Annual Conference Summary 2009

A symbolic cleansing of the space of the spirit of violence and worship took place on Monday, June 15, prior to the opening of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Bishop Peggy Johnson joined members of the Methodist Federation for Social Action and Heeding God’s Call, a faith-based campaign to stop gun violence, at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, where, only days before, a gun show was held.

Meeting June 16-18, 2009, with a theme of Sharing the Connection, Eastern Pennsylvania was the first conference to ever offer skilled American Sign Language interpreters, real-time text captioning, assistive listening devices, a large print reader for persons with low vision, and video streaming for persons who could not physically attend conference because of physical challenges. “We are not fully the body of Christ unless we include the gifts of

Ellis-Killian to be Philadelphia Area Ecumenical Officer

BY SUZY KEENAN

Bishop Peggy Johnson has selected the Rev. Dr. Daniel Ellis-Killian to be Ecumenical Officer for the Philadelphia Area of The United Methodist Church. He began on July 1, 2009, after three years of being retired, and will serve part-time in this newly created position.

Dan grew up in The United Methodist Church. As a youth, he was deeply influenced by the pastor of his home church, the late Rev. Andy Schultz, of Parkside UMC in Parkside, PA, who confirmed his call to ministry. As a philosophy and fine arts student at Edinboro University, Dan’s call to ministry was deepened, and he proceeded shortly thereafter to Colgate Rochester Divinity School to obtain his M.Div. And so, his interest in ecumenical concerns was born in an ecumenical school of theology. In 1974, Dan received a D.Min. from Vanderbilt University, formerly a Methodist-related school, and was ordained an Elder.

Throughout thirty-six years of appointments in local churches, Dan was involved in many ecumenical activities in the communities in which he served, as well as on the conference level. Under the leadership of Bishop James M. Ault, Dan led the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, often accompanying Bishop Ault to ecumenical events or representing the office to the Greater Philadelphia

Yvette Davis to be Director of Urban and Global Ministries

BY SUZY KEENAN

Bishop Peggy Johnson has appointed the Rev. Yvette Davis to be director of Urban and Global Ministries for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. She will begin in that role on July 15, 2009.

In the year 2000, Yvette went through a period of questioning her purpose in life. “I was standing in my mother’s kitchen when I sensed God speaking to me, calling me to be a United Methodist pastor,” she said. “I didn’t pursue my call for two years. I was attending another church in New York with my former husband. Then the Lord drew me back to the United Methodist Church, to Hanson Place Central UMC.” So Yvette started the process to become a pastor in New York, only to then relocate to Philadelphia.

That move brought her to Johnson Memorial UMC, where, in the East District, she again became a certified candidate for ministry. At Johnson Memorial, Yvette’s ministry included serving the church as lay leader and as a Christ Servant Minister. As a Christ Servant Minister, Yvette helped with planning and implementation of a new Chinese ministry outreach in Philadelphia, coordinating efforts between the General Board of Global Ministries, the East District, and the host church.

In a volunteer capacity, Yvette served as collection supervisor for

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ

Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church

Volume 9 Number 6
July/August 2009

Continued on page 6

Continued on page 9

Continued on page 8
July
FRIDAY, JULY 31 - SUNDAY, AUGUST 2
2009 Academy for Laity: Park Ridge Hotel and Conference Center, King of Prussia, PA. Contact Brenda Tildon at (502) 836-8553 or brendatilden@aol.com.

August
SATURDAY, AUGUST 1
Servant or Sucker? Hope Church, UMC, at 117 North Monocacy Creek Drive, Douglassville, PA. No registration is required and there is no cost to participants. For more information feel free to contact the Hope Church office at 610-385-7141.

September
THURSDAY, SEPT. 17 - SATURDAY, SEPT. 19
Cornwall Manor Society Fall Festival: Crafts, homemade candy, baked goods, book sale, and a live and silent auction will be the center of the 59th annual Cornwall Manor Society Fall Festival on Saturday, October 3 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This rain-or-shine event offers something for everyone. www.cornwallmanor.org.

October
FRIDAY, OCT. 2 - SATURDAY, OCT. 3
The Big Event: Young and Young Adult Event at Eastern University. Cost is $50 which will include food for Saturday and registration. For more information contact Lydia Munoz at PRgirlsings@aol.com.

November
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4
Clergy Day Apart: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Lunch Provided No charge for the day. Pocono Plateau Camp and Retreat Center, RR2 Box 2747, Cresco, PA 18326. 570-676-3665; www.poconoplateau.org, email: camp@poconoplateau.org.

December
FRIDAY, NOV. 6 - SUNDAY, NOV. 8

NEW Spirit!
The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church
980 Madison Avenue, Norristown, PA 19403
Bishop Peggy Johnson - Philadelphia Area Bishop
Suzy Keenan - Director of Communications
Sarah Young - Graphic Design and Layout
Published 10 times per year.
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Periodicals postage paid at Norristown, PA 19403.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: NEW Spirit! at EPA Conference, P.O. Box 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482.

In Memoriam
Rev. David W. Powell Jr.
Word has been received of the death of Rev. David Powell, Jr., who passed away at his home in Parksley, Virginia on Friday, May 29, 2009. Rev. Powell served the following appointments beginning in 1956: Swiftwater; New Hope; Allentown: Asbury; Phila: Holmesburg; Extension Ministry: Evangelical Manor, Asst. Director; Extension Ministry: Phila: Ralston House; Extension Ministry: SNJ Annual Conference Admin. of Home in Ocean Grove. Rev. Powell was appointed to extension ministry to Simpson House in 1987 as Executive Director and remained with the organization until his retirement as President and CEO of Simpson Senior Services in 2003.
A memorial service was held on Tuesday, June 9 at the Jane Henry Chapel at Simpson House, 2101 Belmont Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19131; www.simpsonhouse.org. Rev. Powell is survived by his wife, Juliett, a son, two daughters, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.
Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Julie Powell, P.O. Box 276, Parksley, VA 23421. To express your condolences or sign the guest book online, visit: www.thorntonfuneral-home.net.
In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations in David’s name be made to the Alzheimer’s Association National Office, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, IL 60601 or Hospice and Palliative Care of the Eastern Shore, Attn: David Marco, 165 Market Street, Suite 3, Onancock, VA 23417.

Mr. Harrie G. Schimmel
Word has been received of the death of Mr. Harrie G. Schimmel, who passed away on Sunday, May 31, 2009 at Cornwall Manor at the age of 87. During his career in the field of business management, Mr. Schimmel was Business Administrator for the EPAUMC from 1974-1979 and President and CEO of Cornwall Manor from 1979-1989.
A memorial service was held on Friday, June 5, 2009, at Epworth UMC, 19285 Holland Glade Road, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971.
Mr. Schimmel is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, of Rehoboth Beach and two sons, Edwin T. and Rev. Daniel J. both of Lancaster, 12 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.
Condolences may be sent to his wife Elizabeth at 105 Park Ave, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971.
In lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent to Cornwall Manor Benevolent Fund, P O Box 125, Cornwall, PA 17016 or to Epworth UMC, Rehoboth Beach, DE.
Community Garden

Recently the Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops had a meeting in Newport, RI. At the meeting we visited an amazing community garden at Calvary United Methodist Church in Middletown, RI. Bishop Dale White, a UM bishop who has been retired since 1992, has an amazing garden ministry there. His passion for gardens began as a child growing up on a farm. Throughout his life he has worked for environmental justice and calling the church to be more responsible with our use of the earth's resources. He established a community garden at the church a few years ago and it has literally blossomed into an amazing blessing. Quite a variety of people from not only the United Methodist Church but from other churches and community groups volunteer their time in the garden. People of all ages, ethnicities and economic classes help with the garden. The food that is harvested is given to the community food bank and soup kitchen. The flowers that grow in the garden are picked and arranged in vases and brought to people in the nursing homes. People who are working in the garden get their bodies and spirits renewed as they commune with nature, get exercise, and work with one another.

I would say that the Holy Spirit is at work here. It is holistic, ecological, and loving. People are being fed, trained, inspired, taught and community happens when everyone gives of themselves.

Bishop White has established a number of gardens around the country, particularly in inner city neighborhoods where people hardly ever see a tree. Everywhere he starts a garden it not only grows greens but he cultivates community and decreases despair.

Bishop White, at age 85, can teach us that you are never too old to serve God. Senior citizens are a powerhouse of talent and service to the church and the world. He also finds a way to use his love of gardening to make a difference in this world. It has been said that a person's call is where a person's passions and abilities intersect with the needs of the world. Indeed everyone has a call because God has gifted each one of you to make a difference in this world by using your natural talents and interests.

Why not grow a community garden at your church? In doing so you may be doing a lot more than planting some seeds...you will be growing a wonderful new ministry.
Dzens of teens and young adults in T-shirts, shorts, sandals and flip-flops slowly fill the darkened gymnasium that is their Sunday morning sanctuary.

A young woman is the lead singer in a band that performs praise songs. Worshipers seated on cushioned, folding chairs or across the bleachers sing the words projected on a screen in front of them.

Young people at the Vineyard greet church members, read the Scripture, deliver the sermon and take up the collection. And that’s the way they like it. As The United Methodist Church, like other mainline denominations, seeks ways to keep its youth, the casual dress, contemporary music and opportunities for leadership at the Sunday service at Collierville United Methodist Church just east of Memphis may provide some answers.

“There is no ageism here,” says Sarah Woodard, 17. “All have equal opportunity to be a leader.”

**Reaching Youth**

The church’s task in reaching young people has changed dramatically in recent generations, according to many sociologists and youth ministry leaders. Youth and young adults in general today view religion more as a choice than a requirement. In choosing among myriad opportunities available to them, young people seek to be meaningful participants rather than passive consumers of religious experiences, experts say.

The age of many denominations indicates churches have been slow to adjust.

Half of active participants in The United Methodist Church are older than 50, according to a 2008 Congregational Leadership Survey from the United Methodist Council of Finance and Administration. The average age of United Methodists is 57.

Anne Michel, associate director of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership in Washington, says church school attendance for youth in The United Methodist Church declined from 571,794 in 1985 to 420,425 in 2006.

The proportion of youth in the church declined from one in seven members in 1964 to one in 21 in 2005, according to Path One, the strategy team on new congregational development coordinated by the United Methodist Board of Discipleship.

“Ageism” is not only directed at older church members, according to the Rev. Valerie Robideaux, 27. It can affect young people too, she says, speaking at the recent United Methodist Student Forum at United Methodist-related Centenary College in Shreveport, La. The gathering brings together college students and ministry leaders.

“Many of us are lured to be given the opportunity to put our vision into place in our local churches. Sometimes, it feels like there is a glass ceiling when trying to acquire positions of church leadership,” says Robideaux, the student diocesan coordinator for Centenary’s Christian Leadership Center.

Joyce Wickstrom, a student at Armstrong Atlantic State University and a member of Asbury Memorial United Methodist Church in Savannah, Ga., says local churches need to be intentional about including young adults in church leadership.

But change is not going to come easily.

**Challenges ahead**

Multiple challenges, from the fear of change among older leaders to the difficulty young people have in navigating “the system,” confront youth and young adults seeking to be involved in church leadership, says Mike Ratliff, executive director of the United Methodist Division on Ministries with Young People. When they think of church leaders as a threat to their own leadership, and they sometimes question the ability of young people to lead, cfiting lack of experience,” he says.

Older and younger leaders seeking to respond to God’s call in their lives need to invest time and energy in building relationships, Ratliff says.

“The experience of established leaders as well as the ‘new eyes’ of young leaders has the potential to be rejuvenating and invigorating the church. We are in a time of great opportunity where the gifts and resources of our young people have the potential to rejuvenate and invigorate the church. I hope that we are able to embrace the gift that our young people offer,” he says.

**Batting ageism**

From its Vineyard service to church governance to youth ministry programs, Collierville United Methodist Church attempts to include young people in all of the ministries, worship and committees of the church. The youth hold leadership positions in the church and on the district and annual conference levels.

“The youth ministry program here at Collierville is not typical of youth ministry across the denomination,” says Kristofer Roof, 24, the director of young adult ministries. “Adults, the pastors and those who supervise youth really encourage them to step up and take more leadership roles ... and we do more than other churches typically do.”

Roof, a recent graduate of United Methodist-related Duke Divinity School, was a youth ministry intern at Collierville during the summer of 2006. He has delayed his candidacy certification for ordained ministry to get more young and young adult ministry experience and preached his first sermon as the leader of young adult ministry on June 21.

“This is a church committed to young people,” he says. “I could not turn away from that.”

Acknowledging that ageism exists across the general church, he says it is “at a stained glass-celling issue but more a labyrinth, where we are trying to figure out what the best path is to take so that everyone is on board with youth leadership.”

**Following their call**

Collierville United Methodist Church youth say the approach is working.

Maribeth Russell, 17, has been attending Collierville since she was 9 months old, and she describes the church as being full of opportunities for all people.

“This church grows people and inspires them.”

Russell says she appreciates the lack of routine in the Vineyard experience.

“You worship how you want to worship and not because you feel like it is expected,” she says. “This church used to be an unthinkible distraction. How many people can say that it is not a stained glass-celling issue but more a labyrinth, where we are trying to figure out where to go in their power to help you be whole.”

Jared French, 18, says he has visited other traditions but has found “a connection” at Collierville through its hand-bell ministry. “It is one of the first things that led me to God. I cannot imagine living my life without it.”

“I am a leader at Collierville United Methodist Church because I do not follow the patterns of teenagers my age. When I have been given the ability and strength to give other teenagers the words and encouragement to go out and do the things that will change their lives,” she says.

“I am a leader here because God is calling me to do that.”

Sammons says, “Once he breaks down my personal walls and barriers, I think it will become more of a reality for me.”

Green is a United Methodist News Service writer based in Nashville, Tenn. Betty Bakdromk, editor of the Louisiana Conference NOW, contributed to this story.
Mozambique bishop is model for women leaders

BY LINDA BLOOM

Bishop Joaquina Filipe Nhanala says it is too soon to tell whether more women in Mozambique have decided to enter the ministry because of her leadership. But she is happy to be a role model.

Nine months ago, Nhanala, 52, took office as the first female United Methodist bishop in Africa. She already has set her priorities—leadership development and self-sustainability for the church in Mozambique and better access to health care and education for the country itself.

On June 23, during a visit to the headquarters of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, the bishop shared her dreams about strengthening a church where some congregations still “worship under trees.”

Since the end of civil war in 1992, United Methodism has grown in Mozambique, with some 150,000 members in more than 170 congregations of the church’s three districts. The Mozambique area is divided into two annual conferences and has 29 schools, a seminary, agricultural programs and a hospital at Chicuque.

To continue that growth, better leadership training is required. “When we talk about leadership development we are not only talking about clergy,” Nhanala pointed out. “The church is key to the growth of the church. Many are pastoring local churches.”

She wants all church members involved, so another priority is encouraging the churches to intentionally include women and youth in our programs and in our leadership.

Encouraging the call

Of the 132 ordained pastors in Mozambique, only a small percentage are people not ordained to the bishop. This year is the 30th anniversary of the first ordination of women as United Methodist clergy there and she hopes to use the occasion “to encourage women who feel called into the ministry.”

Nhanala’s own theological education began in 1985, when she and her husband, the Rev. Eugenio Tomas, were accepted for theological studies at the Mozambique Annual Conference. They attended Obangna School of Theology in Liberia and Nhanala was ordained a deacon in 1989.

She completed her diploma in theology at Trinity College in Ghana after Liberia’s civil war disrupted their studies. She holds a bachelor of divinity degree from Limuru University and a master’s degree in Bible studies and theology from Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, both in Kenya.

Education remains a family focus. Her husband is principal of the United Seminary of Reteta, an ecumenical theological institution in the Maputo area, and their four children all have pursued higher education.

High illiteracy rate

Such educational opportunities are not available to all in a country where illiteracy remains “a huge issue” both inside and outside the church.

To be able to read and write is to be empowered, in the bishop’s view. “Education opens the eyes and minds of people,” she said.

According to UNICEF, less than half of the adults in Mozambique—only 44 percent—can read. Illiterate women and their children often are trapped in poverty as well, the bishop pointed out.

Literacy classes held at local churches are open to all in the community.

United Methodists work in partnership with the country’s now-stable government to promote literacy and education in general. The state helps provide trained teachers and salary support for United Methodist schools. “The church has a very good relationship with the government,” she said.

The government also pays the salaries of some nurses employed by the church, but Nhanala would like to see United Methodists become more involved in public solutions to major health concerns, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and maternal health issues.

She has experience in such matters, having led a World Relief HIV/AIDS program designed to mobilize churches for education and advocacy in Mozambique’s three southern provinces.

Countrywide issue

“HIV/AIDS is a countrywide issue,” Nhanala said, explaining that the church response also must be national, “not only in Chicuque where the hospital is located.”

Three missionaries currently are assigned to Chicuque Hospital by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries and a fourth works in Mozambique as an agriculturalist and community developer.

Thirty-five projects and programs in Mozambique also receive support through The Advance, the church’s voluntary giving program.

Nhanala appreciates the denominational support. “As missionaries come, they play a kind of capacity-building role and that helps the church be sustainable,” she said.

The church in Mozambique also receives other support from U.S. United Methodists and Nhanala spent much of June participating in annual conference sessions in Missouri, New York and Virginia.

Missouri’s “Mozambique Initiative,” which began a decade ago, connects churches, groups and individuals in Missouri with partner United Methodist congregations and districts in Mozambique to strengthen the church there. The initiative has helped build churches and parsonages and supports pastors in the most impoverished areas of Mozambique, the bishop said.

Bloom is a United Methodist News Service news writer based in New York.

The World in Brief

STUDENTS SWIM CHANNEL

Two seniors from United Methodist-related Ohio Wesleyan University—one from Pakistan and one from the United States—will swim the English Channel this summer to demonstrate the power of friendship in making the world a better place. As part of their twenty-one-mile relay swim in the frigid Channel, Usman Javaid of Lahore, Pakistan, and David Gatz of Delaware, Ohio, are raising funds to support the Pakistani relief efforts of Doctors Without Borders. To learn more about the “Channeling Peace Initiative,” visit www.channelingpeace.org. To learn more about Doctors Without Borders: www.doctorswithoutborders.com.

PUERTO RICAN UMCS ACTION ON POVERTY

Children International congratulates the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico for reaching its goal to support 500 poor children through the U.S.-based humanitarian organization. Over the past year, churches across Puerto Rico agreed to seek support from their neighborhoods initiative to help poor children throughout Latin America. Church leaders, with over 120,000 members and 100 congregations, have reached out to provide desperately poor children in the Dominican Republic, Colombia and Honduras with basic necessities.

AFRICA UNIVERSITY ADDRESSING HEALTH ISSUES

When cholera struck Harare, Zimbabwe, during the past year, one of the worst-affected areas was the high-density suburb of Budiriro. Donnell Dube, 39, a graduate student at United Methodist-related Africa University, wanted to study how effective humanitarian aid was in the response to the cholera outbreak and chose Budiriro as a case study. What he discovered was that critical water governance issues must be removed to reduce the threat of water-related disease outbreaks. Dube was one of several Africa University graduate students researching community experiences with conflict and disease in hopes of informing policy making and improving the lives of ordinary citizens.

RUSSIA OBSERVES 100 YEARS OF METHODISM

A “great cloud of witnesses” surrounded United Methodists in Russia as they celebrated the 100th anniversary of Methodism with festivities that included the announcement of the opening of a new center in St. Petersburg. The anniversary was celebrated in an ecumenical service of worship June 13. The occasion also marked the 120th year since Methodism arrived in what was then Czarist Russia, in the region that is today the Baltic countries. The center, in which the Minnesota Annual Conference contributed $600,000 toward the purchase, will serve as headquarters for the annual conference and the district, and worship and educational space for St. Petersburg congregations.

SUPPORT FOR N KOREA CHILDREN

The National Council of Churches in Korea, which includes the Korean Methodist Church, is urging its members and organizations to join a campaign to give North Korean children milk and bread “without any precondition.” In a statement June 16, the church group in South Korea said it would start “to advocate the necessity of urgent support to people in North Korea in the situation of the present critical antagonistic political arrangement on the Korean peninsula, and to mobilize its member churches.” The statement reported children, pregnant women, and the elderly, who are the most vulnerable in the society, have been the hardest hit. The campaign will send packs of flour weighing 20 kilograms and 8,000 cans of powdered milk as well as encourage churches to have special worship services with prayers for the people of North Korea.
AC Summary 09

Continued from page 1

all God’s people,” said Bishop Peggy Johnson. Rev. Paul Crickelair, a profoundly hearing-impaired pastor, attending his 27th annual conference said that it was “an incredible blessing to know that there were those who cared enough about our needs to make it possible for us to be fully included.”

In Opening Devotions, Bishop Peggy Johnson asked, “What does the Lord require of you?” Preaching from Micah 6:6-8, she remarked that justice is something we do – that everyone gets a fair shake – and that all the precious children of God get a chance to get in line to have their needs met. “It’s about you and me doing it! Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me,” she exclaimed. In regard to loving kindness, she said, “Christ came to give us peace in our diversity.” She urged listeners to humbly walk with God, including prayer, tithing, keeping the Sabbath, and attending to worship and the sacraments.

Opening Worship, planned by conference Young People’s Ministries included the preaching of Rev. Vance Ross of the General Board of Discipleship. He asked, “Children, have you caught any fish? If not, then throw your nets on the right side!” With the analogy of the story of the Emperor’s New Clothes, he said that we have tricked ourselves into thinking our churches are in the right place and doing what we ought to be doing. He urged churches to use evaluation, exploitation, and excitement so we do not remain stuck in tradition and tribalism.

Dr. Mary White, conference lay leader, presented the report of the laity, “Leading our Church into a Future with Hope.” Dr. White’s recognition included the ministry of United Methodist Women and Men and Volunteers in Mission.

Fifteen retirees were celebrated or their 470 years of ministry; they symbolically passed the mantle of ministry and service, as they anointed persons to be commissioned and ordained.

Fifteen persons were ordained as Elders in full connection, and two persons for ministry of the Deacon and two persons for ministry of the Elder. Bishop Johnson ordained two persons as Deacons and recognized the orders of one Deacon. Fifteen persons were ordained as Elders in full connection, and the orders of one Elder were recognized. Bishop Johnson told listeners that “before Jesus, our sins were like filthy rags. Our job is putting off the old sin and clothing ourselves in Christ. The clothes of Christ are patience, love, joy. What are the union dues? Christ wants it all!” Five persons answered a call to ministry at the end of the service.

Ordination Service

Bishop Johnson, along with Bishop Violet Fisher, a daughter of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, and Dr. Mary White, conference lay leader, attended his 27th annual conference said that it was “an incredible blessing to know that there were those who cared enough about our needs to make it possible for us to be fully included.”

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Celebration of Ministries

Rev. Lillian Smith, director of Connectional Ministries, led the celebration of ministries. Suzie Keenan thanked Jamil Harper and Jamar Campbell, young persons from Grace Community UMC, who dressed as mosquitoes to “bug” people for donations for Nothing But Nets. As a result of their efforts, a $4,616 check for Nothing But Nets was given by Bishop Johnson to Katherine and Lynda Commale, enabling them to exceed their initial goal of raising $100,000 for the anti-malaria campaign.

Rev. Smith announced that Yvette Davis has been selected as the new director of the Office of Urban and Global Ministries. Rev. Dorothy Watson Tatem presented the Kin Jefferson Award for excellence in urban ministry to the Rev. J. William Lentz and members of the Wesley UMC, Bethlehem, PA. The Denman Award for Evangelism was given to two clergy persons, Rev. James Brashear, (Bethany UMC in Wescosville) and Rev. Tracy Bass, (Haws Avenue UMC in Norristown), and to lay person, Mary Alice Law, a member of Haws Avenue UMC. Rev. Eva Johnson challenged the churches of the conference to raise $2/worshipping member for 2 years for the Hope for the Children Award which funds ministry with children living in poverty in Africa and Eastern Pennsylvania. Rev. Irving Cotto celebrated four church planters and the start of four new churches in 2009: Wendy Orzolek in Exeter, Lydia Muñoz in Narberth, Elisandra Garcia in Bethlehem, and Byung Woo Cho in Glenside. The Rev. Dr. Alfred Maloney presented a charter for Bickley’s New Beginning UMC in Philadelphia to the Rev. Jackie Anne Stewart and Mr. T. J. Stewart and to the members of the church, which has grown from 4 to 163 people since 2005. First UMC and Grandview UMC, both in Lancaster, PA were recognized for their ministry to refugees by Rev. Hilda Campbell. Bishop Johnson announced that the Rev. Dr. Daniel Ellis-Killian has been selected to fill a new position as Ecumenical Officer of the Conference.
Bible Studies

Rev. Dr. Harold Recinos led two morning Bible Studies, "Jesus, the poor Stranger" based on Luke 24:13-25, and "God Makes a World of Difference" based on Galatians 3:26-29. He said, "The great Creator God, who created our differences reflects the different parts of God's own internal structure. If we have dispute with the differences, then we have a dispute with God!" He said that what counts is not religious orthodoxy; what counts is right action: to live and act compassionately. Recinos is professor of Church and Society at the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. Both Bible Studies are available on DVD.

Memorial Service

In a ceremony of candle lighting and flowers, the conference remembered the faithful lives of bishops, clergy, spouses, widows, and lay members. Rev. Vance Ross preached that what is important is "orthopraxy, not orthodoxy – deeds, not creeds – walks, not talks. We memorialize those who lived in that lifestyle, who lived expectant for paradise, and it has come for them." He implored, "If you knew one of them, then stand in their name, and pledge yourself that you are working for the Kingdom of God to come on earth!"

In offerings, churches and individuals gave:
- Barrels of gift cards and hygiene kits to Methodist Services for Children and Families in Philadelphia;
- $3,013 for Hope for the Children;
- $3,075 for Nothing But Nets;
- $379 for the Youth Service Fund; and
- $4,425 for scholarships for undergraduate and seminary students.

Members voted on 32 proposed General Conference amendments. The results of the voting will be added to those of all other conferences; the amendments that receive a two-thirds approval margin will be adopted. The Council of Bishops will announce the final tabulation in 2010.

In business, the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference voted to:
- Approve a 2010 budget of $6,388,385 for General Conference and Eastern Pennsylvania Conference ministries;
- Dedicate the 2009 Journal to the late Bishop James Mase Ault;
- Recommend 18 ministries for Conference Advance Specials, enabling them to receive second-mile giving donations;
- Resolve that each church set aside a Sunday of its choice to be declared Volunteers in Mission Sunday;
- Set aside the first Sunday in June as Annual Deacon Sunday;
- Approve a resolution asking churches to diligently consider utilizing the investment services of the Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula UM Foundation;
- Urge churches to support the effort to stop the expansion of gambling, including supporting the repeal of ACT 71 of 2004;
- Approve a resolution supporting the need for the U.S. Congress to enact programs and legislation that will reduce emissions in the effort to slow global warming, presented by the Center for the Celebration of Creation of Chestnut Hill UMC;
- Approve a resolution regarding handgun violence, resolving that each congregation study the issue and take action to challenge gun retailers;
- Encourage elected officials to work toward the signing of the Convention on Cluster Munitions;
- Encourage appointed clergy to support the Central Conference Pension Initiative with $60 per year.

Membership stands at 121,203, down 2,220 from the previous year. Worship attendance stands at 48,760, down 1,085. Church school attendance stands at 17,125, up 140.

For more information, photos, or to order DVDs of Annual Conference, go to www.epaumc.org.
It's On!  

BY LILLIAN SMITH

I t's on! The words featured on a recent Southwest Airlines advertisement campaign speak volumes. Those words communicate resilience and resolve in the face of challenging situations and remind me of the Nike slogan of 'Just do it!' The words speak of a commitment to win despite adversity. The nation, our congregations, and each of us individually, are all facing challenging situations.

Each day, we hear about or live the experiences: financial woes, job loss, foreclosures. In the life of many congregations, we face aging populations, disconnect with congregational neighbors, and a lack of passion for people who don't yet know Jesus Christ as Lord.

This is not the time to throw in the towel or to question our faith. It is not the time to bury our heads in the sand and say, "Maybe we can try to reach new people for Christ, next year." Now is the time! It's on for ministry on Christ’s behalf! As lives hang in the balance of life and death, our congregations, as well as every United Methodist in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, are called to seize the day and share the gospel.

As Kelvin Sauls reminded us in a previous training, "the Great Commission is not just an option, but an obligation! The word (Evangelism) can be considered a bad word by many. For some, the idea of evangelism seems overwhelming. It is something that others do! In reality, all of us individually and corporately are called to share God’s good news of salvation available for all.

If your congregation is not connecting with people outside the church family or building walls, why not? What is stopping your congregation from "reaching new people, younger people, more diverse people?" Is music or the worship style a turn off for some in the community? Offer another worship experience in addition to the original service. Is it the lack of internal invitation to hospitality to our neighbors? What are you willing to do to make things happen on God's behalf? Are you in it to win it or just along for the ride? Now is the time to declare to every obstacle, "It's on!"

Now is the time to give it everything we’ve got in our attempt to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. This is not about institutional maintenance but instead about new souls for Jesus Christ. Let's think about it. What will God say to us on Judgement Day? Will God say, "People in the neighborhood of your church didn't learn about my transforming power, love and liberate because you and your congregation decided to keep me to myself." Will God say, “Countless people, in the neighborhood around your church, lived a hell in this life and went to hell for everlasting life because you didn’t invite them to know, love, serve and follow me?" God loves humanity so much that he sent his son to die to gain our salvation. I don't think God is going to like our responses, especially if we say, "We were doing other things and didn't have time to tell them about you.”

By God's grace, we still have time to turn things around. See the side for free or low cost strategies that will help your congregation reach beyond its walls to reach new people for Christ. Any of them can be prayerfully modified to fix the context of your congregations.

As we move forward, we have something to celebrate. According to John Southwick, Director of Renewal Ministries, nationally, 47% of United Methodist Churches report no professions of faith. Southwick further explained that in 2007, 37% of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Congregations reported no professions of faith. That year, Southwick added, only 168 out of 454 congregations reported. In 2008, David Napoleon reported that 66.7% of our congregations reported professions of faith. That means only 33.3% of our congregations RECEIVED no new Christians in 2008.

The numbers of congregations that had professions of faith has increased. What if next year, every congregation had professions of faith! We can have more people in our worshipping communities. We can have more people loving, knowing, following and serving our Triune God. Praise God from whom all blessings flow! It’s on as we strive to reach new people, more people and more diverse people!

Lillian Smith is the Executive Director of Congregational Transformation and the Director of Connectional Ministries.

Ellis-Killian is to be Philadelphia Area Ecumenical Officer

Continued from page 1

versary Commemoration of the Liberation of Death Camps in May of 1995.”

Ecumenism is not only in his professional service, but in his family as well. Dan’s wife, Sandra, is pastor of St. John’s Lutheran Church in Ambler, same institution as a religious studies department at Villanova University (an Augustinian school.)

What does it mean to be Ecumenical Officer? Dan defines ecumenism to be, “not so much a ‘subject,’ but rather a ‘context’ in which we do theology, practice discipleship, and live out our faith relationally. Ecumenism is not merely about intramural activities between churches, nor the theological dialogues between denominations. Ecumenism (oikoumenes), as its Greek root implies, is something more encompassing, it’s literally ‘household management’, where the ‘house’ is all of God’s creation.”

He added, “We have to live together in this household, where family members speak different languages, where some observe specific dietary restrictions and others refuse to sit at the same table; where not only are different holidays observed, but different calendars used; where previous trespasses are relived and cherished; and where some assume the authority to say who’s ‘in’ and who’s ‘out.’ It’s about the household, but it’s also about the homeless. We have to live together in this household, where difference is not necessarily characteristic and where unity is to be valued over uniformity.”

Dan will represent the Philadelphia Area's two conferences (Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware) at Pan-Methodist, Christian, and inter-faith functions. He said, “To be involved in ecumenism and inter-religious concerns is to be part of something larger than one’s own parochial world. It’s not about finding the ‘lowest common denominator’ or over-looking real differences, but neither is it poltemical (a controversial argument).” It’s dialogical, which means being secured in our identity as United Methodists, especially in a so-called era of post-denominationalism. To be involved in ecumenism is to find ways in which we are to live into the unity of being One in Christ, which is already graciously given. As Jesus prayed in John 17:20-21, “I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

Prayer

Pray for God’s vision for your neighborhood and congregation. Aldersgate Renewal Ministries offers various prayer guides that can be used by congregations. See especially the prayer for revival, the prayer for children and grandchildren, and the prayer for pastors. Prayer does and will make a difference. www.aldersgatenewal.org/resources/prayer/index.html

Prayer Walking

Search on line for prayer walking guides to identify one that meets your needs. As you and other members of your church walk through the neighborhood praying for your neighbors, you show them God’s love as you pray for their physical, emotional, social and financial well-being. You also can pray for each person in the neighborhood to engage and respond to the good news. A number of EPA churches engage in this practice and are seeing God move in mighty ways as more people are coming to the church for ministry.

Everyday Evangelism Ideas

Evangelism Connections on the GBOD Evangelism website provides easy, everyday ideas for your congregation to reach unchurched persons. http://evangelism-connections.org/

GBOD provides various free resources to share with people who want to more confidently share their faith. http://www.gbod.org/evangelism

Together 52 Devotions Together in Ministry Everyday, by Kent Millard and Lori Cranford

Written by the Senior Pastor and Director of Communications, St. Luke’s United Methodist Church, this book details the experience of that congregation. Millard has served as senior pastor of St. Luke’s United Methodist Church in Indianapolis since 1993. Under his leadership, the church grew to 6,000 members, with 3,000 in worship each week in ten different services, including two satellite locations. He served several churches with distinction in South Dakota and was a District Superintendent in the South Dakota Conference.

Just Walk Across the Room

Simple Steps Pointing People to Faith by Bill Hybels

In this book, Hybels, who pastors Willow Creek Church in South Barrington, IL, encourages each reader to claim and know their faith story and to share his/her faith with others. Better yet, write your own story from your church’s experience.
Planting churches takes root in eastern PA

BY IRVING COTTO

G od has blessed our conference with an ever increasing culture of church planting. With a goal of reaching new people, especially younger and more diverse people, we are starting four new churches in 2009, and hopefully before the year is over, will add a fifth one.

A first step in starting churches is assessing potential church planters. Four persons were assessed this spring by The Inquest Group, an organization helping potential church planters better discern their call to this important ministry.

Conversations were held over many months between potential church planters, superintendents and conference staff regarding the new church start model required and the location. Places such as Exeter, Bethlehem, and Narberth and Philadelphia are just a few of the areas identified to begin new faith communities.

The culture of church planting is rooted in people who hear the call from God and then devote themselves to the task of breaking new ground through a variety of strategies and approaches. These four gifted church planters bring their unique talents and life experience to the planting ministry.

Wendy S. Orzolek, a probationary elder, is co-chair of the Congregational Transformation Team (CTT) of our Annual Conference. Presently, she is serving as Pastor for Discipleship at New Haven United Methodist Church in Gillette, PA. She has been responsible for engaging small groups, training Lay Pastors, and leading discipleship initiatives among all age groups. She brings to our Annual Conference a deep passion for evangelism and outreach. A graduate of Palmer Theological Seminary (M.Div.), Wendy has worked in the secular field as a pharmacist with a strong background in research and clinical investigation. With the assistance of New Hanover Church, Wendy is looking forward to a new church start in her home town.

Elsisandra Garcia is a young adult from La Trinidad Wesleyan Methodist Church in Allentown. At the age of 17, Elsisandra received a call to pastoral ministry. She has served in many leadership positions at her local church as youth counselor, translator in bilingual services, worship leader, and preacher. Through music, multimedia presentations, outreach and evangelism, this enthusiastic young woman brings a refreshing spirit to the task of church planting. She is currently working on her B.S. in Religion and Biblical Counseling. Her goal is to pursue her M.Div. at Moravian Theological Seminary.

Byung Woo Cho will start a Korean church in the Glenside area. He will be in a partnership with Lighthouse Fellowship Church and Methodist Church. Pastor Cho comes from Clifton Park, NY. He is an Ordained Elder in Full Connection with the Troy Annual Conference in New York. He was elected president of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Korean United Methodist Association. He and his wife, Eunmi, a deaconess serving through the General Board of Global Ministries, are parents of two children: Esther, who works in New York City, and Daniel, who just graduated from Rochester University in May. Pastor Cho is an experienced pastor who completed is doctor of ministry degree in 2008 with a focus on building strong churches through effective lay leadership.

Lydia E. Munoz, is a graduate of Penn State University with a bachelor’s degree in Psychology and of Wesley Seminary where she obtained her M.Div. Lydia interest is in developing a church that will especially speak directly to young adults and to people seeking an emerging ministries kind of new church start. Having grown up in a missionar family, Lydia knows what it is to live and work among humble communities in Central America and in U.S. urban areas. She is very passionate about young people’s concerns and is an advocate for their full participation at all levels of the church. Ms. Munoz has experience as Local Pastor, psychotherapist, ministry coordinator, and is an accomplished singer. She is fluent in both English and Spanish and has worked as a consultant for the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries.

Lastly, a culture of church planting can only continue grow and continue to develop through a life of prayer and total reliance on God’s Spirit. In other words, church planting is the business of all of us. You may not be in the field as a missional pastor, and you may not be a part of a congregation birthing a new church, but if you are a part of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, you can join us in prayer for each of these potential church planters and the communities they will serve.

Irving Cotto is the Director of Congregational Development, irving.cotto@epaumc.org.

Yvette Davis as Director of Urban and Global Ministries

the Johnson-UGO Foundation Library, and conducted over 30 free community workshops on grant seeking. The library to date has worked with over 100 faith and community organizations. Her background includes ten years of grant writing, obtaining grants for ministry, community partnering, organizing, and workshop facilitation.

In June of 2008, Yvette was appointed part-time local pastor to Bridesburg UMC in Philadelphia. She said, “I was the chosen pastor to develop a vision in its then 174 year history.” While at Bridesburg, she has encouraged servant leadership, re-organized the Sunday school ministry, and expanded the food ministry from a bologna ministry to Bridesburg’s first emergency food ministry through the Philabundance Food Bank.

Yvette has done all of this while also working full-time, as a paralegal and corporate librarian for Constar International, a manufacturer of PET plastic food and beverage containers. Simultaneously, Yvette is also finishing her Master’s degree in Library Science from Drexel University and returning to seminary (formerly she was a student at Palmer Theological Seminary). She will pursue her M.Div. with Asbury Theological Seminary in Kentucky, primarily through online studies.

Now, she succeeds the Rev. Dr. Dorothy Watson Tatem as director of the Urban and Global Office. She plans to “take it wherever God wants it to go. I will seek God’s face and direction to build on what Dr. Tatem and previous directors have done. It is my goal that the office is a blessing to urban ministry and in reaching out to immigrant populations.”

Yvette is a child of the urban setting, having grown up on Long Island, where her family still resides. Her was the middle child, and remains close to her family. Among her pastimes are a love of jewelry making, writing, poetry, and eclectic independent films. She plans to eat “a refreshing spirit to the task of church planting. She is currently working on her B.S. in Religion and Biblical Counseling. Her goal is to pursue her M.Div. at Moravian Theological Seminary.

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Irving Cotto is the Director of Congregational Development, irving.cotto@epaumc.org.

Long’s Barn dedicated as Heritage Landmark

BY SUSY KEENAN

L ong’s Barn, the historical meeting place of Martin Boehm and Philip William Otterbein, was dedicated as a United Methodist Heritage Landmark on May 31, 2009.

The meeting of Otterbein, a German Reformed pastor, and Boehm, a Mennonite preacher, played a significant role in the birth of The United Brethren in Christ, one of United Methodism’s founding denominations. This meeting was an indication of movement of God’s Spirit in doing a new thing in Colonial America, whereas in Europe, the religious views of the two men would have been viewed as significantly opposing. However, 242 years ago on Pentecost Sunday at Long’s Barn, they found themselves drawn together in faithfulness to God when they preached to 1,000 assembled worshippers, with Otterbein exclaiming to Boehm, “We are brethren.” The two men became United Brethren’s first bishops.

Nearly two centuries later, in 1946, the United Brethren merged with the Evangelical Association to form the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) Church; in 1968 The EUB Church merged with The Methodist Church forming The United Methodist Church.

Bishop Peggy Johnson of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference and Rev. Robert Williams, general secretary of the United Methodist General Commission on Archives and History, dedicated Long’s Barn as the newest Heritage Landmark. Bishop Johnson said, “It is appropriate that we are celebrating this dedication on Pentecost. Pentecost is the day that the Holy Spirit gave a diversity of gifts that brought people together in unity. At this barn, two men from two differing Churches came together as brothers in Christ.”

Long’s Barn is now one of 41 United Methodists Heritage Landmarks, five of which are in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. St. George’s UMC, Mother African Zoar UMC, Boehm’s Chapel, Albright Chapel and Long’s Barn. There are nearly 450 official Historic Sites; fourteen of them are within the bounds of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

Visitors seeking to see a place of significant history can find Long’s Barn at 1001 Jake Landis Road, Lititz, PA 17543, just west of Landis Valley Farm Museum between Lititz and Lancaster City.

More information can be found by searching “Long’s Barn” on www.gcah.org.
James R. Bamberger is appointed to Brunenville (1/2 time) and to Parkesburg (1/2 time). He graduated from Drew University Theological Seminary in 1975, then continued with a Doctor of Ministry at Drew in 1982. He was ordained Elder in 1977, transferred to the Eastern PA Annual Conference from 1977-1980. Following his work in the local church, Jim worked almost ten years in the area of chaplaincy, both in military and hospital settings, from 1980 to 1989. For the next fourteen years, he worked as consultor for the St. Paul's charge. In 2002, Jim was appointed as the Stewardship Director of the Finance Program of Lancaster County. From 2004 to present, he has been Executive Director of the Community Life Network in Columbia, PA. The Community Life Network is a comprehensive, community-based, grassroots social service organization helping those in the greater Columbia area. Jim also currently serves on the Board of Directors of LUMINA, the mission of the Southwest District shared with the General Board of Global Ministries. Jim is very much looking forward to returning to local church ministry after many years away from it! Brunenville UMC was founded in 1866, and is located in the northeastern part of Lancaster County, just north of Lititz in a small town. Several decades ago, the church moved a block to its current location to take advantage of greater acreage. The church sits today on a sizable piece of property, giving it the ability to expand as needed. In 2006, the Rev. Ryan Khan followed longtime pastor, the Rev. Fred Landis. Rev. Khan has worked hard to bring the church into the 21st Century technologically, and a new audio visual system now enhances the worship service. The membership stands at 227, with worship attendance averaging 70. Pastors Robert Stuppich and James R. Bamberger will share pastoral duties at Brunenville UMC.

Terre Hill: St. Paul's UMC is located in a small town in northeastern Lancaster County, above New Holland. Formed in 1869, this church sits prominently on Main Street in Terre Hill. With a membership of 114 and average attendance of 40, the small but determined congregation reaches out to its community in a variety of ways. Several years ago, a summer soccer camp was formed to reach out to children and youth in the community. Other community outreach initiatives include a community Thanksgiving Dinner, “Breakfast with Baby Jesus,” and an immunization clinic.

Elaine M. Bortman is appointed to the Georgetown-Meridian Charge (1/2 time) in Delaware County, and has been married to her husband, Michael, for 36 years. They have three children, one granddaughter, and another grandchild on the way. Elaine graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary in 2004, and was commissioned in 2006. Prior to attending seminary, Elaine worked for twenty years as a registered nurse in different clinical settings. Her pastoral ministry began in 1999 when she was appointed as associate pastor of Olivet UMC in Coatesville. From there she went to Grace UMC, then Gradyville UMC, and in 2006 was appointed to the Narberth-Radnor Charge. She and Michael reside near Coatesville, and find time to relax at the New Jersey shore.

Georgetown-Mt. Pleasant Charge may be the oldest two point charge in the Eastern PA Conference – 67 years together and counting! There is a great deal of love and care between the two local churches, and together they impact a sizable part of southeastern Lancaster County and western Chester County. Georgetown UMC was organized in 1832, has a membership of 130, and an average worship attendance of 40. Mt. Pleasant was organized in 1863, has a membership of 62, and an average worship attendance of 20. These two churches, under the able leadership of Rev. John Case and Rev. Tim Remel, reach out to their community in many ways, visiting the sick, planning community events, serving as “Pretzel City, in the early 60’s to German American people. By the time she was a young girl, she had a large interest in singing. She aspires to be a professional throat doctor at some point in the future! Shirley has been a member of West Grove United Methodist Church for 20 years and has been a visionary in its growth in Missions and in the After School Program where she has served on the board. She is currently employed in The Children’s Home and licensed to lead a Pastors. She will be serving ½ time in her appointment. Shirley is married to Fred, and they have four grown children and two grandchildren. Shirley also serves as a volunteer on several committees of the church serving the communities of Southern Chester County. With a special focus on ministering with families with children and older adults, this congregation reaches out in Christ’s name. We worship during two services each Sunday, a service with contemporary music led by our band, PraiseWorks, at 8:30 a.m., and a service with a more traditional order led by our Chancel Choir at 11 a.m. This summer we will offer Mid-Summer Camp, a Bible camp for eight weeks at our local township park. Our ministry opportunities include four UMW circles, an active Missions committee, a softball team, hand bell and children’s choir groups, and many other programs. We have a Children’s Morning Out preschool that includes a special emphasis on students with special needs and those for whom English is a second language. Our Older Adult Ministry, led by new local pastor Shirley Daddario, will soon begin their traditional annual Christmas Eve service with a special emphasis on those for whom English is a second language. Our Church Council, under the leadership of Mrs. Susan Daniels, will soon begin their traditional annual Christmas Eve service with a special emphasis on those for whom English is a second language.
Appointments

Conference, just appointed to Mechanicstown. Curt is a 2006 graduate of Palmer Theological Seminary. Prior to pastoral ministry, Curt was a rocket motor/protection test engineer before entering similar work in the Air Force. During his time in seminary and thereafter, he has served two churches in Delaware. Curt enjoys leading mission trips and has been on several mission experiences in the Dominican Republic and in the Navajo Nation in the southwestern U.S. In his free time, he enjoys both the beach and the mountains, as well as woodworking. We welcome him to our Conference.

Wendy Orzolek is appointed to Plant a New Church at Narberth UMC. She is a graduate of Penn State with a B.S. in Pharmacy from Temple University, her Masters degree in Technical and Science Communication from Drexel University, and her M.Div. from Palmer Theological Seminary (formerly Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary). Before entering ministry, Wendy spent nine years in a variety of positions in the pharmaceutical industry, gaining experience in training, management, and international business. At Walgreen’s in Philadelphia, she was a member of the first local management team. In 2009, Ms. Munoz served as ulong director of pharmacy services at CNPI serving for 16 years, as both staff and volunteer, in almost every area of ministry at New Hanover UMC as the church grew from about 200 in worship in 1994 to over 750 today. In addition, Wendy was a pastoral intern at her alma mater of its intern pastor, Dr. Sharon Bradley, the fellowship hall area in the basement has been transformed into the Art and Soul Café, inviting local and regional artists to perform in a Christian atmosphere on Saturday nights. Originally planned as an event that would occur once or twice each year, it is now weekly, thanks to a “two-year” local newspaper which misrepresented the frequency of the Café. A more contemporary worship service now takes place on Sunday morning in the café area, in addition to the traditional service which takes place in the Sanctuary.

Robert A. Stippich III is appointed to Brunswick (1/2 time). He is a seminary trained local pastor, appointed to Brunswick (1/2 time) serving in addition to his appointment to Philadelphia: Lindley, and Philadelphia: Bridesburg while a student at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary (now Palmer). He is a 2006 graduate of Palmer Theological Seminary. Prior to pastoral ministry, Curt was a rocket motor/protection test engineer, and before that, did similar work in the Air Force. During his time in seminary and thereafter, he has served two churches in Delaware. Curt enjoys leading mission trips and has been on several mission experiences in the Dominican Republic and in the Navajo Nation in the southwestern U.S. In his free time, he enjoys both the beach and the mountains, as well as woodworking. We welcome him to our Conference.

Benjamin T. Taylor is appointed to Narvon: Mt. Zion UMC (1/4 time). He has just retired from full-time ministry, and with his wife, Rebecca, moved to Lancaster County near Millersville. Ben served for the last fourteen years as pastor of Oxford UMC in southern Chester County, and expressed interest in serving a church part-time in retirement. Prior to Oxford UMC, he served a number of years at St. John’s, the Philadelphia: Roxborough: First, Narberth, Philadelphia: Lindley, and Philadelphia: Bridesburg while a student at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary (now Palmer). He received a D. Min. degree from Drew University Theological School in 1988. He is married to Linda, and has four children. For the past six years Bob has been the part-time pastor of Shoeneck: West Memorial UMC in northern Lancaster County. Bob graduated from Boston University School of Theology in 1994, and served as associate pastor of Levitown: Emilie from 1990-92, and Landenberg from 2000-03. Other ministries where Rob has served are: youth pastor at Busleton UMC, transitional program manager of Carson Simpson Farm, and director of Eagles Wings Ministries. He has been active in Walk to Emmaus in the Conference since 1984. Rob believes strongly in church revitalization through Christian discipleship: thus, he had his current appointment doubled in size during his pastorate. Rob moves to full-time local pastor as he continues half-time as pastor of West Memorial UMC in Shoeneck.

Brunerville UMC was founded in 1866, and is located in the northern part of Lancaster County, just north of Lititz in a small town. Several decades ago, the church moved a block to its current location to take advantage of greater acreage. The church sits today on a sizable piece of property, giving it the ability to expand as needed. In 2006, the Rev. Ryan Han followed longtime pastor, the Rev. Fred Lansid. Rev. Han has worked hard to bring the church into the 21st century: technology, a new Sunday school building, and visual system now enhances the worship service. The membership stands at 272, with worship attendance averaging 70. Pastors Robert Stippich and James R. Bamberger will share pastoral duties at Brunerville UMC.
Rethink Church Training

November 13 and 14, 2009

Open hearts, open minds, open doors. What if open were a verb? What if church were something we did 24/7?

Register now for Rethink Church Welcoming Training, presented by United Methodist Communications and sponsored by the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

National trainers will facilitate the training event:
- Terry Keeling, lay member of Richfield United Methodist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Rev. Danette H. Howell, pastor of Weimar Church in Weimar, Texas, and
- Rev. Larry Homitsky, pastor to a cluster of United Methodist churches, rebuilding an urban ministry presence in Pittsburgh, PA (previously Director of Connectional Ministries of the Western PA Conference)

Training will be held at West Chester UMC, West Chester, PA, on Saturday, November 14, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The cost is $40 per church team. There will be a “Training the Trainers” course offered on Friday, November 13 for those interested in training their district churches to be more welcoming.

Check out the REThINKing CHURCH: Rest Stop Ministry.

Two United Methodist Churches in Eastern Pennsylvania are REThINKing the way they do "church.

For Conyngham and Black Creek United Methodist Churches, "church" includes offering free coffee, hot dogs, baked goods to weary holiday travelers over the Fourth of July weekend. This participation is part of PennDOT’s Safety Breaks program offered over the four most-traveled holiday weekends of the year on the state’s highways. The program is open to participation by churches, Boy Scout troops, Lions Clubs, fire companies, high school sports teams, and others. The only requirement is that the organizations offer free coffee at the specially designated rest stops. According to Pastor Lorelei Toombs, almost every member of Conyngham UMC participated in some way over the four days, Friday, July 3 to Monday, July 6 at the White Haven Rest Stop, which is along I 80 Eastbound. Grateful travelers could choose coffee or tea, juice or water, brownies, cookies or cake baked by church members, and hot dogs with the fixings. Conyngham UMC members Beverly Mace and Billie Shaffer have organized this outreach for seven years. This year they used 20 pounds of coffee and gave out over 2500 hot dogs. They organized 64 members, young and old, who worked 4-5 hour shifts.

Rev. Gene Boyer said it was an overall church effort for Black Creek UMC which offered coffee, hot dogs, snacks, water, juice, and doggie treats night and day over July 5 and 6 on North Route 81 on the road toward Wilkes Barre. "It was a great witness, working together and meeting people from all over the country," he said. He also recognized how the rest stop ministry "brings the church together."

At both rest stops, in addition to refreshments, the churches offered conversation, encouragement, and even prayer to weary strangers who had often been in their cars for long periods of time. Visitors were invited to place a pin on maps of the U.S. and world globes, showing their home and their destination. Both rest stops offered travelers an opportunity to write down prayer requests which are prayed over at the churches’ Sunday worship.

The Big Event - Conference Youth Rally

On His Mark, Set, Go

Friday, October 2 - Saturday, October 3

Cost: $50/person

Location: St. Matthews UMC, 600 Walker Rd., Wayne, PA 19087

Information: Jim Wilkin @ 610-666-9090, ext. 225 or jim.wilkin@epaumc.org

"Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win the prize that will fade away, but we do it for the eternal prize."

1 Corinthians 9:24-25