know they were thought of in their own grief and in their ministry to their community, the Grandview family sent them flowers.

Some responses were more direct. The Rev. Stephen Taylor, who had volunteered as a chaplain at Ground Zero following the September 11 tragedy, felt called again into a tragic situation and went to the Nickel Mines area to offer his services as a counselor.

Taylor also combined the adult Sunday School classes at Chiques Church in Mount Joy to respond to questions raised by the tragedy. Though people in Lancaster County live near the Amish, he noted, most don't know much about the history and theology of this Anabaptist group. Plus, many in his congregation were troubled by that age-old question of why God permits terrible things to happen to innocent people.

The witness of the Amish community as a forgiving people was high-

lighted in sermons in many United Methodist churches, including St. Mark's in Mount Joy, where forgiveness is the 2006 theme.

Senior Pastor David Woolverton pointed out, in an article in the Lancaster New Era newspaper, that the killer's inability to forgive himself and God for earlier events in his life was part of what led to the tragedy.

"A lot of who he was, his brokenness, that's in all of us," Woolverton observed. "We are all broken people. God asks us what we are going to do with that brokenness."

Todd noted that efforts at healing are ongoing. Representatives of Lutheran Disaster Relief met with Remel, Todd, and Deb DePrinzio, the disaster coordinator for Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. They are establishing a plan to provide financial resources for long-term counseling.

Though forgiveness was nearly immediate, Todd said, "If there is some other tragedy like this, it's going to bring back these feelings." Churches are working together to prepare so that that we can do more than react.

Condolence cards may be sent to the affected families and community via Georgetown United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 76, Bart PA 17503.

* The Rev. Andrea Brown is associate pastor of Grandview United Methodist Church in Lancaster, PA.

United Methodist Women: Working for peace

The United Methodist Women of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church held their 33rd Annual Meeting at Zion United Methodist Church in Myerstown, Pennsylvania on October 21, 2006. The meeting was well attended by UMW members from throughout the Conference.

The theme for this year's meeting was *Working for Peace Through a Shared Mission*. The guest speaker was Mia Adjali, Executive Secretary for Global Concerns, for the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries.

She discussed the tragic numbers of civilians lost in the war in Iraq and noted the large number of children lost because of sanctions imposed before the war began. She continued her discussion noting that we all are commissioned to participate in creating peace, beginning in our own communities by finding ways to eliminate violence in schools and moving on to seeking alternatives to war, seeking the elimination of weaponry and means of eliminating poverty in the world.

Adjali's address was followed by a panel discussion. Panelist Rev. Sally Wisner Ott, serves as a General Board of Global Mission Church and Community Worker, with the Lancaster United Methodist Inner-City Alliance (LUMINA), based in Lancaster. She described the mission of LUMINA as "to bring light to places in despair." She noted "Children do not

respond to violence with shock because it is so widespread." In discussing programs to improve nutrition, she noted that food is not enough — education is vital to break the cycle of poverty. Wise use of resources would be an important result of such education. Rev. Ott described prison ministries and clothing ministries as important examples of work that fosters peace. LUMINA is seeking to help to bridge the gap between the haves and have-nots.

Panelist Wilhelmina Young, a member of Cookman United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, discussed the programs of her church. The motto: *Christians Responding to Opportunities to Serve*. The church "Welfare to Work" program teaches life skills. Ms. Young discussed ways to find support for such programs and noted that the Women's Division had helped in many ways. She also described the *Friday Night Community Care Dinner* conducted by the church to serve the poor and homeless of the community and an after-school program that also provides meals to participants. The Teen Lounge, run by 18 to 21 year-olds three days per week, provides a safe haven for teens to gather.

Bishop Marcus Matthews presided over the installation of officers for 2007 and over the communion service. The officers for 2007 are: Ethel Malone, President; Barbara Drake,

Vice-President; Henrietta H. Thomas, Secretary; Sue D. Kruse, Treasurer; Mary Bamford, Chairperson of the Committee on Nominations; Donna Blanshine, Secretary of Program Resources; Frances J. Rivers, Communications Coordinator; Gladys B. Hubbard, Social Action Coordinator; Mary Lou Kerrick, Education and Interpretation Coordinator; Susan Dziuk, Needlework Circle Chairperson; Nancy Matthews, Chairperson of Permanent Trust Funds; Willie A. Black, Dorothy D. Miller, Committee on Nominations.

Ultimately, the purpose of the United Methodist Women is to "be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church." The Deputy General Secretary of the Women's Division, Jan Love, reflected,



Mia Adjali, Executive Secretary for Global Concerns, for the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries.

"This purpose challenges us, and I fully expect it to continue to challenge the church. This is our calling. This is our mission."

The Foundation Center comes to the Eastern Pennsylvania

Dr. Dorothy Watson Tatem and Yvette Davis-Trotman

The Office of Urban and Global Ministries of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference (EPA), Dr. Dorothy Watson Tatem, Director and Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church, The Rev. Richard H. Andrews, pastor, have collaborated to form the Johnson-UGO Foundation Library, a Cooperating Collection of the nation's leading nonprofit management and grantsmanship library, The Foundation Center. Johnson-UGO is the first designated Cooperating Collection formed by a collaboration of faith-based organizations. This is among five Foundation Center Regional Libraries and close to 300 Cooperating Collections throughout the United States. Ms. Yvette Davis-Trotman, a corporate librarian of 15 years experience and eight years of engagement in the nonprofit sector, has been appointed by the Office of Urban and Global Ministries to be the supervisor of the Johnson-UGO Foundation Library. She is also the Lay Leader of JUMC and is a Christ Servant Minister.

Johnson-UGO Foundation Library is located in the Education Building at Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church in Northeast Philadelphia. As a complement to the Regional Foundation Center Library, located at the Free Library of Philadelphia in Center City, Johnson-UGO will offer the same exhaustive foundation and grant resources provided by the Foundation Center's core collection and these sources will be available during the following non-traditional hours:

Monday	10:00am – 3:00pm
Tuesday	6:00pm – 10:00pm
Wednesday	6:00pm – 10:00pm
Thursday	6:00pm – 10:00pm
Friday	Closed
Saturday	10:00am – 6:00pm
Sunday	Closed

Location: 3117 Longshore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19149
Phone: 215-338-5020

The Foundation Center core collection includes but is not limited to the Foundation Directory Online Professional that is a comprehensive, web-based directory of over 80,000 grant

makers and half a million grants. This premier electronic resource is available for searching free of charge by library visitors. This is an excellent source for identifying foundations that may offer grants to nonprofits, ministry objectives and individuals.

For those who are not yet comfortable with database searching, print directories are available that provide information on foundations that fund nonprofit organizations, including faith-based organizations, libraries and schools. There are also directories listing thousands of private and corporate foundations that are arranged according to geographic location.

In addition to offering resources to help identify possible funders, Ms. Davis-Trotman and volunteers, who are lay members and Christ Servant Ministers of Johnson Memorial, will conduct a series of free community grant seeking workshops that cover varied topics including how to write grant proposals, fundraising planning, prospecting individual donors and how to search the Foundation Directory Online Professional database. The volunteers will also be available to assist patrons through orientations to the library and one-on-one training.

We will be offering two five-week series of training workshops at Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church. Dates and times will be announced via *The New Spirit e-News* and other media.

In addition to the Foundation Center core collection, the Johnson-UGO Foundation Library is presently equipped with three computers for searching and printing. A photocopier is also available for copying entries from the print directories. There is a \$0.10 per page charge for computer prints (there is no charge if the patron brings own paper) and a \$.25 per page charge for photocopies.

For more information about The Johnson-UGO Foundation Library, if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, or would like to donate office supplies, please call 215-338-5020.

Be on the alert for the date of the dedication, by Bishop Marcus Matthews in Spring 2007.

Resources

Health and Welfare Ministry Sunday

The Health and Welfare Providers of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference

(Cornwall Manor, Simpson Senior Services, Methodist Home for Children, Wesley Enhanced Living and Methodist Hospital) are grateful to all of the churches that participated in "Health & Welfare Sunday" in September, as well as those churches who held a Golden Cross collection in the spring. The gifts received from those offerings are used to offset the cost of care provided by these organizations for people with limited resources.

If your church has not yet conducted a "Health and Welfare Sunday" collection, you can still do so. Information including a suggested worship service and bulletin inserts are available on the Eastern

Pennsylvania Conference web site: www.epaumc.org. Please note that collection envelopes are no longer provided, and gifts can be sent to the Conference Business Office marked "Health & Welfare Sunday."



World AIDS Day Is December 1, 2006

We care that: 25 million people have died in over 25 years of the virus
We care that: An estimated 65 million people are living with HIV/AIDS
We care that: In the time it took to read this message, another person is **infected** with the virus and another person has **died**
We care that: HIV/AIDS is here in Chester County
We share in: The hope that you will **Be Safe! Be Sure! Be Tested!**

For HIV/AIDS & Test Site Information
Call the Health Information Hotline @
1-800-985-2437

Message Presented By:

- United Methodist Church of the Open Door's • H.U.B. of Hope HIV/AIDS Ministry • St. Paul's Baptist Church's • Ministry of Christian Compassion • United in Faith • Episcopal - Lutheran Mission • **Grove United Methodist Church** • West Chester United Methodist Church • Family Service of Chester County • Project ONE • Brandywine Valley Infectious Diseases Associates • Chester County Angels



Classifieds

SEEKING POSITION AS MUSIC DIRECTOR

Casey Proch, currently the Music Director at Trinity UMC, just outside of Dallas, Texas, will be moving to the Philadelphia area soon and would like to find employment as a Music Director in a Methodist church. Casey holds a Masters degree in conducting, has several years of Music Director experience, and has begun the United Methodist Music certification program. To contact, email caseyproch@hotmail.com

In Memoriam

The Rev. Alvin S. Hildebrand died at the age of 89 at St. Anne's Retirement Community on October 10, 2006. He served in the US Army during WW II, graduated from Lebanon Valley College, Bonebrake Theological Seminary, and was ordained in the Evangelical United Brethren Church. He served churches in Ohio and Nebraska. Upon returning to Pennsylvania he taught history at Manheim Central Junior High. He was appointed to serve Schoeneck: Wiest Memorial from 1961 to 1977, when he retired. He is survived by his wife, Elaine Hildebrand, 8 stepchildren, and 12 grandchildren. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Elaine Hildebrand, St. Anne's Retirement Community, 3952 Columbia Ave., Columbia PA 17512. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Paul's UMC Youth Department, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 100 West Main Street, Mountville, PA 17554-1699.

Discipleship Resources

publication # DR489, \$16 (10 or more copies, \$13.60 ea.)

This new resource provides hymn suggestions for all lectionary passages for calendar year 2007, including Old Testament, Psalm, Epistle, and Gospel readings for every Sunday and major observances of the year.

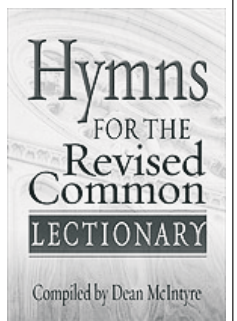
Included are hymn and song recommendations for:

- The United Methodist Hymnal (1989)
- Mil Voces Para Celebrar (Spanish language UM Hymnal, 1996)
- Come, Let Us Worship (Korean-English bilingual UM Hymnal, 2001)
- The Faith We Sing (2000)
- Songs of Zion (1981)

It's presented in a clear and uncluttered, logical, easy-to-read format offering lots of hymn recommendations and will be a welcome resource for pastors, church musicians, worship planners, and others.

More information about the book is available at

http://www.upperroom.org/bookstore/description.asp?item_id=350058



Bishop Matthews celebrates day on Southeast District

By Suzy Keenan

Southeast District clergy and laypersons gathered on October 25 to meet and hear Bishop Marcus Matthews at the Garden Church in Lansdowne.

District Superintendent Susan May welcomed everyone and led devotions. Reflecting on Acts 2 and the Pentecost story, she said, "We were born multilingual, and we have a message that can be understood by all. We talk about learning a new language. The language of Christ is what we need to speak all around."

Bishop Matthews thanked the pastors of the district for being prophetic leaders, and for all the quiet ways in which they make contributions. He acknowledged the learning and listening he has been doing around the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference over the past two years, and announced plans for the initiative to engage all churches in active disciple making.

Reflecting on his visit this summer to the Kumnan Methodist Church in Seoul, Korea, he said, "I wondered what would make a church grow like this. Here is this church with over 120,000 members, and they were one of

the most gracious and warm churches I've ever been in. Their hospitality was unbelievable. They grow because of prayer: they believe if they pray, their prayers will be answered."

Bishop Matthews encouraged the churches to anchor themselves in a spiritual way, so that when we share Christ with another, we do it out of the depth of our faith. He asked clergy and lay persons to model leadership in our churches in a new way, including learning new languages so that we can speak to new populations in our communities.

"Some are not so concerned about our United Methodist membership decline," said Bishop Matthews. "They say, 'Let's not be concerned about the numbers, but whether we have quality people.'" He added, "Well, I think we do need to be concerned with the numbers: it's about saving souls for Christ."

He mourned churches which act like secret societies or clubs, "where if a lost soul comes in off the street, they wouldn't know what to do. We need to treat these persons like a baby in Christ. They may not know where to find a hymn or how to find Matthew in

the Bible. So often we run them off, using terms as if everyone knows what we're talking about."

The success story of a church in the Peninsula-Delaware Conference, shared by Bishop Matthews, is an example of how invitation to membership will make a difference. Over the past year, after the pastor began inviting persons to church membership each week in the Sunday bulletin, they have received more than 63 new members.

Bishop Matthews introduced the Rev. Lillian Smith, director of connectional ministries. She quoted from Acts 2:47, "Day by day the Lord added to their numbers those who were being saved." She announced plans in which the conference will work together with the General Board of Discipleship to resource all congregations to fulfill their mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

"Beginning in January, monthly trainings will be held throughout the conference, and every church is invited," Rev. Smith said. Workshops will include topics such as transformational spiritual leadership, prayer, and developing a ministry action plan



The Rev. Lillian Smith speaks at the Bishop's Day on the Southeast District.

through using the Church Vitality Indicator.

Each church will be expected to take the Church Vitality Indicator, except where a church already has already developed a ministry action plan or has begun work with the Natural Church Development assessment.

For more information on the Church Vitality Indicator, see page 8.

Wesley Heritage Tour



9 Exciting and Educational Days

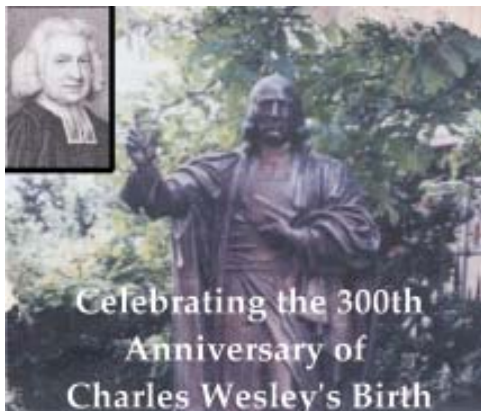
Join Bishop and Mrs. Matthews and the Philadelphia Conference
Depart on August 6, 2007
Philadelphia or Baltimore from \$2298*
*Plus taxes, tips, fees, etc.

Your Journey of a Lifetime Includes:

*Roundtrip Airfare *Week Stay in First Class Midlands Hotel *Daily Breakfast and Dinner (dinner in London on your own) *Deluxe Motorcoaches *Guided Sightseeing *Entrance Fees *Study Guide *Lecture Program

Educational Program:

*Asbury House, Birmingham *New Room and Charles Wesley House, Bristol *City Road Chapel, London *Old Rectory and St. Andrews Church, Epworth *Coventry Cathedral, Coventry *St. Mary de Crypt, Gloucester



Celebrating the 300th Anniversary of Charles Wesley's Birth

For brochure contact the conference office at 1-800-828-9093 or e-mail Carol von Minden at carol.vonminden@epaumc.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS WITH BISHOP MATTHEWS

For Clergy Only

2006

Tuesday, November 28 - Bishop's Advent Day Apart - Bishop Woodie W. White, Bishop in Residence at Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, GA will be our guest speaker and preacher; Aldersgate UMC, Wilmington, DE.

2007

Tuesday - Thursday, January 16-18 - Bishop's Mid-Winter Retreat - Mid-winter Retreat for clergy and spouses - Bishop James R. King, Jr. Resident Bishop, Louisville Episcopal Area will be our guest speaker; Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel, Ocean City, MD.

Lenten Day Apart

Tuesday, February 20, 2007 - Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference will be our guest speaker and preacher.

Bishop's Advent Day Apart

Tuesday, November 27, 2007

For Clergy and Laity

Bishop's Day on the Districts:

January 29, 2007 - **Central District**
February 6, 2007 - **Northeast District**
February 22, 2007 - **Southwest District**
March 1, 2007 - **Northwest District**

Please go to: <http://www.epaumc.org/NewsDetails.asp?pageID=1499> for more information on place and time.

Attention all S/PPRC Chairpersons:

Are you looking for a way to honor your pastor? Be on the lookout for a letter in the mail from Bishop Matthews suggesting that your congregation consider sending your pastor (and spouse) to the Bishop's Mid-Winter Retreat at the Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel, Ocean City, MD. The dates are January 16-18, 2007. Discounted registrations are available the sooner you register.

For a copy of the brochure that you can print out, go to: <http://www.epaumc.org/NewsDetails.asp?pageID=1231>.

For more information or for an additional copy of the letter or brochure, please call the Retreat Registrar, Mrs. Amy Botti, 610-666-1442/1-800-828-9093, ext. 233 in the Bishop's office.