Peace Action leads way to change

by Suzy Keenan*

Violence in its many forms rears its ugly head in the cities and through the countryside of eastern Pennsylvania as well as across the nation. Bishop Marcus Matthews, determined to raise awareness of the situation, has called United Methodists to lead the way toward peace.

In a statement he issued on September 21, Bishop Matthews called for Peace Action: End Violence Now, as a way for persons to pray, act, and advocate for peace on October 6. During Peace Action, held at Tindley Temple United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, Bishop Matthews, pastors, youth, lay persons, and organizers prayed and committed to advocate and act for peace. During a Peace Fair, out on the street in front of the church, organizations handed out information on aspects of violent crime: handgun proliferation, domestic abuse, drug and gang violence. Organizations like United Methodist Women, the Church and Society Work Team, Women of Strength, and Cease Fire PA made resources available and offered practical action steps. Children made pinwheels and talked about being winds of change, while youth signed a banner with pleas and prayers for peace.

In the sanctuary, “Prayers for Peace” offered moments of quiet and inspiration. Among the speakers was Ann Jacob, a high school student and president of the Conference Council on Youth Ministries, who offered a prayer for peace. Michael Nutter, democratic candidate for Mayor of Philadelphia, urged the crowd to “pay attention to elected officials and make sure they are serving you. If we want to stop or at least lower the rate of violent crime, focus and be attentive to what your elected officials are doing.” He added, “Children need a school program; even more they need adults in their lives. How can we make progress if we are stuck in a world of ignorance, in a world of poverty. Let’s take care of our children and we will take care of our future.” Among those to offer prayers for peace and for solutions were Dr. Mary White, conference lay leader, Rev. Andrew Foster, Dr. Vivian Nicks-Early, dean of the School for Social Change, Rev. Donna Jones, and Rev. Sandra Steiner-Ball. Shkera Alston and Eastwick “Hands of Praise” offered prayers of dance set to music. Exiting to the sidewalk in front of the church, speakers and attendees made a public witness. Bryan Miller emphasized the importance of getting stopping the flow of illegal handguns. Founder of Women of Strength Chester Chapter, Nicole Cogshell spoke of efforts to make peace in the streets, and youth from Godman and Hancock St. Johns United Methodist Churches shared the impact of churches ministry on their lives.

Rev. Lillian Smith, coordinator of the event and Conference Director of Connectional Ministries said, “It was an exciting day. People prayed. Individuals danced. Key leaders shared information about how participants could be God’s change agents. If you missed the rally you can still participate in peacemaking. Every congregation is needed in this effort. Peace begins with you and me and we have as our example the Prince of Peace.” She urged all churches to contact legislators and to access resources for churches available from the General Board of Church and Society. “Suzy Keenan is the Director of Communications of the Easter PA Conference.”

*Suzy Keenan is the Director of Communications of the Eastern PA Conference.
NOVEMBER 3, 2007

NOVEMBER 9-11, 2007
234th Annual Conference with the Holy Spirit - The EPA Renewal Fellows will be at their annual conference at Refreshing Mountain Camp in Stevens, Pennsylvania (near Lancaster). This year's theme will be “Fresh Manna for Front Line Christians.” Opportunities include a main conference for adults, a Youth Retreat and Children's Ministry. Come as many days as you are able to refresh for the work the Lord has called you to. “Saturday Only” pricing is available. For more details, please see our website www.tabar-umc.org/ renewal2007.

NOVEMBER 9-11, 2007
Encounter 2007 - Your Youth Conference at Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center from Friday-Sunday. Cost for this event is only $65, which includes lodging, meals and all activities. Please note that we are looking for interested adults to serve as chauffeurs (optional events) for Encounter. Please contact Pastor Kris Perry at 570-355-2474 or 570-661-4730 for further information, or for Dyers. See page 12 for more information.

NOVEMBER 10, 2007
Start a Holiday Scrapbooking - In our designer handbag sale. Sale between 2 PM to 4 PM at their main store. For more information call Cash & Carry. Gall Armstrong, 484-680-2807. NEW LIFE UMC, State Road & Upper Darby.

NOVEMBER 12-14, 2007
THE 2007 PENNSYLVANIA STATE PASTORS' CONFERENCE -at The Hilton Harrisburg and Towers. The theme is “Being Christian in a Hi Tech World.” The cost for this conference is $150, if postmarked beginning October 1, 2007. You can register on line by going to www.pachurches.org. There is also a link on this site to reserve a room at the Hilton Harrisburg. If you have any additional questions, please contact Rev. Dennis Keen, the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference representative to the PA Council of Church. (215) 355-2474 or dkeen@stluth.org.

NOVEMBER 16-18, 2007
Fall Children’s Retreat - For Grades 3 & 4 - Come to camp for an exciting weekend. The theme is “Go to the Rock” - Lead me to the rock that is higher than I,’Psalm 61.2. Meet up with your friends from summer camp, or make new Plateau friends. For 3-6 graders. Join us for crafts, games, singing Bible stories. Special 10:00 AM - 3:30 p.m. Lunch is provided. Ann Marino, Gail Armstrong, 215-925-7788 or email office@historicstgeorges.org. Historic St. George’s United Methodist Church, 235 N. Fourth Street, Philadelphia, PA. NOVEMBER 18, 2007
Sanctuary Hall Scrapbooking - First Memorial United Methodist Church will celebrate its 150th anniversary, and Herbert Skeete, former bishop of the EPA Conference (1980-1988) will speak at the 10 AM worship service. The theme for this special celebration is “Past Worship for Present Challenges.” First Memorial UMC, 235 N. Fourth Street, Philadelphia, PA.

NOVEMBER 25, 2007
United Methodist Student Day - For more information and to order tickets, go to: www.umc.org/umcconf. NOVEMBER 26, 2007
Bishop’s Advent Day Apart - Aldergate UMC, Wilmington, DE. Dr. Lovett H. Weems, Jr. will be the speaker.

DECEMBER 7, 2007
First Suburbs Summit: Harnessing Community Leadership for Community Change at Philadelphia University, 3201 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia University Marching Band! Additionally, a FREE buffet lunch is provided: ALSO University of Delaware, 12 March 1947-2007, 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. Contact: Jones Memorial United Methodist Church, Dr. A.D. Moseley, Senior Pastor, 215-844-5964.

DECEMBER 17, 2007
Be An Amateur History Detective: Living History. North Penn Library at Historic St. George’s United Methodist Church, 235 N. Fourth Street, Philadelphia, PA.

DECEMBER 8, 2007

JANUARY 15 – 17, 2008
Mid-Winter Retreat - Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel, Ocean City, MD. Dr. Paul Njii will be the speaker. See page 12.

JANUARY 21-25, 2008
Luncheon Club Church Event - “World Making a World of Difference.” The first 300 registrants will save $50 off the $300 registration fee. See page 8.

JANUARY 26, 2008
Tools for Ministry - training for church leaders (Finances, Trustees, SPRC, Church Council, Lay Leader/Member, Safe Sanataries, Young

Bishop Marcus Matthews
South Carolina
Ileana Rivera
Philadelphia Area Bishop
Director of Communications
www.epauc.org

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Bishop issues call to action

To the 250,000 United Methodists in The Philadelphia Area of The United Methodist Church from Bishop Marcus Matthews:

The City of Brotherly Love is bleeding. Last year, 406 persons died by gunfire in Philadelphia. It’s the second highest gun mortality rate in the nation. The City of Brotherly Love is bleeding.

The causes of this plague of violent crime are complex and multifaceted: proliferation of handguns and illegal guns; poverty; especially children growing up in poverty; unemployment; violence in schools; illiteracy.

The solutions will need to be multifaceted also.

Pray. Believe in the transforming power of prayer.

Act. Be an oasis for a change: safe haven for children and youth; a place where families can come and find counseling, homework help, and positive hopeful activities; a place where people of all ages can come to find a supportive and loving community and faith in Jesus Christ to guide their hearts, minds, and souls.

Partner with schools to help children get on track with the basics of reading, writing, and mathematics – skills that will help them get a good job and be a positive contributing member of society.

Advocate. Become informed about issues and where candidates stand on issues and vote. Urge elected officials to take action on these other issues:

- Fund equitable education so that each child has a chance to have a productive and fruitful life.
- Support faith-based funding and partnership for programs like the home school program at the North Philadelphia Cluster of United Methodist Churches and the Curfew Program in the Kensington Area Ministry.

Through these actions, we can love life back into our neighborhoods: "Pay close attention now: I’m creating new heavens and a new earth. All the earlier troubles, choices, and pain are things of the past, to be forgotten. Look ahead with joy. Anticipate what I’m creating: I’ll create Jerusalem as sheer joy, create your people as pure delight. I’ll take joy in Jerusalem, take delight in my people. No more sounds of ‘weeping in the city, no cries of anguish.’” Isaiah 65: 17-19.

We United Methodists of The Philadelphia Area of The United Methodist Church - 1,000 United Methodist Churches with 250,000 members - can pass on to the world through prayer, action, and advocacy.

Faith in Action: Stop illegal gun trade in Pennsylvania

By Bryan Miller*

Anyone living in any of the cities and towns across Pennsylvania knows the Keystone State is suffering from a rising tide of gun violence.

Philadelphia lost 406 residents to homicide in 2006 and will exceed that number this year. York endured a week two summers ago when 6 were shot and killed. Harrisburg’s per capita rate of gun homicide is higher than Philadelphia’s. Many of the cities in the state face record rates of handgun homicide.

For every gun death, there are 2 to 4 more wounded.

It doesn’t have to be this way. New York City, with five times Philadelphia’s population had fewer gun homicides in 2006. New York City has among the lowest per capita rates of gun violence in the country.

The difference is gun laws. Several states place barriers to the movement of handguns from legal sale at gun shops to illegal street sale. Federal data consistently cites these states as those with the lowest rates of gun violence in the country: NJ, NY, CT, MA, CA, HI.

Simply and sadly, Pennsylvania’s weak gun laws fail to impede the flow of illegal handguns into cities and towns. Criminal entrepreneurs - gun traffickers - actively create and maintain handgun trafficking networks.

Trafficfickers, recognizing demand on the street for handguns among those who cannot acquire them legally, fulfill it by hiring stand-ins to make purchases at gun stores. Those ‘straw buyers,’ who can acquire the required federal background checks, are critical to the illegal gun trade, as traffickers cannot pass checks.

In typical straw purchases, the trafficker and his stand-in enter the gun shop together. The trafficker chooses handguns and the straw buyer fills out the background check form. Then the federal Insta-Check system, based upon incomplete information in the FBI’s national database, completes its process. Given no disqualifying information (felony, domestic violence or certain types of mental health records), the straw buyer purchases the chosen guns. Normally, this takes only minutes. The trafficker and straw buyer exit the store. The latter receives a service fee and the trafficker has handguns with no record connecting him to them.

Straw purchases are seldom of single handguns, as traffickers need to sell multiple units to profit. This is enabled by the lack of limitation in Pennsylvania law on the numbers that can be purchased at one time, allowing traffickers to profit from the movement of multiple handguns.

What if police recover a handgun from crime and trace it back to a straw buyer? Typically, straw buyers claim that they either lost the guns or they were stolen from them. In either case, current Pennsylvania law imposes no responsibility or liability.

Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) evidence shows clearly how active and menacing this highly efficient illegal gun trade is. Pennsylvania is an anomoly among major states in the Northeast. Unlike New Jersey, New York, Connecticut or Massachusetts, the vast bulk of crime guns recovered in Pennsylvania were originally purchased in-state. ATF data also demonstrates that, whereas the majority of crime guns recovered and traced in other major Northeast states were originally purchased dozens of miles from their use in crime, those in Pennsylvania were typically recovered within ten miles of point of purchase - right around the corner.

Pennsylvania’s illegal handgun trade fuels the criminal market. These illegal handguns are the ones sold on street corners to gangs, across kitchen tables to drug dealers and their protectors and on playgrounds to violent teens. These are the handguns used to wound and maim and kill.

But, again, it doesn’t have to be this way.

So, what can be done? There are two measures currently being considered by the Pennsylvania General Assembly that can place barriers to the flow of illegal firearms: HB-22, a bill to limit individuals to the purchase of no more than one handgun A Month, and HB-29, a bill to require reporting to law enforcement of lost or stolen firearms.

Neither places an undue burden on law-abiding gun owners. One Handgun A Month allows individuals to buy up to thirteen handguns per year and places no limit on rifles and shotguns.

Currently, a trafficker needs only a single straw purchaser to obtain multiple handguns. Under One Handgun A Month he would need multiple straw buyers to obtain the same number of handguns. This would dramatically increase the time, risk and cost of trafficking and diminish the supply of illegal handguns on the street.

Virginia enacted a One Handgun A Month law in the mid-90’s and has enjoyed a year-by-year decline in interstate trafficking.

A requirement that lost or stolen firearms be reported to police is common sense. Law enforcers need to know of loose lethal weapons. And, such a requirement will inhibit some straw buyers.

What can you do? You can talk to church members, family friends, neighbors and coworkers about the illegal gun trade and strengthening Pennsylvania gun laws to combat it.

You can advocate for justice by going to www.HandgunBanInver, where you will find multiple ways to act and help, including sample letters to legislators, a petition, and more. You can contact your legislators to tell them reducing gun violence is a top priority, that you support immediate passage of HB-22 and HB-29, and that you expect her/him to push for it and to vote for it. Find contact information for legislators at www.legal.state.pa.us.

Bryan Miller is Executive Director of Causelife N.J. He may be contacted at (609) 371-3084 or em@causal.org

* Bryan Miller is Executive Director of Causelife N.J.
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• Directors of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries have abruptly dismissed the mission agency's chief executive. The decision not to re-nominate the Rev. R. Randy Day came Oct. 9 upon recommendation from the board’s personnel committee during the board’s annual meeting in Stamford. The dismissal was effective that day Directors then approved the appointment of an interim chief ex-

executive responsible to a United Methodist Bishop Felton May immediately filled that role. Day who took office Jan. 1, 2005, had led the Board of Global Min-

istries for nearly five years. Bishop Joel Martinez, the board’s president, said in a statement that the change “does not diminish our appreciation for the many talents and skills of Randy Day but indicates that direc-

tory is looking for a different style of administrative leadership to take us into the future.”

• Harriett Olson believes personal devotion and a call to action are a good mix. That was one of the reasons she was attracted to United Methodist Women and involvement of the executive of the Women's Division, United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, which serves as UMW’s administrative arm. Olson, 49, who was unanimously elected to that posi-

on Aug. 17 by the division’s board of directors, began her new job on Sept. 4. She succeeded Jan Love, who is now dean of the Candler School of Divinity at Emory University.

• Youth in Birmingham hope a penny saved is a life saved through their donation of 1 million pennies to Africa University. Three acutely Health Sciences in Mutare, Zimbabwe. The "Penny Project" is an interfaith effort to collect one penny for each of the 23 million Africans living with HIV/ AIDS pandemic. “We call it the day God showed up in the dining room,” said youth pastor Jeff Nelson, refer-

ling to a brainstorming lunch meet-

ing the day the idea was born. Since summer 2005, the youth have spon-

sored a penne pasta supper, a World AIDS Day dance, a "Cent-O" de Mayo celebration and other events.

• When St. Paul United Methodist Church in Searcy, Ark., became the church home to six families of chil-

dren with disabilities, the congregation’s leaders were deter-

mined to make the families’ time at church one of renewal, worship and support. The Jonathan’s Child minis-

tory has blossomed into a mission supporting the needs of families with disabled children. The ministry’s name comes from 2 Samuel 4:4, which describes how Jonathan’s small son was left disabled from an injury sus-

tained during a fight between the church to First United Methodist Church, Bir-

ningham, Mich., who decided to try making a difference in Africa’s HIV/
Filipino church ministers to destitute families

by Kathy L. Gilbert*

Philippines (UMNS) and Vincent, both age 12, were born in a cemetery in Manila, and until recently lived among the tombs with no hope of a future beyond the mausoleum walls. They were no different than the thousands of other children wandering around the 11 million residents of Manila until a United Methodist pastor saw their potential. The boys now live at the Gilead Center, a residential shelter for street children supported by the Women’s Division of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries.

The children are grateful for small things: a roof over their heads when it rains, food on the table when they are hungry and a warm bed inside a safe room at night. “I was not afraid there because it was where I was born,” Kent said of his life in the cemetery. “I like the climate, you could never be clean there.” The Rev. R. Randy Day, then top executive of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, and Rebecca Asdellio, also a board staff member and a native of the Philippines, traveled to Manila in July to visit several ministries that care for street children and the poor.

Life in the cemetery

Manila North Cemetery is the city’s largest cemetery. It is also where many of the poorest residents live.

Everywhere in the cemetery are signs of life. Scraps of wood and tin become walls and roofs, resting on and between the tombs. Clotheslines heavy with wet jackets and shirts are draped over trees. Children’s clothes are strewn from walls. A basket lined with rags and shaded by a torn umbrella contains a worn child's toy. Dogs and cats weave their way through the tombs searching for overlooked bits of food. Men, women and children walk dispassionately among graves. Joseph Saniego was washing a few clothes when leaders from the Board of Global Ministries, Bishop Solido K. Toquero of the Manila Area and others from the Philippines Annual (regional) Conference came to see where Kent and Vince’s life began. “I make 30 pesos a year to take care of a few of the tombs,” Saniego explained. He was buying water from his neighbors who have built homes on top of the graves. It costs 4 pesos for a bucket of water. Saniego said he lays a mattress on top of a tomb at night but that “the mosquitoes are very bad.”

Ministry among the tombs

The Rev. Allan D. Casuaro started Sta. Mesa Heights United Methodist Church out of a carport and has built a congregation among the people of North Manila Cemetery.

“We are a very mission-minded congregation,” the 200-plus members sponsor children like Kent and Vince so they can climb out of poverty. One woman who has six children said one of her children is sponsored by a church, which means he gets fed, clothed and can attend school. After seeing where and how the child lived, Asdellio said she was touched by the pastor’s devotion to the people living among the tombs. “Clearly he cared for them; he wanted them to know Christ and experience grace,” said Asdellio. “Besides their spiritual needs, he was eager to provide the people access to resources that the church is able to provide — like making it possible for some of the children to attend the church’s day care/nursery/kindergarten school.”

A balm for children

The Gilead Center is a clean, green space outside the city. Children play on swing sets and eat at long tables inside a warm, tasty-smelling dining room. The center is surrounded by mango and citrus trees.

The Rev. R. Atienza, the United Methodist deaconess and director of the center, explains the name Gilead comes from Jeremiah 9:17, “There is no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why have the people of my nation not been restored?” The Gilead Center is a place for healing. Children living in a future that has been difficult circumstances, said Atuel. Most of the children in the center came from North Manila Cemetery or from Rizal Park, a large public park inhabited by many homeless people. Local United Methodist churches and the Board of Global Ministries send money to support the children Currently, 11 girls and 16 boys live in two dormitories. Bright pink walls, bunk beds and bed coverings make the Ethel Lou D. Talburt Shelter for girls a cheerful place to live. The shelter is named for the former wife of retired Bishop Melvin G. Talburt, who wanted to establish a safe haven for girls living on the streets.

The blue walls and bunk beds of the Kapitahan Shelter are just as inviting to boys. Atuel proudly talks about Jennifer Gamutia, a former shelter resident who received a nursing assis tant certificate from Asian College for Science and Technology last March. “It was a dream come true for me and my mother,” Jennifer said. “I stayed in Gilead Center for Children and Youth Welfare for three years where she finished her secondary education.” Atuel said. “It is truly wonderful when we are given glimpses into the fruits of our labor after these years. The center takes in children ages 7 to 13 until they are ready to be transferred to high schools. Parents visit their children as often as possible, and the church also helps parents develop skills that can provide sustainable incomes. Atuel said graduates of the center are working toward high school diplomas, higher education degrees or certifications. “Isn’t it wonderful what the church can do?” she asks.

*Gilbert is a United Methodist News Service news writer based in Nashville, Tenn. She compiled this report based on her visit to the Philippines in July.

The World in Brief

• A $4 million project for continued tsunami recovery work in Indonesia has been approved by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries and social sciences, peace, and the program will also cover the more than 1000 asylum seekers and refugees — mainly from Zimbabwe. UMCOR will help with basic services, food, medical and material support as they settle into permanent homes. UMCOR is helping to provide temporary accommodations until permanent shelter becomes available. The program will provide food, diapers, clothes, and other basic supplies for infants whose mothers have no financial resources. Medical services will be provided as needed and the program will also cover the cost of expensive prescriptions. About 22 residents arrive each day and two to three dozen infants stay there on any one given time. Accommodating the growing number of refugees daily is placing a strain on its available resources and supplies.
Feeling stuck? Clergy coaching can help

by Julia Lendzinski*

In today’s world of multi-taking, pastors are often called upon to be all things to all the people of their con- gregations: pastor, preacher, counselor, administrator, financial wizard, perhaps even plumber. According to the Rev. J. Val Hastings, Jr., “the same old, same old just doesn’t work anymore. In a time when clergy is expected to multi-task, answer phone calls and emails all day, they start to lose focus. They get off the path they are intended to walk on.” Rev. Hastings is a member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference appointed to extension ministry as executive director of Coaching4Clergy.

Whereas a coach is not called upon to save a church, they are there to empower pastors and bring out the best of their gifts and talents so they can strive to do God’s work.

“What I do is empower pastors so that they can empower others; it’s a domino effect,” explains Rev. Hastings. When coaching, he asks questions that encourage clergy to dream and set goals. “What do you really want? What’s next, past this problem? What do you want to be able to say about your church three months from now that you can’t say today?” The aim of these questions is to shift their thoughts from current challenges to their desired vision.

A coach can be used at any time, such as when a pastor is just starting out, or when a church is going through difficult changes or transition. Even if everything seems to be going well in a church, a pastor might feel like he needs more focus, and so seeks out a coach.

“Many pastors do not have a confidante when they have concerns, doubts, worries, and challenges. When they have a coach, they have a trusted advisor, someone who they can talk to about their concerns,” Rev. Hastings states.

“Sometimes we feel stuck in a place that won’t allow us to do what we need to do,” says Blue Mountain pastor, Rev. Rene Perez, Director of Outreach and Church Multiplication for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. “At those times, a clergy coach can help a pastor realize that he or she is able to fulfill his or her purpose, and can help guide them back to the right path.”

“When things are challenging, a coach reminds me of my values and priorities,” said Rev. Perez. “I talk to a coach to help get focused, to dig through the mess, and to bring out the answers.”

Clergy coaching started in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference about six months ago. Now there are more than fifteen trained coaches working in the conference. Rev. Perez pointed to the wisdom of Ephesians 4:11-12: “It was he who ‘gave gifts to people,’ he appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers. He did this to prepare all God’s people for the work of Christian service, in order to build up the body of Christ.”

For more information on finding a coach or becoming a clergy coach, contact Rev. Rene Perez, 800-828-9063, ext. 218 or rene.perez@epaumc.org, or contact Rev. J. Val Hastings, Jr. at jval@coaching4clergy.com.
DISCIPLE Bible Study transforming lives

By Bishop Richard B. Wilke

Every day, I hear reports about how DISCIPLE Bible Study is being expanded to reach more people. This is exciting, because already nearly 2 million people have graduated from the program since it was released in 1987.

As many United Methodists know, DISCIPLE provides an in-depth study of Scripture designed to transform churches and encourage people to live as disciples of Christ. Many DISCIPLE graduates have even entered the ministry.

The four-part series covers the Old and New Testament, and has been used in more than 10,000 congregations in 30 denominations. It is now available in French, German, Czech, Korean, Spanish and Chinese—both Mandarin and Cantonese dialects.

Here are a few ways DISCIPLE has been reaching even more demographic

Stewards of God’s Gifts: Beyond Fundraising

Every Christian is called to be a good steward of the possessions he or she has been given. “All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.” Acts 4:32 NIV. The November Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World session on stewardship is brought to you in conjunction with the Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula United Methodist Foundation.

The Rev. David S. Bell was the speaker for the Foundation’s workshop held in March 2006. For those of you that missed the program, this is your opportunity to catch up as the program will continue the conversation around giving and dealing with the obstacles we experience. If you were able to join us for the first session, you know how wonderful David’s presentations are so please come again and bring fellow church members. The topic this year is “Stewards of God’s Gifts: Beyond Fundraising.” In this program you will:

· Discover some “best practices” for effective year-round stewardship

· Engage in peer learning by discussing various case studies

· Build on the assets of your congregation and your personal attitude of generous giving

The date is Saturday, November 3rd and our host is Washington Crossing UMC, 1895 Wrightstown Road, Washington Crossing, PA 18977. Registration begins at 5:00pm, worship at 6pm and the session at 6:30. To register, please go to the EPA website (www.epaumc.org or call the Conference Office 800-828-9093 or me at 484-782-847).

About David Bell

David Bell leads Covenant Quest, a professional consulting practice providing strategic services across North America. David’s experience includes leadership development, organizational visioning, fiscal matters and non-profit fundraising. He creates hope by providing practical consultation and motivational seminars for faith-based organizations. He encourages leaders to discover their vital role in enabling communities of faith to embody a generous culture.

David is a magna cum laude graduate of Drew Theological School and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies and Secondary Education from The College of Wooster. David and his wife, Ethel, reside in Brighton, Michigan with their two children, Allison and Andrew. In his leisure time, David enjoys discovering local restaurants, playing with their children, watching the backyard birds, walking along the shoreline with his wife, and searching for antique bargains.

David currently serves as Vice-President of Stewardship with The United Methodist Foundation of Michigan. He is President of the Board of Directors of the Ecumenical Stewardship Center. He is an active member of The Alban Institute of Fundraising Professionals, Christian Stewardship Association, and the National Association of Church Business Administrators.

www.epaumc.org

Rev. David Bell

David is a magna cum laude gradu- ated from Drew Theological School and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies and Secondary Educa- tion from The College of Wooster. David and his wife, Ethel, reside in Brighton, Michigan with their two children, Allison and Andrew. In his lei- sure time, David enjoys discovering lo- cal restaurants, playing with their chil- dren, watching the backyard birds, walking along the shoreline with his wife, and searching for antique bar- gains.
Making Disciples Series Training Schedule

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3 · Stewards of God’s Gifts
LOCATION: Washington Crossing UMC, 1830 Washington Street, Washington Crossing, PA 18977
COST: $10 per person, includes materials
REGISTRATION: 8:30 AM - 9:00 AM · Training will be led by the Rev. David Bell, Bishop Wilke and his wife, Julia, Coordinator of Accountable Discipleship, United Methodist General Board of Discipleship. Registration Deadline is October 31 at 3:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8 · Accountable Discipleship: The Power of Small Group Ministry
LOCATION: Wescosville: Bethany UMC, 1206 Brookside Road, Allentown, PA 18106
COST: $10 per person, includes resources
REGISTRATION: 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM · Session 1: 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM · Training will be led by Steve Manskar, Director of Accountable Discipleship, United Methodist General Board of Discipleship. Registration Deadline is December 5 at 3:00 p.m.

Making Disciples DVDs

- Transformational Spiritual Leadership Part I
  with the Rev. Kelvin Sauls
  $10 x___ = ____

- Transformational Spiritual Leadership Part II
  with the Rev. Kelvin Sauls
  $10 x___ = ____

- Acts 29 Prayer Encounter
  with the Rev. Terry Teykl
  $10 x___ = ____

- Preparing Your Congregation’s Ministry Action Plan
  with the Rev. Kelvin Sauls
  $10 x___ = ____

- Living as Christian Disciples
  with the Rev. Tom Albin
  $10 x___ = ____

- Vibrant and Transformative Worship
  with Eileen Guenther and Dr. Lucy Hogan
  $10 x___ = ____

- Ways to Increase Your Church Attendance
  with the Rev. Rene Perez and the Rev. Dorothy Watson Tatem
  $10 x___ = ____

- Christian Education and Spiritual Formation
  with Carol Krau
  $10 x___ = ____

- Faith Sharing Becoming a Welcoming and Inviting Church
  with the Rev. Larry Homitsky and Suzy Keenan
  $10 x___ = ____

Plus Shipping $ 4.00 - TOTAL $ __________

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Make checks payable to: EPA Conference, and mail to: Video Order, Communications, P.O. 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0820.
United Methodist Church Commissions 13 New Missionaries

In a multilingual, international, and spirit-filled ceremony, 13 people were commissioned on October 9 for United Methodist mission service in Europe, Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the United States.

Bishop Joel N. Martinez of San Antonio and Bishop Benjamin A. Juusto of the Baguio Episcopal Area in the Philippines, presided at the service that took place during the annual meeting of the directors of the General Board of Global Ministries meeting in Stamford. Bishop Martinez, president and Bishop Juusto is a director of the international mission agency.

Three of the new missionaries are assigned through the United Methodist National Plan for Latino and Hispanic Ministries, a special emphasis in the United States.

Of the other nine new missionaries, four are from and will serve in Latin American countries, making the missionary class more than fifty percent Spanish-speaking. Bishop Martinez said this is “the vanguard of the new missionary movement of The United Methodist Church.”

Bishop Juusto delivered an impassioned sermon, calling upon Christians to purify their motives and strengthen their resolve, based on Matthew 28:18-20, also known as the Great Commission, that calls disciples of Jesus Christ to make other disciples.

“The true followers of Jesus Christ have a common mandate,” declared Bishop Juusto. “That is, to go and make disciples in all parts of the world... Tonight’s occasion is another affirmation that missionary spirit is alive.”

The bishops were joined in the “laying on of hands,” a holy sending. Bishop Martinez, Bishop Juusto, and other directors made the mission statements of the new missionaries.

The October commissioning took place less than four months after 17 young adults were commissioned in July 2007 as US-2 missionaries and international mission interns. It came six months after nine persons were commissioned as Church and Community Workers, missionaries who work in challenging rural and urban communities in the US.

World Service Fund supports missionaries

A question which often comes to the staff of the General Board of Global Ministries is: how much of a local churches contribution through apportionments goes toward the support of missionaries? While there are several apportioned items which come to each local church, it can be stated that 6% of the total of the World Service Fund apportionment goes toward missionary support.

To understand this more fully, we must look at the multiple channels of financial giving in The United Methodist Church.

Missionary support includes much more than salary. It is the total funds needed to financially support a missionary. This includes budgeted amounts for health insurance, pension, housing, travel - both to and from place of assignment and while in the work, itineration expenses, educational expenses for children, training expenses, the Wellness Program, and often some other amounts for expenses specific to a place of assignment.

For 2006, the expenditures for missionary support were $17 million. $8 million ($24%) came from the World Service Fund | 2. $2 million (12%) came from UMW Undesignated Giving | 3. $5 million (29%) came from The Advance for Christ and His Church | 4. $6 million (35%) came from trust, investments, and other income designated for missionary support. Therefore, as the total contributions during 2006 to the World Service Fund for the whole general church was $27 million, of which $4 million went toward missionary support, then understood as a percentage, this means that 6% of the total World Service Fund went towards missionary support.

Compiled by Financial Services and Missions Staff of The General Board of Global Ministries

Blown as seeds to minister around the world

by Suzy Keenan*

Teri and Evelyn Erbele have been out of the country for eighteen years. Missionaries, first in Nigeria, and then in Eurasia, they are now assigned as Mission Interpreters in Residence for the Northeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church.

As missionaries of the General Board of Global Ministries, they have served on behalf of United Methodists around the world. As new missionaries because we leave the U.S.;” explained Evelyn, “we are sent from here, blown by the wind to Nigeria and Eurasia.”

Teri served as Area Financial Executive for the North East Central Conference, which covers eleven time zones and eight nations. He made sure gifts of the United Methodist Church were properly allocated to projects and ministries. He then served as district superintendent in Lithuania.

Evelyn, with an undergraduate degree in nursing and a graduate degree in counseling, had been the director of a dental clinic. She also started the Moscow Bible College, which in its ten years has had 60 graduates from its two-year program.

She explained that the church in the former Soviet Union is in its adolescence. “For fifty years there was no Christian church. When everything changed they began kitchen table Bible study, and decided around the table who is going to be pastor, youth director, and music director. Their first experience with the United Methodist Church came from Volunteers in Mission Teams, who shared Bible stories, songs, and liturgy. ‘They never had a Bible or Bible songs.’ She added, ‘They are a human as you and I are. They are desperate for a healthy environment in which to live and don’t have the means. We have the means.’

The Erbeles urge all United Methodists to purchase and use the Women’s

Division Prayer Calendar, which includes mention of every missionary. “We need to know you are supporting us – not financially – supporting what we do. You are in community with me and I wish you.”

“Often churches think of their apportionment as a chore. It is ministry.” Evelyn said. “Through it you are in ministry with people around the world. We always think of it as a portion meant for others. It’s the beauty of the Methodist system.”

*Suzy Keenan is the Director of Communications of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

2008 Prayer Calendar Pre-Order

Taking Pre-Orders Now - All-New — featuring full-color photos of mission projects world-wide; personal reflections from persons in mission; space for personal notations. The Prayer Calendar is a guide to prayer that lists the World Service Fund apportionment as a chore. It is ministry. It is

Compiled by Financial Services and Missions Staff of The General Board of Global Ministries

www.epaumc.org

NOVEMBER 2007
Mission trip begins new spiritual journey

“Why don’t you just ship the stuff out there by truck?” is a question often asked of Prospect United Methodist Church’s Mission Team when it explains its annual, two-week trek by RV and trailer to Native American Indian Reservations in South Dakota and Montana. “It would take less time and be less expensive, wouldn’t it?”

The point of the trip, though, is not so much the stuff – winter coats, clothing, blankets, and school supplies for Poplar, Montana on the Ft. Peck Reservation and Christmas gifts for the community center in Kyle on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. The point of the trip is relationship-building and making connections between people of different cultures and regions yet people who are all a part of the Body of Christ. “Successful missions connect people in relational ways,” says Rev. Jim McIntire, Prospect UMC’s pastor. This summer’s two-week trip with Mission Team Leader Bob Hinderliter and Team member Sabrina Daluisio was McIntire’s first and the first time a pastor traveled with the Team.

With a population of nearly 1,000, the City of Poplar faces severe poverty with an estimated 31.5% of residents living below the poverty line and an extremely high crime rate which has left it with the unflattering nickname of “Stab City.” June Greybull Hawk, PUMC’s main contact among the Lakota in Poplar knows the reservation’s struggles all too well. June is a faith-filled woman who works for the school system as a “home and school coordinator.” When a child is missing from school for a prolonged period, June makes contact with the family to investigate. She tells stories of finding unattended children, homes with no furniture, children with little food and no clean clothes, and families faced with the devastation of substance abuse. June is able to identify families in need and provide them with items from the Prospect UMC donation each year. “We need to make people aware of the poverty on reservations,” says Bob Hinderliter whose lifelong passion for Native Americans has been the driving force of this ministry for nearly 20 years. “The unique part of our trip is the personal connection and interaction with native people. Anyone who goes along will become aware of the conditions and the Native Americans’ attempt to retain some of their cultural heritage and ways of life.”

This ministry is not designed to “drop and run” as could easily happen in a mission project such as this, but rather it is meant to educate Prospect UMC members and others and to get them involved in the lives of people who are different yet very much the same. Racism, stereotyping, and bias often dominate typical American views of indigenous populations such as the Plains Indians. “I had heard and read of Native American spirituality but never truly understood the depth of belief among the Lakota people until this trip,” says McIntire, “and never really recognized how beautifully Native American religious practices and Christian beliefs can interact. It was an enlightening trip and the beginning of a new spiritual journey for me.”

A dozen or so members and friends have traveled along on Prospect UMC’s Ft. Peck trips these past years and many more have made one of the Mission Team’s annual trips to Collins Chapel UMC in Lumberton, North Carolina where Hinderliter has also been developing relationships among Lumbee Indians. This additional part of the congregation’s Native American ministry delivers Christmas gifts designated for specific children and youth as determined by Pastor Doug Locklear of Collins Chapel. The congregation’s children, in fact, plan their Christmas Pageant around the date of Prospect UMC’s trip so they can share that special moment with their friends from Eastern Pennsylvania. Youth and adults from Prospect UMC and St. Andrew’s UMC (Warminster) have also traveled to Lambert to serve as a work team to help with housing repairs and construction projects.

The impact of Prospect UMC’s Native American Ministry is widespread as word travels among the networks of those who have participated. “My prayer is that we will be able to continue to grow this ministry and educate many more about the needs and gifts of Native Americans,” concludes Bob Hinderliter. To learn more about this mission or to request a group presentation, contact Hinderliter at BrotherlabashIndy@aol.com or Rev. McIntire at PUMCPastor@verizon.net.

The financial cost of Prospect UMC’s Native American Ministry is funded by gifts from members and friends of the congregation and donated items come from not only individual members but from many others including neighbors, local schools, and businesses. This year’s Montana/South Dakota trip was enhanced by a significant grant from the EPA/UMC Native American Ministries Committee.

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**United Methodist T-shirts**

**Adult sizes: S, M, L, XL**

**Cost:**

$10 for shirts picked up in person • at the check-in table at HERSHEY PARK, throughout Annual Conference at the camping table, and at the conference office

$12 for each shirt sent through the mail.

For more information or to place an order, contact Jim Wilkin, Jim.wilkin@epaumc.org or 1-800-828-9093, ext. 225.

**Christ Servant Ministries**

**Basic Course**

Asbury UMC (Allentown, PA)

Instructor: Judy Ehninger

Registration Fee: $30

November 16, 2007: 7–10 pm – Part 1

November 17, 2007: 8 am – 3 pm–Parts 2 & 3 (brown bag lunch)

“The CSM Basic Course needs between 12 and 20 participants to insure a meaningful experience. Courses not meeting these participation levels may be cancelled or split into multiple courses. Upon completion of the CSM Basic Course, an individual is recognized as a Local Church Servant. Completion of an additional 10 hours of approved training is needed for recognition as a Christ Servant Minister. Registrations are confirmed based upon the date payment is received. Checks can be made payable to: George Hollich, CSM Director. To allow time for mailing of homework materials and adequate time to prepare, completed registrations and checks must be received by November 1.

For more information, contact George Hollich at: 717-838-2812 or Email: hollich@comcast.net.

For registration form, go to: www.epaumc.org.
**Electronic Funds Transfer: a giving solution**

How can your congregation benefit from the UM EFT program? UM EFT offers United Methodist congregations a convenient and low cost alternative to traditional collection methods. Utilizing e.service® Electronic Funds Transfer, an electronic giving solution from Vanco Services, the UM EFT program allows participants’ contributions to be transferred electronically from their checking or savings accounts and deposited directly into your church’s bank account on a steady, uninterrupted basis. In addition to promoting consistent giving, UM EFT saves staff time and administrative costs so your church can enjoy greater financial stability, less bookkeeping, and more confidence in meeting your financial goals and pursuing your missions. Combine e.service® Electronic Funds Transfer with e.service® Merchant Services and a presence on Web, and all your electronic donation needs are just a phone call away.

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  - e.service® Electronic Funds Transfer – Donations transferred via checking and savings accounts
  - e.service® Merchant Services – Donations transferred via credit and/or debit cards

For more information: [http://www.grf.org/fundstransfer.html](http://www.grf.org/fundstransfer.html)

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**WANTED FOR CAMPUS WORSHIP**

Ashbury Protestant Ministry at Drexel University, a ministry supported through the Eastern PA Conference, is seeking to better serve our students by hiring a Key Account Manager in the Philadelphia location. The incumbent will serve the market by developing and strengthening relationships with customers and will assist with the management of the store. Ideal candidate must have retail and leadership experience. Christian Education experience is strongly preferred. Interested persons should submit resume along with salary history to empress@rcn.com. Reference: BFGF@rcn.com. References will serve the market by developing and strengthening relationships with customers and will assist with the management of the store. Ideal candidate must have retail and leadership experience. Christian Education experience is strongly preferred. Interested persons should submit resume along with salary history to empress@rcn.com. Reference: BFGF@rcn.com. References could be sent to Mrs. Eleanor C. Kunz, his surviving spouse, at 9869 Wheatheaf Lane, Morrisville, PA 19067-6110.

Rev. Claude A. Edmonds, retired elder, on October 4, 2007. Rev. Edmonds served the following appointments: Phila: John Wesley, MD; Arenys Charge, Denton Larger Parish, Phila: Emmanuel, Northwest District Superintendent, and Phila: Tindley Temple United Methodist Church. Rev. Edmonds is survived by his wife, Jennie, and a son, Craig. He was predeceased by a son, Claude A. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Jennie A. Edmonds, 7901 Henry Avenue, Apt A111, Philadelphia, PA 19128-2915.

Mrs. Naomi Glick, who died September 21, 2007, age 84. She was the widow of the Rev. H. Harold Glick, who died in 1981. Rev. Glick served the following appointments: Avondale, Chatham, and Green Hill. She is survived by her daughter, Judy Morris. Condolences may be sent to Judy Morris, 988 E. Orange St., Lancaster, PA 70602.

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**United Methodist Student Day**

November 23, 2007

For more information go to: [www.umcgiving.org](http://www.umcgiving.org)
**Bishop’s Mi-Winter Retreat**

**January 15-17, 2008**

With guest speaker, The Rev. Dr. Paul Nixon at the Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel in Ocean City, MD

Paul Nixon is pastor of Epicenter DC, a new church being launched in the greater Washington DC area, a multi-site project focused on serving the people in emerging urban neighborhoods of high density housing along the subway lines. He is a member of the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Until 2007, he served on the extended cabinet of Alabama-West Florida Conference, overseeing congregational development. For nine years, he served on the pastoral team of the 4000 member Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church near Pensacola. Paul was founding pastor of the Community Life Center, the east campus of Gulf Breeze, overseeing it from its conception to 650 in worship attendance.


**Schedule Overview**

(detailed schedule to be provided at retreat)

**Tuesday, January 15, 2008**

Noon—2 p.m.: Registration
Bishop’s Welcome/Worship
Speakers—Dr. Paul Nixon
Dinner

**Wednesday, January 16, 2008**

Breakfast
Worship
Speaker—Dr. Paul Nixon
Free Time
Dinner
Entertainment

**Thursday, January 17, 2008**

Breakfast
Closing Worship/Communion

**Online registration:** [www.epaumc.org](http://www.epaumc.org)

**Deadline to register is November 30, 2007**

Contact information: Amy Botti, Registrar; 1-800-828-9093, ext. 233 or email at amy.botti@epaumc.org

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**Encounter 2007**

One Weekend. One Passion. One Purpose.

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**encounter** (verb) to come upon face to face

**Friday – Sunday, November 9th-11th**

A weekend of impact and equipping for students in Grades 7-12

The Band: David Haggard & STRIPS in concert and worship. The Speakers: Kim Cheekyre, Kris Perry, Peter Clarke & Ron Bullock. The Pan American, high a four open challenge course, amazing nature, games, great food, and more of all—a weekend of drawing closer to God. Don’t miss out—reserve your spot today by calling or emailing Kris Perry at (570) 385-3941 or revkrisperry@yahoo.com. Cost is $99; all meals, lodging and including $29 Deposit due on September 20th; Balance of $70 due on October 26th.

Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center
87 Old Mine Road, Lebanon, PA 17042
Contact: Kris Perry at (570) 385-3941 or revkrisperry@yahoo.com.