Students find purpose in spring break

By Nikki Ryan*

The sky is bright blue and beautiful and its sun beams down on my pale Philadelphia skin. Surrounded by friends, the warm breeze sends tingles down my spine as sand crosses my path. Sounds like the typical spring break, right? Only the warm breeze and beautiful sky are in the wonderful city of New Orleans. The friends who accompany me were mostly strangers before our 20-plus hour bus ride from Philadelphia. And the sand is pretty much all that remains in the Lower Ninth Ward, where I have come, along with 29 other Drexel University students and staff, to help rebuild.

It is Spring Break, but not the stereotypical one spent on the beach of some tropical location, strawberry daiquiri in hand. It’s Alternative Spring Break—through a trip sponsored by Asbury Protestant Ministry at Drexel—in the still partially deserted city of New Orleans, and in our hands we hold hammers and paintbrushes.

N’Awlins, as the locals call it, is a place of spirit—unbreakable, under-advertised, and underlying spirit. It does not lie only in the vitality and craziness on Bourbon Street, but in every church we have English-speaking Anglos and African-American members.

He continued, “In every bulletin we print, John 6:37 b, which says ‘He who comes to me, I will not cast out.’ We are an inclusive church—no matter who you are, no matter where you come from, everyone is welcomed and loved. Our name, Fuente de Amor, tells of how through us, God’s love and grace flows out into a hurting community. We have an altar call every Sunday, laying hands on people, praying for them, calling them to salvation. Of the members that we now have, most have come by profession of faith; only a handful were transfers from other churches.”

Palm Sunday marked the congregation’s first worship in the new space in Fulton Elementary School auditorium. They previously worshipped in both St. Paul’s and Pearl Street United Methodist Churches. Easter Sunday was the second service that they celebrated in the new facilities. Rev. Iraheta said, “The day before Easter we distributed flyers to invite the community to our service to be followed

continues on page 12

continues on page 13
MA Y 5, 2007
Companions In Christ and The Way of the Child Training Event
A one-day leader training event for the Companions in Christ family of resources at West Chester United Methodist Church, 129 South High Street, West Chester, PA from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The training provides leaders of children and adults with an in-depth experience in Companions in Christ resources and trains them in the distinctive leadership skills called upon when leading formation groups. To register for either training, visit www.companionsinchrist.org and click on the Training Events link. For information, call Jo Ann Higgins at 610-692-5190.

MA Y 8, 2007
Spring Break Junior Day
Gretna Glen

MA Y 9, 10, 11, 2007
Making Disciples Training Series - “Preparing Your Congregation’s Ministry Action Plan” Training with the Rev. Kelvin Sauls
Registration - 8:00 - 8:45 p.m.
Workshop - 8:45 - 4:00 p.m.
Session - 7:15 - 8:45 p.m.
Register online now! Go to: http://www.epaumc.org/manager/1087231

MA Y 11, 2007
Golf Tournament
Camp Innabah

MA Y 13
St. James AMC Dinner Theatre - The “Making a Difference Musical Smorgasbord” 199 East Tabor Road, Philadelphia, PA 19126, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Gourmet meal and spirit food with a Divine Musical and Pianist discource. The Reverend Margaret Marie Powell, Soloist The Reverend J. Harris, Host. There are a total of 75 tickets available at $30.00. Wearing a tuxedo is optional. For more information, contact Suzy Keenan 610-692-8054.

MA Y 15, 2007
Grant due date for grant monies from Urban Global Office of EPA Conference. For more information, contact the Rev. Dr. Dorothy Watson-Tate, 215-687-8054.

MA Y 15, 2007
Women in Professional Ministry will be holding their next meeting on Tuesday, May 15th from 9:30 a.m.-12:00 noon at Asbury UMC in Allentown. We will be meeting in the parlor. All who fit this category are encouraged to attend. We will have a time of wor- ship, fellowship and some business. If you have any questions, please email Rev. Mandy Stanley Miller the co- convener at stanley.mandy@verizon.net

MA Y 18 - 20, 2007
Mountain Bike Weekend
Gretna Glen

MA Y 19, 2007
Camp Fest
Gretna Glen

MA Y 19, 2007
Grand opening celebration.

Johnson-Ugo Foundation Library. 10 a.m. The library is open for business. Training dates have already begun. For more information, call 215-338-5020 or email johnsonugolibrary@yahoo.com. The library is located in the education building at John Memorial UMC, 3117 Longshore Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19149.

MA Y 20, 2007
Open House
Pocono Plateau
JUNE 1 - 3, 2007
Youth Leadership Event
Gretna Glen Camp

JUNE 10, 2007
Patriotic Concert - 7 p.m. Fritz Memorial United Methodist Church, 500 Packer Ave. in Allentown, PA 18107. We are holding our 2nd annual Patriotic Concert in honor of our military past and present. The United States Army will be the Honor Guard and all of the services in uniform will represent. The music will be the church choir, bagpipes, and trumpets. This is a free concert and a donation will be requested for UMCOR Katrina survivors. Last year we received over $400.00 and had over 140 in attendance. For additional information contact, Ray Halisip, Concert Coordinator, rhalisip@earthlink.net.

JUNE 13-15, 2007
Annual Conference - See page 16.

JUNE 15, 2007

JUNE 19, 2007
Day at Camp
Pocono Plateau

JULY 11 - 13, 2007
Youth 2007 SPLAT!
In Greensboro, NC. See page 6.

JULY 15 2007
Youth 2007 SPLAT! - All family music - the doors of Beacon’s Chapel will open for a 3 day event. See page 10.

JULY 16, 2007
Campus Church Conference, in the community and in the church.

JULY 19, 2007
Youth 2007 SPLAT!
In Greensboro, NC. See page 6.

JULY 24-25, 2007

JULY 28, 2007
Phillies vs. Pirates @ 7 p.m. Look for ticket order forms in your church office in early April. A UM Men’s Choir will sing the National Anthem.

AUGUST 3-5, 2007
24th Annual Academy for Laity at the InterContinental Hotel and Conference Center, King of Prussia, PA. The theme for the weekend is “Sharing Our Faith – in the local church, in the community and in the world.” The Rev. N. Lynne Westfield, Associate Professor of Religious Educaion at Drew University and an ordained deacon in The United Methodist Church, will be the keynote speaker. Mark the date on your calendar and register early for the Academy. Details about courses and registration will be available in March on the Church Servant Ministry website: www.ogm-umc.org or the Conference website: www.epaumc.org If you have more questions, you may contact Verna Collier, Dean of the Academy for Laity at ycalliver@comcast.net or 215.850.0797.

AUGUST 4, 2007
A Day of Imagination EPA Confer-
ence Young Adults Academy - Valley Forge www.epaumc.org

AUGUST 6 - 14, 2007
Wesley Heritage Tour with Bishop and Matthew S. Johnson

AUGUST 9 - 10, 2007
The Alpha Training Event. The Alpha course is a 10 week experience used around the world. In thousands of churches in many different denomi-
nations, where people from all back- grounds come together in a welcoming environment to explore what rel-
Evance Jesus has for their lives today. The course is running in a number of EPA Conference churches. The ALPHA course both revitalizes believers and sparks interest in not-yet believ-
ers and your whole church is changed. Learn how to lead this kind of fire and keep it burning— at an ALPHA training event. One is scheduled for the Phi-Delphian area August 9-10. For information or to register call 1-866-US-ALPHA or go online at www.alphaconferences.org

AUGUST 13 - 15, 2007
Healing the Wounds of Racism Work-
shop - Damascus Abbey

AUGUST 17 - 19, 2007
Healing the Wounds of Racism Work-
shop - St. John’s Abbey

AUGUST 18, 2007
Making Disciples Training Series - Ways to Increase Your Church Attend-
ance. See page 10.

SEPTEMBER 8, 2007
Making Disciples Training Series - Christian Education and Spiritual Formation.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2007
United Methodist Day at Hershey Park

SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2007
More information for EPA Confer-
ence Young Adults Academy - Valley Forge www.epaumc.org

SEPTEMBER 26, 2007

NOVEMBER 14, 2007

DECEMBER 13, 2007
Making Disciples Training Series - Accountable Discipleship: The power of small group ministry for all ages. See page 10.

NOVEMBER 27, 2007
Bishop’s Advent Day Apart

FEBRUARY 5, 2008
Bishop’s Lenten Day Apart

EPA Conference Young Adults Academy - Valley Forge www.epaumc.org

www.epaumc.org
Cabinet advocates for chaplains at the Pentagon

By James B. Todd*

On Friday, April 20, Bishop Marcus Matthews and the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Cabinet and family members visited the Pentagon in northern Virginia to meet with military chaplains. Their mission was to find out how both the Cabinet and local churches can be supportive of the work they do and the people they serve.

Supporting the work of chaplains is a particular area of interest and passion for Bishop Matthews, as he chairs the Endorsing Committee of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in Nashville, TN, along with Bishop Gregory Palmer of the Iowa Area. On their way back from the World Methodist Council in Seoul, Korea last summer, Bishops Matthews and Palmer visited United Methodist chaplains in Korea and Hawaii (please see the article about this trip on the EPA website, Military Chaplains, God’s Call – A Special Passion For Ministry, January 25, 2007).

At the Pentagon, Bishop Matthews and the Cabinet were met by Air Force Colonel Mark D. Moore, clergy member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference and until recently, deputy chaplain to the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon. With his position discontinued at the Pentagon due to lack of funding, Mark is looking forward to serving Glassbrenner UMC in Mount Joy on the Southwest District beginning July 1, 2007. Col. Moore was able to give the Cabinet an inside look at the work that goes on in the Pentagon, and to introduce the group to several chaplains.

The Cabinet paid respects in the part of the Pentagon hit by an airplane hijacked by terrorists on September 11, 2001. There is a small memorial site inside that part of the rebuilt Pentagon, with an adjacent memorial site in the process of being built outside. Before September 11, 2001, there was almost no space set aside in the Pentagon for the more than 25,000 employees to be able to worship and pray. As a result of the rebuilding, there is now a chapel. At the time of the Cabinet’s visit, a Roman Catholic Mass was being celebrated there.

Col. Moore listed three ways that congregations, regardless of their views on the Iraq war, can be involved in supporting chaplains and the troops they serve:

1. Find out about military personnel in your neighborhood and community who are deployed overseas, and find ways to offer their families tangible, practical help, such as mowing of lawns and other yard work, babysitting, and house repair and maintenance. Offer to pray with and for these families.

2. Find out about chaplains serving in the armed services, and covenant to pray for them and let them know of your support. The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference has several military chaplains who would love to hear from you! The Conference-Journal can tell you who they are and the District Office can help you to be in touch. Chaplains can also connect congregations to be in touch with service members who might not be receiving cards, letters, and gifts at the same rate as others so that everyone feels supported by the family and friends back home. There are currently 509 United Methodist chaplains who serve in the armed forces, and they need support for the difficult and demanding jobs they do, often in dangerous places.

3. Help to “re-integrate” a service member to society after he or she returns from the battlefield or a difficult deployment. Churches must become “military friendly” in how they reach out to military personnel and their families in empowering, non-judgmental ways. Churches and individuals need to offer a “safe space” to encourage conversation and the processing of often difficult images that are carried home from the battlefield.

A great place to start to reach out to chaplains, military personnel and families is to visit the website of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (www.gbhem.org/chaplains), and to look over the many practical resources available to individuals and congregations. Having passed the four year mark in the current war in Iraq, may we not be “weary in well doing” (Galatians 6:9) as we seek to reach out to chaplains, military personnel and their families back home, especially knowing the sacrifices they have made for all Americans.

* James B. Todd is superintendent for the Southwest District of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

In Memoriam

Rev. Robert Earl Sheesley, Sr.

who died Tuesday, April 24, 2007 at his home in Elizabeth City, NC. Mr. Sheesley suffered from Parkinson’s Disease in his last years and was cared for by his loving wife, Anna Bowman Sheesley. He served as a United Methodist minister in the Eastern and Central Pennsylvania conferences for 50 years. In the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference he served the following appointments between 1945 and 1969: Mt. Hope CT, Mt. Herman 22nd St., Trainer, and Pen Argyl. As of 1/1/1970, he became a member of the Central PA Conference.

Dr. Sheesley is survived by his wife, Anna, and their four children, Bobbi Hunsberger, Renata Sheesley Banks, Robert Sheesley, Jr., and Ruth Goetz as well as a brother, Charles Richard Sheesley. The Sheesleys have nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

A memorial service will be at a later date.

Condolences may be sent to the Rev. Robert E. Sheesley, Jr. at Apt. 611A, 5400 Wissahickon Ave., Phila. PA 19144.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to the American Parkinson Disease Association, Inc., 136 Parkinson Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10305-1425, or to the International Society for Stem Cell Research, 60 Revere Drive, Northbrook, IL 60062.
As they grieved for victims of the deadly shooting rampage at Virginia Tech University, United Methodist leaders condemned U.S. gun laws as lax and questioned why Congress had not already passed a ban on the sale of 19 types of semiautomatic weapons to express their sorrow.

The social action agency of The United Methodist Church also renewed the church’s call for govern-ments around the world to ban ownership of all handguns, assault weapons, automatic weapon conversion kits and weapons that cannot be detected by traditional metal-detection devices.

“The past has been in place, this shooting might have been prevented since one of the guns used by the assailant was a 9 mm handgun,” said Jim Winkler, chief executive of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society.

“We once again call on the Congress to ban all handguns and assault weapons so that our communities will be safer and so that the cyclical violence of gun death will end,” Winkler said in an April 17 statement, one day after the shootings in Blacksburg, Va., left 33 people dead.

A Virginia Tech student identified as Cho Seung-Hui, 23, shot and killed 30 people in a building of classrooms and offices on campus and is believed to be responsible for the earlier killings of two people in a dormitory. Fifteen people were wounded, and the gunman took his own life.

“What is indeed tragic is the fact that this violence is commonplace in U.S. society,” Winkler said. “In 2005, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives reports that there were 10,100 deaths by firearm. This represents an average of four deaths for every 100,000 people in the United States.”


Epidemic of gun violence

The Rev. Bob Edgar, a Methodist president who is the leader of the National Council of Churches, said the Virginia Tech massacre reflects an epidemic of gun violence in the United States.

“My pastor’s heart breaks for the families of those who died today. Edgar said in a statement released April 16. “I pray for them and for those who witnessed the unspeakable violence that destroyed the peace of a spring day on the campus foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains of southern Virginia.”

A former U.S. congressman, Edgar said faith leaders have frequently spoken up about the epidemic of gun violence. “Despite repeated calls from faith leaders, national leaders and the gun lobby across the USA have seen how the epidemic can be prevented in many other countries.”

Edgar pointed to the National Council of Churches’ 1967 policy calling for firearms control and a March 2000 interfaith campaign urging an end to the epidemic of gun violence.

“The escalation of gun violence compels us to call for an end to the manufacture and easy distribution of such instruments of destruction,” Edgar said in 2005, reiterating that statement after the Virginia Tech shootings.

Concern around the world

The Rev. Samuel Kobia, a Methodist president from Kenya who serves as chief executive of the World Council of Churches, pointed to the Virginia Tech carnage shows the impact of gun violence on families and society in general.

“The rampage in Blacksburg offers further indication of too many guns, too freely available in this country and around the world,” Kobia said. Each day, about 1,000 of them die from gun violence and many more are injured.

The R. Rev. Randy Day, chief executive of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, said the Virginia Tech carnage shows the impact of gun violence on families and society in general.

“The rampage in Blacksburg offers further indication of too many guns, too freely available in this country and around the world,” Kobia said. Each day, about 1,000 of them die from gun violence and many more are injured.

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“The rampa...
By United Methodist News Service and Suzy Keenan

**Former bishop of Zimbabwe dies at 64**

Bishop Christopher Jokomo

Bishop Christopher Jokomo, 64, former Episcopal leader for The United Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, died April 7 at his home in Harare. Jokomo served the Zimbabwe Area until retiring in 2004 because of health problems that included a stroke several years ago.

“Jokomo was the right person for the right time” in the early 1990s, when the United Methodist Church and had a major impact on Africa University, said Milton Salley, associate vice chancellor for institutional advancement for the United Methodist-related school in Mutare, Zimbabwe.

“Jokomo was very active in the United Methodist Church and provided leadership on the finance committee,” Salley said.

“When you look at ... the Zimbabwe Annual Conference and the Africa Central Conference, he provided stellar leadership with his focus on empowering people to be all that they can be. His focus on evangelism and partnerships with other annual conferences can be a model which all other annual conferences could emulate. He will be greatly, greatly missed.”

**A lifetime of service**

Born on Dec. 27, 1942, in Murewa, Zimbabwe, Jokomo was ordained deacon by Bishop Roy Nichols in 1976 and elder by Bishop Abel T. Mizowera in 1978.

He served congregations in Zimbabwe and was headmaster and chaplain at the Mutumbara United Methodist Mission School and the United Methodist mission school in Murewa.

He earned a master of theological science degree from United Methodist-related Perkins School of Theology in Dallas and later received an honorary doctorate from Morningside College in recognition of his leadership and educational service to the denomination.

His work on behalf of Africa University led the school in 2014 to name the library the Jokomo/Yamada Library — also named after Ken Yamada, a staff member with the denomination’s Board of Higher Education and Minis- ters.

The Rev. R. Randy Day, chief executive of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, served with Jokomo on the university’s board of directors and on the finance committee.

“Bishop Jokomo had the distinction of presiding over the 100th anniversary of The United Methodist Church in Zimbabwe,” Day said in a statement.

“He was also the episcopal leader who helped to bring Africa University to maturity as a church-related institution of excellent reputation throughout the continent.”

That leadership extended throughout Zimbabwe, according to Day. “The bishop also showed vision and courage in determining to provide HIV/AIDS education to the people of Zimbabwe,” Day said. “Despite both cultural and governmental coolness to the idea, Bishop Jokomo set up AIDS education programs through United Methodist congregations across Zimbabwe.”

“He also worked with the General Board of Global Ministries in initiating a landmark program in the care and education for children who lost their parents to AIDS.”

**Missionary leadership**

Under Jokomo’s leadership, the Dendera Mission in eastern Zim- babwe grew from a center providing basic services for needy people into a laboratory for economic and educational development. The denomination supported a church building, a medical clinic, an ambulance and a school at Dendera.

By United Methodist News Service and Suzy Keenan

The W

**The World in Brief**

- People left homeless by the April 2 tsunami in the Indian Ocean, Java, are receiving emergency aid from United Methodists. The United Methodist Committee on Relief is assisting the World Council of Churches’ Pacific Office in its emergency response. Food has been supplied to 100 families, along with temporary shelter, kitchen supplies and windows and mosquito nets. To support UMCOR’s international work, checks can be dropped in church collection plates and identified as “International Disas- ter Response, UMCOR Advance #982950” on the memo line or mailed to UMCOR at PO Box 9080, New York, NY 10001. Online donations can be made at http://newsgm.umc.org/ umcor.

- UMCOR’s partner Equal Ex- change reaches out to small coffee farmers, like the 1,073 members of Farmers’ Hands in Guatemala. Most of these farmers own less than 2.5 acres each and were unable to compete in the coffee market alone. Each year they struggled just to survive. These farmers formed seven cooperatives and through Farmers’ Hands they have better market alternatives and can sell their coffee for a fair price. Buying fairly traded goods such as tea, chocolate and cocoa through Equal Exchange ensures that the farmers that produced these goods benefit from the sale. Learn more about fair trade on the UMCOR’s Fair Trade web page: http://newsgm. umc.org/umcor/work/hunger/fair- trade. World Fair Trade Day is being marked up on May 12. Use this as an oppor- tunity to learn more about fair trade to support small fair trade cooperatives and what your church and community can do to help these farmers who make the products you enjoy. UMCOR Advance #982920 World Hunger/Poverty, support programs such as fair trade.

- “Water is life here,” said one UMCOR worker of the importance of UMCOR’s water projects in South Darfur, Sudan. UMCOR is rehabilitat- ing water points that have been rendered unusable for a variety of rea- sons. In the next few years, some 250,000 Sudanese will have better ac- cess to water and sanitation through UMCOR’s projects. Access to water has become increasingly important in areas where tens of thousands of people have fled seeking safety, taxing the already fragile water system in now-overpopulated areas. Learn more about what UMCOR is doing to in- crease access to water and other UMCOR programs in Darfur through their latest report, “A Day for Life” in Sudan available online at www.umcor.org. UMCOR Advance #184185.
Youth '07
July 11-15, 2007
Greensboro, North Carolina
Join the 10,000 United Methodist youth and Youth Workers in Greensboro for a “Total Youth Experience.” The week will include “Rock the House” Praise and Worship, splatshops, and more. A bus will be leaving from each district. The costs associated with the event are as follows:

Youth - Costs: $200 - Registration for the event; $ 99 - Hotel (four to a room); $ 60 - Lunch and dinner (for youth); *Breakfast will be provided each morning, at the hotel; $ 75 - Transportation on a coach bus; $434 - Total amount

Adult Chaperones - Costs: $200 - Registration for the event; $ 99 - Hotel (four to a room); $ 110 - Lunch and dinner; *Breakfast will be provided each morning, at the hotel; $ 75 - Transportation on a coach bus; $484 - Total amount

For Youth Leaders:
Step one: Register your youth group for the event. www.youth07.org. Click on Register and pay online
Step two: Reserve your hotel rooms at 1-336-434-5200. Please indicate that you are with the Eastern Pennsylvania Group.
Step three: Contact Jim Wilkin, at the EPA Conference Office, at 1-800-828-9093 to reserve space on the bus.

For Congregations:
Pray for the event and all of the participants. Help financially sponsor youth from your congregation on this trip.
Sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship, this event is held once every four years.
For more information about the event visit the website at www.youth07.org. For more information about the bus trip, contact Jim Wilkin at jim.wilkin@epaumc.org or 610-666-9090, ext. 225.

Peace with Justice Sunday
June 3, 2007
Encouraging prayers for peace, the Rev. Wesley N. Yamaka and Katie Davenport display the paper cranes they make during the Day of Remembrance service at Jason Lee United Methodist Church, Salem, Ore.

For resources for your church go to: www.umcgiving.org

United Methodist Night at the Phillies
JULY 28, 2007
Phillies vs. Pirates @ 7 p.m.
Look for ticket order forms in your church office. A UM Men’s Choir will sing the National Anthem.

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.
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Join Bishop and Mrs. Matthews and the Philadelphia Conference
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Educational Program:
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Celebrating the 300th Anniversary of Charles Wesley’s Birth
For brochure contact the conference office at 1-800-828-9093 or e-mail Amy Botti at amy.botti@epaumc.org.
## What's the fuss about numbers?

by Lillian Smith*

Okay, I'm guilty. It used to bother me to hear “This Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World” emphasis is only about numbers.” The statements bothered me because the goal was only to raise church attendance by at least 10% by 2012. That number is small and possible for all congregations. For some that number is as low as 5 new people for Christ? The goal is a challenge to increase church attendance only by membership. If the belief that the emphasis is only concerned about numbers were true, then perhaps I have been concerned only about numbers.

As I’ve looked at additional numbers, I’ve become even more concerned. In fact, we all probably need to be more concerned about numbers. In addition to worship attendance, the areas of baptisms and professions of faith need to be on the radar screen. Each Annual Conference/Episcopal area is challenged to more faithfully live out the mission of the church – that of making disciples of Jesus Christ. Towards that end, Episcopal Leaders report quarterly on net change in the areas of Membership, Worship Attendance, Baptisms, Small Groups, Professions of Faith and Apportionment Giving. While assembling data related to net change for this annual conference, some of the information was challenging. The numbers on the chart can speak for themselves. Numbers in parenthesis represent negative change.

### Discussion about numbers is not necessarily a bad thing.

The bible recounts numerous stories that mentioned numbers. With five loaves of bread and two fish the disciples fed 5,000 men. (Mark 6:38) Note, any women present weren’t even included in the reported number of persons fed. On the day of Pentecost, the bible reports “Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.” (Acts 2:41) Even a small number of one represents one soul for Jesus Christ. As we look back at what transpired at Calvary, we are reminded that Jesus died for everyone. Why not attempt to share that gift of salvation continue on page 10.

## Preparing Your Congregation’s Ministry Action Plan

### MAY 9, 10, 11, 2007

The May sessions of “Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World” are quickly approaching. During the upcoming sessions, Kelvin Sauls will talk with members of congregational teams about preparing ministry action plans. Congregations are asked to forward to Kelvin Sauls, Betsey Heavner and Lillian Smith (lillian.smith@epaumc.org), copies of their CVI/NCD focus areas or strategic plan highlights. In order for Kelvin and Betsey to adequately prepare for the large volumes of congregations, the deadline for this information is April 30, 2007. Congregations that haven’t completed this process are still encouraged to attend this and all of the other sessions.

The monthly training sessions exist to further equip lay and clergy persons in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference so that congregations can reach, engage and nurture more disciples of Jesus Christ.

In response to the evaluations, future presentations will include more interactive components and give attention to ministry with post-moderns. See page 10 for more information and times. Register online now! Go to: [http://www.epaumc.org/member/NewsDetails.asp?NewsID=12937](http://www.epaumc.org/member/NewsDetails.asp?NewsID=12937)

### Wednesday, June 13, 2007, 7:30 PM

**Annual Conference Session**


Rev. Thomas Albin, Dean, Upper Room Chapel, General Board of Discipleship

## New ministry will reach Chinese communities

An outreach ministry to the Chinese communities of Northeast Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs launched on May 1, 2007 by The United Methodist Church of the Good Shepherd. The idea for the Chinese Ministry came about after a workshop on “Assessing Your Community for Ministry”, presented by the Rev. Dr. Alfred S. Maloney, Superintendent of the East District of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Following the workshop, John Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church, under the leadership of Pastor Rick Andrews and Lay Leader Yvette Trotman, sought to respond to the concerns of the community about its transition. The results of their assessment showed that the community was becoming more diverse, with the Chinese population leading the percentage of growth among the diverse groups. The East District was able to develop some understanding of the Chinese population in the Northeast Philadelphia area with the support and assistance of Asian-American and Pacific Islanders Ministry, a division of The UM General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). The Good Shepherd UMC, where the Rev Susan C. Czarnecki is pastor, will support this outreach as a ministry of the church. Other UMC churches in the immediate area will provide support through their role as advisors. Good Shepherd is hiring the Rev. Quibi She Peng, who was referred by GBGM’s Asian-American and Pacific Islanders Ministry to lead the Chinese Ministry Development Project. In this position, Rev. Peng will assess the community for ministry to the fast-growing Chinese population with a goal to nurture a congregation who will worship in a Chinese dialect.

To help facilitate the momentum of the Chinese Ministry Development Project’s growth, an advisory board representing a cluster of United Methodist churches was organized by the Rev. Dr. Alfred S. Maloney Superintendent of the East District of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. This Board will serve to encourage and support Rev. Peng and Good Shepherd with prayer and guidance. The East District sees this ministry as a great witness to the Annual Conference theme of “Making Disciples for Christ” in other ethnic populations within our boundaries.
Every Sunday should be a little Resurrection

The Tully Principle of 52 Equal Sundays

by Lovett H. Weems, Jr.

After Easter, attention in the church is likely to turn toward plans for the summer; such plans often include a “change of pace” with adjustments in worship times, number of services, types of music, etc. These changes may seem appropriate at first since fewer people may be attending, and clergy and staff will be joining parishioners in taking annual summer vacations. Not so, says the Reverend Bill Tully, rector of St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church on Park Avenue in New York City.

When Mr. Tully came to St. Bart’s in 1984 from St. Columba’s Church in Washington, DC, he was faced with the task of either helping the church to grow or helping to close it. The 1,100 seat sanctuary was attracting only 125 people each Sunday. The church was continuing to operate only by drawing from endowment funds. “When I arrived, I was pretty honest with the congregation,” he recalled. “I said, ‘Watch how churches today.’” Tully introduced his new congregation that all living things need to grow – a daunting idea in a congregation that had been living on endowment and with no real notion of proportional giving, tithing, and stewardship.

The turnaround of St. Bart’s over the following years is testament to Tully’s vision and leadership. Out of that, a “change of pace” has developed several principles for growing churches. One of them is the concept of “52 Equal Sundays.” He contends that it sends the wrong message when you announce vacation schedules for some or all of the summer months. “When people come to your church, you want to be doing your best work always.” The goal is 52 equal Sundays.

“Quit messing with the schedule,” Tully says. “Take ‘summer’ off your calendar. Provide the same, high-quality worship schedule every Sunday of the year.” The goal is to have the kind of powerful worship every Sunday that will give the greatest opportunity to reach any person who chooses to worship at your church that day. A summer break can allow all the vitality of the year to dissipate. Summer visitors then get liturgical leftovers rather than the vitality of a service that carries on from one week to the next.

Every Sunday should be a little Resurrection, Tully reminds us, so we put out our best offerings – worship, education, hospitality – every Sunday of the year. Therefore, if the first day a person attends your church will be the best we can make it. For many people, the experience of worship will be the dominant reason they come back again and again. If the service is done sloppily or the instruments are out of tune or lectors and lay readers and clergy speak in monotone, seekers won’t come back, says Tully. Every single Sunday must reflect the quality we expect on our “most important” celebrative Sundays.

But what about clergy and staff vacations, you may be asking. They continue as usual, but with “52 Equal Sundays” firmly in place, no longer is the worship experience of congregants and visitors shaped by vacation schedules. Things may be done differently and involve different persons on some Sundays, but the care and attention that goes into the worship planning and execution will be such that the worshippers will have an experience equally as vital as they would at any other time of the year. It does mean that planning will be required, but all vital worship requires extensive planning.

“Guest who needs the church may happen to come in the door on any given Sunday,” says Tully. “And, we always have to be ready and at our best every Sunday; even in the middle of the summer when our rector is on vacation.”

If this is a new concept for you and your congregation, this may be an opportunity to think about it and have conversations with others to see how it might take shape in this direction this summer. It is a chance to remind all worship leaders at the beginning point of worship planning is always the worshipers and their needs, not the interests and needs of the professional or volunteer leaders.

To read more about the principles used at St. Bart’s, but each to their website at www.stbarts.org. To read more about the principles used at St. Bart’s, but each to their website at www.stbarts.org.

Order now!

Making Disciples DVDs

Transformational Spiritual Leadership
Parts 1 and 2, with the Rev. Kelvin Sauls
(Set of 2 DVDs)
$20 x 2 = $40

Acts 29 Prayer Encounter
with the Rev. Terry Teykl
$10 x 2 = $20

TOTAL $ 60

Plus Shipping $ 4.00

TOTAL $ 64

Make checks payable to:
EPA Conference, and mail to: Video Order, Communications, P.O. 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0820.

Give sails to your church with prayer

By Lilian Smith

“Prayerlessness is a characteristic of many churches today,” the Rev. Terry Teykl wrote in his book, Prayed on or Prayed for. “Many churches have no prayer room, no prayer coordinator, no prayer meetings, little prayers for the city and little or no prayer for the pastor.” He continued, “A prayerless church is like a sailboat without sails. The Spirit’s wind may be blowing, but there are no sails to catch it.”

Prayer, the one conduit to access God’s life with God, here are some books by Terry Teykl:

http://www.epaumc.org
Matching Grants offered for advertising

United Methodist Communications offers $1 million in matching funds annually to local churches, districts and conferences to help establish an advertising presence in their community. Matching funds can be used for placing television, radio, cinema, outdoor media or a combination of these media types.

Grant applications are accepted three times a year for media placed in coordination with the national cable TV schedule: Lent, Back-to-school and Advent.

Next Application Period
- May 1 through June 1 for Back-To-School and/or Advent 2007
- ON AIR MEDIA SERVICES

Through Igniting Ministry Media Services, a local church can access the expertise of Igniting Ministry’s full service advertising agency for all their media strategies, solutions, buying and placement requests at no charge. This service is available to anyone placing any type of media.

Granting Grant and non-Matching Grant alike.

APPLY ONLINE
A convenient online application form is available during each application period. Once an online application is started, it cannot be saved for later completion.

APPLY OFFLINE
If you prefer to work from a hard copy, an application form is available with full application instructions.

AWARD PROCESS
Grants are awarded, to the extent of available funds, based on optimum media coverage, giving the best reach and frequency throughout the United States. We encourage applicants to cluster with other churches in your media market to pool resources and make an effective buy with a single application. A list of churches, districts or conferences in your media market is available upon request. If you have any questions, please contact the Media Grants and Services office at 877-281-6535 or IMmedia@umc.org. To apply, go to: www.ignitingministry.org.

GBOD Announces Discipleship University, New Church Goals

The General Board of Discipleship is launching a Discipleship University. Karen Greenwaldt, GBOD general secretary, made the announcement to directors at their meeting March 14-17. This initiative is designed to take the lessons learned in the agency’s Romans 12 Project and to bring them into a two-year, academy-style learning experience for church leaders. Some of what the agency is currently doing will move into Discipleship University (DU).

The Romans 12 Project has been identifying best practices in congregations, and DU will move these into hands-on experiences in worship, small groups, spiritual leadership, and stewardship.

DU is patterned off the Upper Room’s Academy for Spiritual Formation. “GBOD is focusing much of its work on the renewal of existing churches,” Greenwaldt said in her opening re-port. The agency will continue this focus through the 2008 General Conference.

Greenwaldt also announced that an inter-agency group called the Path One Team for New Church Starts has set a goal of having 1,000 church plant-ers start 650 churches in the United States by 2012. The team will create a system whereby the plants will be supported in order to prevent burn-out. Media and marketing resources will be provided and internships will connect new planters with existing planters. In other business, the board learned of work by the worship staff to create supplemental liturgies that would respond to requests from ra-cial/ethnic groups as well as the emerging church community. These would not replace the current official ritual and resources.

Lending a hand in the name of Christ

By Hilda Campbell*

Twenty-four members from Eastern Pennsylvania Conference spent Holy Week in Gulfport/Biloxi, Mississippi as Volunteers in Mission (VIM). While thinking of Jesus preparing for His walk, we were walking the streets viewing the devastation remaining from Hurricane Katrina. Although the work was much to be done, the trip brought many positive experiences that brought joy to the givers and the receivers.

The team, primarily from Janes Memorial United Methodist Church, coordinated by Rev. Dr. Albert Mosley, went to assist in the rebuilding of homes destroyed by Katrina. We worked on houses, painting, installing light fixtures, smoke detectors and an entire kitchen. Many of our team spent time cleaning debris from the yards, cutting down bushes, scraping iron railing and preparing the exte-rior of the house for the paint crew.

The crew was comprised of people young and old, male and female, skiers and snowboarders, with one goal. Even though it has been 18 months since the hurricane, there are so many families who have not yet moved back into their resi-dences. The joy was evident as we helped families rebuild their homes.

Our work included placing insula-tion underneath the home of Mrs. Barbara Payne. Since building code now requires that dwellings must be built on piers 8 to 10 feet above ground. She joined us for church both nights and fed the crew lunch on Thursday. She shared the story of how her husband died one month before the hurricane, and how diffic-ult it had been for her to dispose of his belongings. When the water came it washed everything away and, she thanked God that her struggle to part with his precious items was over. The Rev. Dr. Albert D Mosley preached on Thursday from Psalms. His goal is to increase awareness of the overwhelming need for hurricane recovery and to encourage others to take an active role in the rebuilding efforts. On Thursday night some of our team went to New Orleans to view the dam-age in the lower 9th Ward. It was hor-rific to see the total devastation that remained; it was as if the storm had been yesterday.

On Friday, at the end of our final workday, the team stopped by the beach for pictures in the sand. We were in agreement that our VIM team wants to return to help soon, and we want to encourage other churches to form VIM teams to do the same. Much help is still needed.

*Hilda Campbell is director of Human Relations and Leadership for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.
What’s the fuss about numbers?

continued from page 7

with as many people as possible? Challenges are also opportunities! Though some of the numbers are down, we have a unique opportunity for ministry! God is calling us to new levels in ministry. God is calling us to share the good, good news with everyone! Death, drugs, abuse, illness—nothing has the last word in our lives. The resurrection of Jesus Christ attests to that.

Change is already happening. It is time to celebrate. Some congregations have already reported a 10% increase in church attendance. According to the Rev. David Polker, Effect UMC has reported a 21% increase in church attendance within the last year and now has a new members class of 12 people. Other congregations have reported an increased level of excitement in ministry God is doing amazing things in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. The Rev. Thomas Jackson reported that Tindley Temple has reported 10 new members this year. Tindley Temple is working towards reaching 170 new souls for Christ in 2007.

Is all of the growth attributable to the monthly trainings? Of course not. While the growth is not due entirely to the monthly sessions related to “Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World,” we pray that the training, encouragement, prayers and support offered through this year-long emphasis will help each congregation thrive in its ministry of making and nurturing more disciples of Jesus Christ. Ready for some more good news! More than 200 out of the 462 congregations in the annual conference have participated in the ‘Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World’ training sessions. Additionally, 81 out of the 462 congregations have activated the Congregational Vitality Indicator. According to Betsy Heavner, CVI Coordinator, GBOD, the 18% level of early participation of congregations is substantial, especially as the process is not mandatory yet highly recommended.

What’s the fuss about numbers? Continued from page 10


JUNE 13-15, 2007

At Annual Conference in Philadelphia during evening Celebration of God during Annual Conference in Pennsylvania, May 9 at Trinity UMC in Lickdale; May 11 at Tindley Temple UMC in Philadelphia. Registration: 6:00 - 6:45 p.m. Worship: 6:45 - 7:15 p.m. Session: 7:15 - 8:45 p.m.

Ways to Increase Your Church Attendance - WEBCAST TRAINING 9:00 AM: Small Congregations 11:00 AM: Medium Congregations 1:30 PM: New Church Starts 3:30 PM: Large Churches Training by Rev. Rene Perez and Rev. Dorothy Watson Tatem

AUGUST 24, 25, 26, 2007 - Christian Education and Spiritual Formation – Saturday, one location, Congregational Leaders Team Sites and times to come.

OCTOBER 13, 2007 - Faith Sharing - Saturday, one location: “Using Communications in Evangelism Recruitment” - location to be determined. 9:30 AM - 4:00 PM - Training by Rev. Larry Homitsky, Director of Connectional Ministries, Western PA Conference. GBOD’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, GBOD is located at 1908 Grand Ave. in Nashville, Tenn. For more information, call the Media Relations Office toll free at (877) 899-2700, ext. 7017.

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“Igniting Ministries Training”

NOVEMBER 3, 2007 - Stewards of God’s Gifts David Bell 6:00 PM - 6:30 PM - Worship 6:30 PM - 8:15 PM - Training by the Rev. David Bell, Director of the Center for Christian Stewardship of The United Methodist Church

DECEMBER 13, 2007 - Accountable Discipleship: The power of small group ministry for all ages 6:45 PM - 7:15 PM - Worship 7:15 PM - 8:45 PM - Training by Steve Manskar, GBOD

What’s the fuss about numbers?

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Men from across the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference gathered at the United Methodist Men’s Convocation held at Pocono Manor, March 23 to 25. Nearly 50 men, including six youth, came together for a retreat with worship, singing, speakers, and workshops.

The officers elected include Ross Brightwell from Jarrettown UMC, president, Walter King from Camphor UMC, vice-president, Tom Hurd from Bethel Hill UMC, treasurer. Conference Lay Leader, Dr. Mary White, met with the convocation on the evening of March 24, to help organize the EP A Conference UMM. “We met this weekend to re-establish the United Methodist Men of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. In so doing, we elected officers, and began a network with district UMM local presidents, and connections with district lay leaders and local churches,” said Dr. White.

She added, “The goal for UMM is that they become spiritually motivated and bring other men to Christ. We also want to build relationships among adult men, as well as young adults, and youth to nurture each and make a stronger men’s ministry within the local churches.”

Upcoming events planned for United Methodist Men include UM Night at the Phillies on Saturday, July 28, where a UM Men’s choir will be featured singing the national anthem.

Spring is when young people sign up to attend summer camp at:

Camp Innabah * Pocono Plateau * Gretna Glen * Carson-Simpson Farm

Please help us make it possible for any young person in the conference to join these children for a week of Christian camping in the beauty of God’s creation, having fun, making friends, and finding new and renewed life in Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, some families can’t afford the cost of summer camp for their children. We believe that no child should be denied the opportunity to attend a week of Christian camp because of the inability to pay. A week at one of our conference camps costs about $300. Won’t you, your church, or a group in your church help ensure that every young person has the opportunity to attend camp by making a donation to the conference Camping Scholarship Fund?

Donations (made payable to Eastern Pennsylvania Conference) should be sent to: Camping Scholarship Fund, Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, P.O. Box 820 Valley Forge, PA 19482-0820. Scholarship funds may also be sent directly to any of the camps. Donations to the camps may be made by check or major credit card. For more information, please contact Jim Wilkin, Director of Camping and Nurture Ministry, 610-666-9090 ext. 225, jim.wilkin@epaumc.org

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Youth Leadership Retreat

June 1-3, 2007
Gretna Glen, Lebanon, PA

“Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity.” - 1 Timothy 4:12

Dr. Stephen Gallaher and Salt ’n Light Youth Ministry will teach young people and adult workers how to energize and grow the ministry in your local congregation.

The retreat is designed for teams of adult workers and young people who are leaders in their youth group. The cost is $100 for the adult worker and $60 for each youth. The cost includes the training, meals, accommodations, and materials.

For more information and registration form go to: http://www.epaumc.org/NewsDetails.asp?pageID=1744 or contact James Wilkin at 1-800-828-9093, ext. 225; jim.wilkin@epaumc.org

Ross Brightwell (left) has been elected president, and Walter King (right), vice-president, of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference United Methodist Men. They stand with Dr. Mary White, Conference Lay Leader, who helped organize the UMM Convocation.
Alternative Spring Break
continued from page 1

Street, but within every local. This incredible gift is in every person who has been born loved one, or a former life. The people of New Orleans have a spirit that can only be envied—that is until you become a part of their lives.

After seeing the aftermath of Hurrican Katrina on the news 19 months ago, it seemed like something far away, place full of heartache and nightmares. When I was granted the opportunity through Asbury to help relieve New Orleans over the break, I jumped at the chance. Though I was wary as to what it was going to be like, I was curious as to what it would be like more than a year-and-a-half later. I didn’t know what to expect, being that there had been little news footage on the area since a few months after the hurricane hit.

When we first arrived in the city, I opened my eyes, still groggy from sleep, and honestly thought I was still dreaming. Kelly Pillard, a fellow student volunteer described what we saw, “It was incredible—in a depressing way. It’s hard to believe that it’s still like that down there.”

I shared the same disbelief, thinking about how it had been 19 months since the hurricane. The hub of the city, much of the community was still in shambles. The different areas ranged from what looked like war zones to “third world” countries to ghost towns. We looked at the buildings that were boarded up and barely standing, trying to decipher what they used to be like.

After entering the area where our group of 28 students and two staff members—members including Pastor Tim Emmett-Rardin, Asbury’s director—took a new town that was being built by Habitat for Humanity and where we asked around all of their neighbors, he began pointing at all the houses on the street saying, “They’re dead. He died. She died. Dead. Dead. Dead.” Just the way he said it was crazy to me, so I asked him why he was 48 there. He told me, “I’ve lived here all my life. This is all I know. Where else am I supposed to go?”

As he said that, I flashed back to my own neighborhood where I had spent my whole life so far. I couldn’t imagine my house, neighbors, even street signs all gone with nothing left to take their place but a trailer that would soon be revoked.

The rest of our week was spent sharing stories and smiles with the citizens of New Orleans. People would pass by our work site, begging them car horns and yelling ‘God bless y’all’ out their windows. I realized how meaningful it was to everyone that we were there, especially after hearing the tragedy of Katrina Peters (one of the homeowners), who rode out the storm on her roof clinging to her daughter.

Courtney Peterson, another student on the trip, explained how being part of the rebuilding efforts affected her, “The part that hit me the hardest was when (Ms. Peters) said that it meant so much to her that we were there because she thought that everyone forgot about her and everyone else who was affected by the hurricane.”

The week I spent in Louisiana helped more than just the people of New Orleans: it helped me grow as a person. I didn’t get my tan from a lounge chair in the Bahamas, but from the beach in Acapulco, but from the future homes of people who lost everything they owned in a matter of hours. I only learned how to use power tools, but how to use my heart and soul to help others. I didn’t just taste fried alligator in a shock in itself, being that I am a picky eater. I tasted the culture of New Orleans. I was able to witness my 29 peers, and newest friends, pour sweat, hope and love into a new home for a family who had lost their own.

I have memories that were not robbed from nights of drinking. I have a new appreciation for construction workers. I even have biceps now. But most importantly, the greatest thing I have gained from this experience is the spirit found within the people I encountered—the volunteers and staff at Habitat for Humanity who hope to build 250 homes this year; in Alana, the woman who’s flooring system we installed who called us all her children; and in my peers who gave up a week of relaxation.

My new friend Courtney summed it up best when I asked if she would ever go back. She replied, “Definitely! I think it’s important to show the people there that we have not and will not forget about them!”

I have learned that the same spirit of perseverance and hope lives within us all. We only have to believe in it— and be willing to use it to help those in need, whoever we are.

For more information about the trip, or about Ashley Protestant Ministry at Drexel University, contact Pastor Tim Emmett-Rardin at 215-895-2522, ashley@drexel.edu or www.asburydrexel.edu.

“Nikki Ryan, a sophomore at Drexel University majoring in psychology, is from Edison, N.J.”

United Methodist @ Forty

Three clergy members of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference have completed a manuscript on the history of The United Methodist Church. The book, to be published by Abingdon Press early next year, is titled, United Methodism @ Forty. A History of The United Methodist Church, 1968-2008, to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the denomination.

The authors are Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., John G. McEllhenney, and Kenneth E. Rowe, all retired Church, 1968-2008. stall, titled, United Methodism in Pennsylvania, 1968-2008

Charles Yrigoyen, Jr. is a graduate of Franklin and Marshall College and Drew Theological School, was awarded a Doctor of Divinity degree from Allbright College in 1981. He has served as local church appointments since 1957 (Charlestonport, Asbury

Allentown, associate, Gladwyne; Philadel-phia; Associate-Stephen’s, Amsterdam; and West Chester). From 1981 to 1986 he was Acting Chief Ex-ecutive Officer at the Methodist Hospi-tal in Philadelphia. For several years he taught United Methodist history, doctrine, and church appointments at Eastern Baptist (now Palmer) Theological Seminary. He resides at Cornhill Manor.

Kenneth E. Rowe is a graduate of Drew University, Yale Divinity School, and Rutgers University. He earned his Ph.D. from Drew University in 1969. After serving Gethsemane, Philadelphia, he was the Methodist Librarian and Professor of Church History at Drew University from 1971 to 2000. The author of several books and articles in periodicals, his most recent publication is co-editor of The Method-ist Experience in America: A Sourcebook. He lives in New Hope.

United Methodist STUDENT FORUM, MAY 24-27

United Methodist college and university students from the Eastern PA Con-ference are invited to participate in the upcoming United Methodist Student Forum, May 24-27, 2007, at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA. The Forum is a leadership development conference of the United Methodist Student Movement, planned and led by students for students. This year’s theme is “Break Forth: Shine Like the New Day” based on Isaiah 58:9-12.

For more details about the conference, check out the website at www.umms.org/studentforum. Final registration deadline is April 24—some scholarships may be available, though churches are strongly encouraged to sponsor their own students.

For more information about UMSM and registering with the Eastern PA delegation, contact the conference UMSM coordinator, Pastor Tim Emmett-Rardin at pastortim@drexel.edu or 215-895-2522.

STUDY BOOKS — WITH DISCUSSION GUIDES

BY GERALD H. HILE

SEE HOW JESUS HANDLED REJECTION! - $9.95

Originally published 2004 by WinePress Publishing

Recently published 2006 in Indonesia by MajestyBooks

Publisher

"Here is a kind of realism that remains optimistic in a world that does not always welcome Gospel." - Bishop Neil L. Irons

See how Jesus used Power! - $9.95

(The Miracles of Christ & the Compassionate Use of Power)

Originally published 2002 by WinePress Publishing

Study Guide Supplement by Rev Nancy Sturdivant FREE from

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"A study guide companion to: ""Here is a kind of realism that remains optimistic in a world that does not always welcome Gospel."" - Bishop Neil L. Irons"
by an Easter Egg hunt. The attendance for the service was 119 people, up from about 40 the week before. He added, “It is exciting to see the growth of the church as people connect, share, and learn about the message of the gospel.”

The first area we began to focus upon was the use and development of real estate holdings. The ASRT can pull up alongside a ministry to assist Carson-Simpson Farm with the planning for a new location. The ASRT also can help the ministry think creatively and intentionally about the best ways to manage and use their property and assets in the service of our common mission “to make disciples for Jesus Christ.” Is there a church that is about to move or close? Perhaps keeping the property and assets available for use by others will be a better way to fund the long-term mission of the church. Is there a parking problem? Perhaps there is a way to partner with local municipal and commercial bodies to create parking space. Are there major demographic changes coming to a community? Perhaps there are people and resources in our connection that can help a church or agency anticipate and plan for what is ahead.

The first group we began to work with was United Methodist Neighborhood Services (UMNS), headed by Dr. Mary White. From its building on North Broad Street in Philadelphia, UMNS has ministered among the poor for decades in an impoverished area. However, with Philadelphia undergoing something of a renaissance in recent years, the area around UMNS is rapidly changing and “gentrifying.” Property values are rising, with developers moving in to create new commercial and residential properties.

ASRT has met with leaders and board members of UMNS, as well as with other local social service agencies (the Salvation Army, local shelters, etc.) to help them begin thinking about how they will adapt their ministries to the changes already happening. Should they consider moving? Refocusing their vision and mission? Redevolving the building to new and multiple uses that could aid in funding future ministry?

As a result of these efforts, UMNS has now embarked on a strategic planning process to answer these sorts of questions, and we envision funding their vision and mission into the next few decades.

Another wonderful asset recently added to our team came in the person of Mr. Russell Alexander, a lay member of Arch Street UMC and a CPA who spent many years in real estate management and development. He has already worked with conference leaders to assist Carson-Simpson Farm negotiate a lease for an unused part of their property, and create an income stream to fund the ministry of camping there for years to come. Russ is excited to use his gifts and experience to assist churches and church-related ministries in thinking about the uses of their property to benefit the work of ministry. A possible project might be to do an inventory of all the property holdings on a single district, and see if there are ways to maximize the effective usage of them within and across the connection.

And there are other ways the ASRT can help local churches. Within our umbrella is the UM Foundation, led by Stacy Martin, which manages more than $27 million in investments for some 135 churches in the Philadelphia area. If a local church suddenly receives a bequest and does not quite know how best to manage that money, there is a way to partner with local community foundations (which may have a higher risk of cost of insurance – medical, property & liability, Worker’s Compensation, etc.). – is a critical problem facing all of us in the connection. Recently a task force has been assembled, led by Conference Treasurer and Administrator Moses Kumar to try to “think outside the box” about how to address these issues, to keep costs down, and free up resources for ministry. These are just some examples of the thinking that the ASRT is engaged in – trying on the ground – and who knows what great ideas or “out of the box” ideas about how to connect resources for ministry.

Well, the administrative side of the church is very much a part of the calling and equipping of ministry! If you have gifts you might like to offer, or “out of the box” ideas about how to address the challenges before us, please contact the author of this article at waynenunc.pastor@verizon.net. We want to find ways to connect our gifts and expertise with the needs of ministry on the ground – and who knows what we can do together to encourage our ministries when we work together?

Fuente de Amor UMC

continued from page 1

by Joseph F. DiPaolo, ASRT Chair

Administration: Necessary Evil or Real Ministry? The ASRT and You

Maintaining and managing property. Organizing and staffing committees. Handling annual and capital fundraising campaigns. Negotiating complicated insurance policies. Managing investments for millions of us in ministry – clergy and lay – and these sorts of tasks are often perceived as “necessary evils” that impinge upon the time we need for the “real” work of ministry in Christ’s name. Yet consider for a moment that among those people Paul listed himself as an “under the Holy Spirit to lead and empower the church – right alongside prophets, teachers and miracle workers – are “those with gifts of administration” (1 Corinthians 12:28, NIV). Administrative work is very much an integral part of ministry – for in the end, it is all about how we lead, equip and organize the saints to fulfill their calling! And that is a task that needs to be fulfilled both at the local church and the conference level.

The Administrative Support Resource Team, or ASRT, is one of five resource teams for the denomination’s 2000 Strategic Plan, and reaffirmed by the 2006 Structure Review Task Force. The ASRT brings together under its umbrella all those bodies and agencies that have an administrative function within the life of the annual conference: Board of Trustees, Equitable Compensation, CCPA, Communications, Board of Pension & Health Benefits, Eastern Pennsylvania-Pennsylvania Conference, Western Pennsylvania Conference, and the Umwala UM Foundation, and Archives & History.

Back when it was first created, the ASRT got off to an uncertain start, never quite understanding its purpose and usefulness. It went “dormant” for several years until 2005, when it was revived, becoming the “think-tank,” bringing together resources and talents that could think creatively about solutions to problems confronting our churches and related ministries. In the spring of 2006, the following statement of mission and purpose was adopted: The Function of the ASRT will be to bring together the various boards and groups under its umbrella for fulfilling the following goals:

1) Consider ways in which the various resources/areas of expertise can be coordinated and create networks to benefit our common mission and ministry to make disciples of Jesus Christ and demonstrate God’s love.

2) To work in partnership with local churches and conference-related bodies to maximize the effective use of their property and assets to empower mission and ministry.

3) To work in partnership with conference boards and agencies in their particular support roles to the clergy and laity of our local churches.

In addition to the statement, guiding principles were adopted that emphasized our role as partners with (rather than directors of) the bodies in question. Too often, our churches and agencies act in isolation from each other, and we don’t take advantage of the connections – above all, of people sitting in the pews of our 450+ congregations who have expertise and experience in construction, investment management, insurance, and so much more. Why not see how we can bring those resources to bear on the challenges before us in partnership with each other?

The first area we began to focus upon was the use and development of real estate holdings. The ASRT can pull up alongside a ministry to assist Carson-Simpson Farm with the planning for a new location. The ASRT also can help the ministry think creatively and intentionally about the best ways to manage and use their property and assets in the service of our common mission “to make disciples for Jesus Christ.” Is there a church that is about to move or close? Perhaps keeping the property and assets available for use by others will be a better way to fund the long-term mission of the church. Is there a parking problem? Perhaps there is a way to partner with local municipal and commercial bodies to create parking space. Are there major demographic changes coming to a community? Perhaps there are people and resources in our connection that can help a church or agency anticipate and plan for what is ahead.

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Locate clergy on Honorable Location

Your help is needed to locate clergy who are on Honorable Location. In order for their status to continue, clergy on Honorable Location are mandated by The Book of Discipline, Paragraph 360.2 to submit to the Conference Relations Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry a copy of their annual report to the charge conference of the local church in which they hold membership.

Again, according to The Book of Discipline, Paragraph 360.2, “Failure to submit a report for consecutive years may result in termination...” Clergy on Honorable Location are mandated by The Book of Discipline, Paragraph 360.2 to submit to the Conference Relations Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry a copy of their annual report to the charge conference of the local church in which they hold membership.

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A Day of Imagination
For EPA Conference Young Adults (College age through 32)
August 4, 2007
Young adults are invited to participate in an exciting new venture in ministry with “A Day of Imagination.” The Rev. Chris Brady, a youth adult, will be the moderator for the event. This event for young adults will be held on August 4, in conjunction with the Academy for Laity.

Young Adults from across the sixteen counties of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference will gather at the Sheraton Park Ridge Hotel and Conference Center in King of Prussia to dialogue on issues of faith and to develop strategic points in developing a plan for igniting new ministries that might change the landscape of our Christian conference ministry with, to, and by young adults.

Chris has served as a Director of Community & Economic Development with the YMCA, as a pastor and minister in churches in the EPA, North Carolina and Mississippi annual conference, and as a professional and in the church. He has a BA degree, summa cum laude, in Philosophy and Political Science from West Chester University, M.Div degree from Duke University Divinity School, and will be awarded a Th.M. this fall in Evangelism, Leadership, and Wesleyan Studies.

Young adults are encouraged to read Life on the Vine: cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit in Christian Community by Philip D. Kenerson prior to attending the event. It is available at Cokesbury Bookstore and at www.cokesbury.com

Improvisation and Imagination
Ignite Young Adult Ministry
By Chris L. Brady*

...Now to him, who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3: 20-21 (NRSV).

Recently I had the pleasure of listening to the rhythmic sounds of the Buena Vista Social Club, a Cuban jazz group, which mesmerized me by the beauty of their multi-dimensional compositions. Their unique sound was filled with the ever-changing rhythms of Afro-Cuban, Brazilian, classical European, and American-influenced beats, forming a melodic phenomenon called Latin Jazz. Latin Jazz is an amalgamation of borrowed influences of sounds brought together that are pleasing to the ear, but more importantly healing for the soul. This music is a lot like ministry should be...drawn from our experiences and healing for the soul. What sets the Buena Vista Social Club apart as unique and appealing is that its music is imaginative. It’s not like the neatly packaged product that encourages impoverished imaginations. Yet, I believe that God is calling generations of Christians to renew their imaginations so that they might become effective faithful witnesses of the love expressed by Jesus.

During “A Day of Imagination,” we will focus on the social and spiritual questions most urgently facing young adults...finances, violence, relationships and our beliefs. How does the culture in which we live affect the way we understand what it means to be a Christian in real and practical ways? How can we develop habits and imaginations that will allow for spiritual growth and provide ways of dealing with forces that may be destructive and bring about suffering? What can we do in the church that will contribute to our growth and development?

How can we be salt for developing risk-taking ministries in our own unique communities of faith? Through this conference, we hope to instigate a renewed vision of Young Adult Ministry and be a model in discipleship and ingenerating ministries will be ignited and renewed.

Join us for “A Day of Imagination,” August 4, 2007 and lend your voice to the conversation. It has been my experience that God with our imaginations for what life in the church, for our communities and in the world can be for all of God’s creation.

*The Rev. Chris L. Brady is a clergy member of the EPA Conference and has served several congregations as pastor of discipleship and young adult ministries and in campus ministry. He currently serves in extension ministry at Duke University as Special Assistant to the Dean of Duke Divinity School

Academy for Spiritual Formation Grants available:
The Academy for Spiritual Formation is a two year journey with Christ that meets 5 days each quarter for a total of 40 days per year. The Upper Room Ministries and the Office of Human Relations and Leadership are offering matching grants for two participants from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

The total cost for the experience is $5,500, which covers expenses for registration, housing and application fee. Grants of $4,000.00 each ($2,000 from Upper Room and $2,000 from EPA Conference) are available for two persons selected for the honor.

Participants will need to pay the remaining $1,500, plus books at an additional $300.00. Participants must provide their own transportation. The opportunity is open for clergy and layperson.

The training will be held in Marriottsville, MD (near Baltimore, MD) at Bon Secours Spiritual Center. For more information please contact Rev. Hilda M. Campbell, hilda.campbell@paumc.org or 410-666-9090, ext. 224.

24th Annual Academy for Laity
August 3-5, 2007
Sheraton Park Ridge Hotel
Conference Center
King of Prussia PA

“Sharing our Faith—in the Church, in the Community, and in the World”

Basic Course for beginning Christ Servant Ministers
New Advanced Courses for CSM Certification in Leading, Communicating and Caring
Open to all laity in Eastern PA Conference
The Academy for Laity is sponsored by the Conference Board of Lay Ministry in coordination with the Conference CSM Work Team
Registration Brochure is now available at: www.pabcm-umc.org/csm

For Information: Contact Verna Culliver, Dean of the Academy for Laity at: wculliver@comcast.net or 215 855 0797

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JUNE 29, 2007

Youth in grades 9-12 (or ages 14-19) are invited to join an EPA Conference-sponsored trip to Washington, D.C. to attend the General Board of Church and Society located in the United Methodist Building on Capitol Hill. Come learn about how violence affects not only your life but that of others around the U.S. and around the world. Come hear about the issues, how to use your voice and your faith to bring justice to “the least, the last and the lost.” You will be inspired and strengthened by this enriching and empowering experience. The seminar will be both discussion and presentation; this is both interactive as well as experiential. In addition, there will be a half-day community-based experience.

Housing will be provided by Trinity Lutheran Church on Capitol Hill. There is no cost to participants other than for their own snacks or souvenirs. Transportation will be provided. Limited to 25 participants. For more detailed information contact Peggy Wood at (610) 524-5935 or Peggy.wood@verizon.net

Why hire the EPP-UM Foundation as the Church’s Investment Manager

by Stacy Martin*

The few past articles have shared the Foundation’s Board’s responsibilities and processes as well as the types of services offered and how those services are customized to meet the needs of the local church. I would like to detail what the investment options available to the local church for any of their investments, both permanent or temporary funds.

Funds Offered:

- US Large/Mid Cap Value
- US Large/Mid Cap Growth
- Small Cap Index Fund
- International Fund
- Fixed Income Fund (average duration of 3-4 years)
- Short Term Income Fund (ranging from 1 - 3 years in duration)

The Foundation has hired investment firms to actively manage all the funds except the small cap index fund. The investment firms have policy guidelines and objectives specific for each of the funds they manage. They are responsible for making investment selections within those guidelines, and, staying in compliance with our United Methodist social principles. That is to say that they buy the stocks and bonds held in the fund. Their performance is measured against appropriate benchmarks set by the Foundation’s Board and reviewed frequently by the Board and its Investment Committee.

Manager of Managers:

This results in the Board serving as the ‘Manager of Managers’ for each of our clients. By serving as the Consultant, the committee at the local church can focus on their ministries rather than trying to find the best large cap manager or fixed income manager – the Foundation’s Board does this for you already.

All of the investments are high quality, striving for the highest return while turning the lowest risk. Including investments in the international and small cap asset classes actually reduces the risk of a portfolio by diversifying the investments to markets beyond the larger companies in the United States.

Which Funds to Use:

Each of our clients buys units of the funds listed above to suit their asset allocation needs – that is how much should be invested in stocks and how much in bonds. The Foundation works with the Trustees/Finance/Endowment Committee to determine the best allocation for their pot of money. This is based on the ministries to be supported, the size of the fund, the level of additions or contributions into the fund, and the risk tolerance of the Committee.

The Foundation has established a recommended allocation of the equity funds, as follows:

40% Growth Fund
40% Value Fund
15% International Fund
5% Small Cap Index Fund
100% Equity Allocation

We believe that this equity allocation provides the appropriate level of diversification given current market conditions. The Board is also responsible for changes to this allocation should conditions warrant.

The investment offerings above can be applied for designated or undesignated funds. Further, we have many resources available to the local church from sample endowment policies, spending policies and gift acceptance policies (how a gift is evaluated prior to acceptance by the church). Please feel free to contact me at the Foundation office for more information about our services.

Stacy J. Martin is the Executive Director of the Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula United Methodist Foundation. Email: stacy.martin@eppumc.org 610-629-9693 x247
Living Connected as God’s People: “Nurturing the Connection”
The Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference
June 13-15, 2007 at the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center Hotel

Kickoff Luncheon Keynote Speaker
Amazing Grace Author Eric Metaxas

On Wednesday June 13, 2007 at 11:30 AM, Eastern Pennsylvania Evangelical Connection will host an Annual Conference Kickoff Luncheon. The keynote speaker will be renowned humorist and author Eric Metaxas. Eric is the author of Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery which is a companion volume to the movie Amazing Grace by Bristol Bay Productions. The book has appeared on The New York Times best seller list. Eric has also written Everything You Always Wanted to Know About God (But were Afraid to Ask) and thirty children’s books. Eric’s writings have appeared in The New York Times, Atlantic, Washington Post and many other publications. He has also written for Veggie Tales and Rabbit Ears Productions earning three Grammy nominations for Best Children’s Recordings. Since writing Amazing Grace he has been interviewed in World Magazine and appeared on C-Span’s Book TV as well as Hannity and Colmes. For more information check his website www.ericmetaxas.com

The luncheon will be held in the Philadelphia Ballroom North of the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center Hotel at no cost to registered delegates and $15.00 for non-guests. All lay and clergy delegates will receive an invitation in early May. Please RSVP by May 22. For more information contact Bob Ladd at 717 269-5508 or jbohladd@ptd.net.

Celebrating 100 Years of Social Action

In 1907, a group of Methodist Episcopal clergy met with President Theodore Roosevelt to express their concerns about the enormous suffering among the working class, particularly the horrors of child labor. Shortly thereafter, they formed an organization that has continued to live at the crossroads of church and society today: the Methodist Federation for Social Action works for peace, women’s rights, worker’s rights, and full inclusion in the church, heeding the words of John Wesley: “The Gospel of Christ knows no religion but social, no holiness but social holiness.”

The Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter of MFSA will host an anniversary dinner beginning at 5:00 PM on Thursday, June 14, at the Annual Conference. The celebration will feature the Rev. Dr. Larry Pickens, General Secretary of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. An attorney as well as a pastor, Dr. Pickens is a former member of the Judicial Council and was a delegate to past World Methodist Conferences in Nairobi and Singapore. He is a dynamic speaker who has served in a number of cross-racial and cross-cultural settings. This is an opportunity not to be missed! Registered Annual Conference members may attend this special event by contacting Jenny Smith at 3302 Kristin Street, Norristown, PA 19401. Please include your address and phone number on the check. For more information, go to: www.mfsawebo.org.

Youth at Annual Conference

Friday, June 15, 2007

Sheraton Philadelphia City Center, 17th and Race Streets, Philadelphia, PA - Beginning with Praise and Worship at 8:00 am and ending with the Service of Ordination, 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm - with programs specially tailored for Middle and High School Youth, and including Teens in Jeans choir that will sing for the Annual Conference, and featuring a dynamic speaker: Andrew Zirschky, who has been named a Timothy Scholar by the UM Foundation for Evangelism. Registration of $40 includes two meals.

Youth Day Highlights:

The Rev. Mary Ann Moman
Associate General Secretary of the Division of Ordained Ministry of the UM General Board of Higher Education and Ministry will lead the Bible studies at Annual Conference. Rev. Moman is responsible for the overall administration of the work and programs of the Division of Ordained Ministry, the Ministerial Education Fund, the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools, and the Commission on Theological Education. She serves as the liaison with United Methodist seminaries and provides support for the University Senate.

Andrew Zirschky

Andrew spent the past decade as a youth and college minister at churches in Idaho, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and has spoken widely at youth events in a half dozen countries including South Africa, Mexico and Mozambique. He’s currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Practical Theology with a youth ministry emphasis at Princeton Theological Seminary and has been named a Timothy Scholar by the United Methodist Foundation for Evangelism. In his spare time he enjoys snowboarding, white water rafting, and hanging out with his wife and 4-year-old son.

“100 Teens in Jeans” Choir

Youth are needed to sing in the “100 Teens in Jeans” Choir. The “100 Teens in Jeans” Choir will sing at the 221st Annual Conference and Youth Day at Annual Conference on Friday, June 15, 2007.

Rehearsals will take place at the following locations on these dates:
• Hempfeld UMC, Lancaster (SW) - May 20, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
• Lehman Memorial UMC, Hatboro (E) - May 22, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
• Hopewell UMC, Downingtown (SE) - May 19, 10:00 a.m. - NOON
• Eastwick UMC, Philadelphia (SE) - May 17, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
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• Eastwick UMC, Philadelphia (SE) - May 17, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

What to bring:
• Bible
• Notebook
• Financial donation to benefit Youth Service Fund
• A wrapped surprise to be auctioned to benefit the Youth Service Fund. (The mystery gifts should be fun and in good taste.)

For more information, complete brochure, schedule and registration form, go to: http://www.epaumc.org/NewsDetails.asp?pageID=1743