Romansville United Methodist Church is celebrating a decade of presenting their drive-through Living Nativity as their annual Christmas gift to the community. The first Living Nativity took place in 2001. It was a monumental undertaking for the small congregation and immediately became a successful and beloved outreach event.

After the first nativity, while the cast and crew were changing out of costumes, cleaning up and enjoying homemade cookies and hot chocolate everyone was expressing their delight about the success of the project when the pastor overheard a long time member say “she’ll probably want to do it every year now!” and that is exactly what has happened. During the past ten years the congregation and the

Conference adopts new strategy, structure and healthcare

BY SUZY KENNAN

On Saturday, November 13, at Hempfield United Methodist Church, nearly 500 members of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference attended the Adjourned (Fall) Session.


Rev. Rene Perez, pastor of Lititz UMC preached, noting the bad economy and its effect on the country. He asked, “How do we respond and live out faith – churches and conference asking the same question – how are we going to do this?”

Rev. Perez shared the situation in his own congregation, with the bad economy, and being $30,000 in debt, when they committed to sending a container with $10,000 of medical supplies to Kenya. “We asked everyone in the congregation to pray, and God planted dream and a vision. It is God’s dream and vision - he will provide!” He added, “We give not what we can give, but what God promised we could give. Imagine the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference and all its churches together with one mission in mind – to change the world with people coming to Christ by the hundreds!”

And he asked, “Now how many of you are with me today?”

John Longmire introduced Michael Agwanda, director of Life for Children Ministry in Kisumu, Kenya. This

Continued on page 7

Continued on page 9
**December**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12**
Messiah Performance: at Arch Street United Methodist Church, 55 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Arch Street’s annual presentation of the Christmas portion of Handel’s Messiah, Sunday, December 12th during the 11 o’clock service.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19**
“Two Thousand Years Ago” - Christmas Musical: Hope Church UMC - Douglassville, PA 7 p.m. on Sunday. Negotiations are suggests but are not required. “Two Thousand Years Ago” is an original Christmas musical presented by the Hope Church choir and special guest vocalists. Contact: Ran Birkins - Choir Director, choirdirector@hopechurchamity.org. More information: www.HopeChurchAmity.org.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26**
A Christmas Offering” - a Christmas Cantata by Marty Parks: The choral cantata performance is on Sunday, December 19th, at 7 PM and Sunday, December 26th, at 9 AM during the morning worship service. For more information about TUMC’s “A Christmas Offering” choral presentation and for driving directions to Tabor UMC, please contact TUMC at 2209 Hendricks Station Road, Wxall, PA 18979, or call the church office at 215-234-4852; or visit www.taborumc.org.

**Wednesday - Friday, December 29-31**
SR/SK High Retreat: Wednesday 7:00 p.m. - Friday 2:00 p.m. Celebrate the season at WINTER BLAST 2010! Connect with God, renew your faith, and experience outdoor adventures including late night gait! Join us for a birthday celebration and the real meaning of Christmas! Don’t miss out on this awesome holiday retreat! Grades 7-12. The Program Directors are Liz and Jared Stoltzfus. Cost: $95. www.poconoplateau.org.

**January**

**Friday - Sunday, January 14 - 16**
Youth Winter Blast Retreat: (Friday 7:00 p.m. - Sunday 2:00 p.m.) Try out ice skating or show off your skills at the local ice skating arena. Come learn how we are called to be full time followers of Jesus. Don’t miss this weekend of fun, crafts, games, high ropes, fellowship and food! Cost: $85.00. www.gretagnagen.org

**Saturday, January 15**
Nepal Mission Team: Those interested in being part of a 10-12 member Nepal Mission Team are invited to gather from 10:00 AM to Noon to talk about possible dates, the purpose, and preparations at West Lawn UMC is located at 15 Woodside Avenue in Reading, PA.

**Tuesday - Thursday, January 18-20**
Bishop’s Midwinter Retreat 2011 for Clergy and Spouses: Lancaster Convention Center, Marriott Hotel, Lancaster, PA. Guest Speaker – The Rev. Kwasi Kena, General Board of Discipleship Register now online: http://www.epaumc.org/events/calendar/midwinter-retreat

**Friday, January 21**
Winter Jamboree! Children’s Retreat: Pocono Plateau Camp & Retreat Center, 304 Pocono Plateau Road, Cresco, PA, 18326. Theme: Say What? Cost: $85/person. Online registration forms and mail-in forms are available on website: www.poconoplateau.org. Contact Glenon Carper, Program Manager, 570-676-5665 or camp@poconoplateau.org

**Friday - Sunday, January 21 - 23**
Children’s Retreat: (grades 2-5)
Youth Retreat: (grades 6-9)
Women’s Retreat: www.innabah.org for more information on any of these events.

**Saturday, January 29**
Tools for Ministry: See article on page 4.

**Monday, January 31**
Exploring the Faith: Led by Scholarly Or- dained Ministers - Practical, Evocative Lectures Relevant for the 21st Century Church, Rooted in Scripture and Tradition. FREE lunch and registration. All prospective grad- uate students: REGISTER TO WIN A United Theological Seminary Tuition Voucher! 0.4 Continuing Education Units. To Register, go to www.united.edu - click on Alumni/ae Tab - Tools for Ministry:

**February**

**Friday - Saturday, February 4-5**
“Understanding Today’s Youth Culture”: Pocono Plateau Camp & Retreat Center retreat for Youth Workers, Pastors, Parents, and Teachers. The retreat is scheduled for 2 PM February 4th – 7 PM Feb 5th – 2011. Contact at 570.676.3665 to register or for more information. For the FULL-BRO CHURE: http://www.poconoplateau.org/documents/CPUFul1retreatBrochure.pdf

**February - Sunday, February 14 • 6 Challenge Retreat: – (ages 12 and above) – Innabah Come join us for another awesom- e challenge retreat. Activities include Bible studies, games, songs, socializing, relaxing, camp fires, and so much more! Cost: $80.00. www.innabah.org

**Friday - Saturday, February 11 & 12**
Conference-wide Laity Retreat At: National Christian Conference Center, 1485 Valley Forge Road, Phoenixville, PA 19460. Dr. Mary White, Chair of the Board of Lay Ministry for More information contact office: Ph 215-236-0304 or mwihite4891@aol.com. THIS IS OPEN TO ALL LAITY Print a flyer: http://www.epaumc.org/events/calendar/layretreat

**Thursday - Saturday, February 24 - 26**
Eccumenical Marriage Encounter Weekend Clergy Couples: Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekends take couples beyond the frustration, disappointments, and loneliness that can be a part of everyday life. Brochures are available from dottielund@ comcast.net (ph. 302-478-4209) or register on-line at: www.presby-me.org. Registration is also available at www.encounter. org, the website of Encounter – United Methodist. Space is limited to 10 couples, so register early!

**Sunday - Wednesday, Feb. 27-MARCH 2**
Northeastern Jurisdiction Clergywomen’s Consultation: See page 12.

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**In Memoriam**

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**Rev. Ronald L. Bickhart**

Word has been received of the death of The Rev. Ronald L. Bickhart, retired Elder, who passed away on November 25, 2010, in Reading Hospital and Medical Center. Rev. Bickhart served the following appointments beginning in 1970: Jon- estown; Fredericksburg; West Lawn; Lancaster: Pearl Street; Telford: Grace; Collingdale: Mariner’s; and Harmony. He retired in 2007, and has served since that time as Pastor of Visitation at West Lawn UMC. He graduated from Ephrata High School in 1960, Albright College in 1967, and United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH in 1970.

He is survived by his wife, Anna (they were married 42 years), a daughter, Pam, wife of Mark Kennedy, and two grandsons.

Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Anna Bickhart, 2900 Garfield Avenue, West Lawn, PA 19609. Online condolences may be recorded at www.kuhlunfurnair.com. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to West Lawn United Methodist Church, 15 Woodside Ave., West Lawn, PA 19609.

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**Rev. Reeves C. Havens**

Word has been received of the death of The Rev. Reeves C. Havens, Retired Elder, who passed away on November 9, 2010. Rev. Havens served the following appointments: Extension Ministry in NJ; Pgitston: ST. Paul’s; Skinner’s Eddy; Wylas- ing: Chenango Bridge (all in Wyo. Conf.); Extension Ministry in AK: Nome AK (Missional Pastor); Ketchikan, AK; Nichols, NY (Wyo. Conf.); Extension Ministry: Phila: Chaplain, Methodist Hospi- tal; Former Lancaster: Broad St. (wiv Christ) and Extension Ministry: Chaplain, Cornwall Manor. He retired in 1978.

He is survived his wife, Geraldine, and by four children: Allan Havens, Lyndal H. Lovett, Rane Wise and Maia Havens. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to the family in care of his wife, Mrs. Geraldine Havens, 314 Cool Springs Blvd., Apt. 132, Franklin, TN 37067.

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**Rev. Howard D. Huddleson**

Word has been received of the death of Reverend Howard D. Huddleson, 87, on Friday, August 27, 2010, at Hospice of Lancaster County. His wife, Glenda Susan (Frick) Huddleson preceded him in death in 1996. Reverend Huddleson served as pastor Periodicals postage paid at Norristown, PA 19403. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: NEWSpirit at EPA Conference, P.O. Box 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482.

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**Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World**
Happy New Year!

A Word from the Bishop

T he season of Advent is upon us once again and I say to you “Happy New Year!” It is right to say “Happy New Year” on the first Sunday of Ad- vent because it is the first Sunday of the Christian calendar. During the four weeks before the celebra- tion of the birth of Christ we devote ourselves to preparaation. We prepare spiritually for the coming of Christ into our hearts and lives and look forward to Christ’s second coming.

We remember the words of John the Baptist who calls people to repentance and change. (Matthew 3:2) We read from the prophet Isaiah “Prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain.” (Isaiah 40:3-4) He is talking about our lives and behavior here, not road construction. Isaiah is calling for social justice which will result in the revelation of the glory of God so that all people can see the Lord. (Isaiah 40:5)

In another month we have another occasion to say “Happy New Year!” That is of course, the celebration of a new calendar year. People often prepare for this by declaring any number of “New Year’s Resolutions.” These tend to be a list of earnest plans to improve ourselves; chief among these resolutions is losing weight. But there are countless other resolutions that we can think of as we sense this “turning over a new leaf” time of a new year’s approach.

This year Advent’s call to social justice can be paired with the calendar’s New Year’s Resolution in a United Methodist Call for “Just and Humane Immigration Reform in 2011.” This program (“The New Year’s Resolution Campaign”) calls United Methodists and all people to choose some action steps to do in the new year that will help promote peace among the earth’s people. Here are possible activities:

1) Call congress once a week and urge your representatives to enact humane immigration reform laws that reunifies families and provides a pathway to legal status for undocumented immigrants.
2) Invite an immigrant family to your home for dinner.
3) Have conversations with friends or fellow church members about the issues of immigration reform.
4) Volunteer to teach at an “English as a Second Language” ministry or at an immigration legal clinic.
5) Host the showing of a film about immigration
6) Pray daily for the protection of immigrants and their families.

Few issues divide people like the issue of immi-gration reform. There are Christians of good will who strongly disagree about this. We can agree that the laws in this country with regards to immigration are not working well. People need to work together in peace to find solutions that are lasting and fair. United Methodists have histori- cally worked for social justice and get involved in ministries with the poor.

Several years ago when I was a pastor in Balti-more, I got to know a deaf man from Ethiopia. He came to the U.S. seeking asylum because there were death threats on his life due to some politi-cal strike back home. He attended the deaf church and lived with his sister, who was a U.S. citizen. This deaf man had to leave his wife and children in Ethiopia because there was no money to bring them to the U.S. The people who were seeking his life in Ethiopia would constantly harass his wife and family. This deaf man struggled long and hard in the immigration court system. It was doubly hard for him because his sign language was different from American Sign Language.

Through the years I worked with him I got to know his sister, have dinner with them in their home and understand the pain of separa-tion and the severe poverty they suffered with every day. His family back home suffered even more from hunger and deprivation. Blessedly this deaf man was successful in immigration court and has documentation that will allow him to live in the US. His wife and children have recently joined him in this country.

Getting to know him as a person and not as a stranger or an intruder was an important experi- ence for me. In the Disney movie “Pocahontas” the song “The Colors of the Wind” says it this way: “You think the only people who are people are people who look and think like you, but if you walk the footsteps of the stranger, you’ll learn things you never knew you never knew.”

Perhaps you will consider having someone to your home for dinner who is an immigrant. When we break bread together we break barriers of distrust and suspicion. I wish you a Happy Advent and a Happy New Year and I pray that whatever plans you make, you will give a thought to immigration reform in whatever way the Lord lays on your heart.

Rev. Thatcher served the following appointments: former Glendon; former Nazareth: Trinity; Shenan-doah: First; and William Penn. She retired in 1988.

She is survived by her sons Daniel, Craig, and Jason; a sister, Susanne Sumerfield of Mount Joy (wife of The Rev. Allan Sumerfield, Sr. of the EPA Conference); nine great grandchildren, Darin Charles Yrigoyen and Hunter Radice Yrigoyen also of North Liberty, Iowa; and two great grandchildren, Darin Charles Yrigoyen and Hunter Radice Yrigoyen also of North Liberty, Iowa.

Mrs. Erma Mae (Suters) Yrigoyen

Erma Mae (Suters) Yrigoyen, 96, born in Philadel-phia, PA, March 25, 1914, died on September 1, 2010 at the hospital’s woman’s auxiliary and served for many years as its treasurer.

As a pastor’s wife, Erma was an active church member and leader in her husband’s churches (all in eastern PA – Croydon, Kensington, Langhorne, Brookline, Reading, Arch Street (Philadelphia), and Allentown). She taught Sunday school, sang in the choir, was active in the church’s women’s groups, and fulfilled with joy the many duties expected of a pastor’s wife. While her husband was the Chaplain of Philadelphia’s Methodist Hospital, she was a leader in the hospital’s woman’s auxiliary and served for many years as its treasurer.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Erma S Yrigoyen Memorial Fund, Langhorne United Methodist Church, 301 East Maple Avenue, Langhorne, PA 19047.
A Call to Action

No one is immune. A situation presents itself in which a decision has to be made. Every person, generation, community, family and church faces a pivotal situation. Whether it is a recession, or some other situation, no one is immune. When faced with a body of water in front of them, and those who wanted to re-enslave them close behind, formerly enslaved Israelites had to choose. Surrender to those who wanted them to return to a life of bondage, or go into the water in front of them. Go back to Egypt to a life of captivity, which wasn’t God’s plan, or trust God in seemingly impossible situations. The situation must have been frightening, maybe even disheartening. In their call to action, the people were challenged to trust God and go into uncharted territory, on their road to fulfilling God’s destiny for their lives.

In fear, the Israelites said to Moses, “What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt?” Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, “Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians”? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” Moses then said to the people, “Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today…” God then told Moses “Tell the Israelites to go forward.” (Exodus 14: 10-15) If you don’t remember the story, God created a path in the water so that the Israelites could cross over to freedom. The ensuing Egyptians did not have it so good. The water overtook them.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus faces a situation that would cost him his life and result in ridicule, heartache, and pain. Knowing full well that he was about to be betrayed and eventually crucified, Jesus chose to stay the course to save us and all of humanity. Instead of calling on the angels to deliver him from the situation, he prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nonetheless, not my will, but yours, be done.” (Matthew 26: 39)

The United Methodist Church and the people called United Methodists are now being issued “A Call to Action.” Faced with continuing decline, the Council of Bishops, the Connectional Table and every church and congregational leader is being invited and challenged to act.

Findings revealed, “While there are many examples of effective disciple-making, prophetic witness, and ministries of justice and mercy across the Connection, these efforts do not obviate the effects in the United States and Europe of our increasingly older membership and aging leaders; declines within the number of professions of faith, worship attendance, and baptisms; and growing financial burdens accompanied by decreasing revenues.” (pg. 8)

The report goes on to say, “Thus the adaptive challenge for The United Methodist Church is: To redirect the flow of attention, energy, and resources to an intense concentration on fostering and sustaining an increase in the number of vital congregations effective in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” (pg. 8)

“The Call to Action,” is calling for increased accountability for every level of ministry - clergy, congregations, general agencies, and Bishops. Congregations will be challenged to demonstrate effectiveness in implementing the three factors of vitality identified in the Towers Watson Report. Those factors are attendance, growth, and engagement.” The report also calls for the dramatic reform of “clergy leadership development, deployment, evaluation and accountability systems. Active Bishops will be “assuming responsibility and public accountability for improving results in attendance, professions of faith, baptisms, participation in servant/mission ministries, benevolent giving, and lowering the average age of participants in local church life; and establishing a new culture of accountability throughout the church.”

Saints of the Most High God, we are all in this together. It will take all of us, by the grace, power and anointing of God, to turn things around. To read the entire report, go to: www.umc.org/call-to-action.

During the coming months we will learn more of how we will be invited to respond to the call to action. The districts and the conference, as a whole, will have to increase urges to resource all congregations so that they can better fulfill their mission of “Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” You will hear more from Bishop Johnson and the District Superintendents about how this call will affect our conference.

Our time is now: to throw in the towel because of fear. Now is not the time to retreat or place our head in the sand. Now is not the time to lament, “We just can’t do it.” Instead now is the time to answer the call, trust God, pray, and move forward.

Like Paul, in his letter to the Church in Philippi, we will each need to declare, “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:14)

Like our spiritual forbears, it is time to again answer the call. Like Charles Wesley, in his hymn, we are challenged to declare, “A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify, a never dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky.” Like our spiritual forbears, it is time again to trust God and answer the call. Is it impossible? Under our own power, yes it is. Under the power of the Holy Spirit, nothing is impossible to us who claim and believe in the name of Christ.

I give thanks to God for you and the ministry you undertake for Christ. May God strengthen all of us for the challenge that lies ahead.

REV. LILLIAN C. SMITH IS THE DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION WITH THE EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. SHE CAN BE CONTACTED AT LSMITH@EPAUMC.ORG OR 610-666-9099.
Event trains leaders of African descent

Left to right: The Rev. Amos Olatepo, Sr. Pastor, Epworth United Methodist Church, Chicago, IL, The Rev. Dr. Mercy Amba Odoyoye, Director, Institute of Women in Religion and Culture, Ghana, Africa, Gerald Lenoir, Director, Black Alliance for Just Immigration, Oakland, CA and Julie Fleurinor, M.Div Candidate, Garrett Theological Seminary, Haiti.

BY YVETTE DAVIS


Julie Fleurinor, a Haitian African-American woman and seminarian at Garrett Theological Seminary was present for the conference. Ms. Fleurinor reflected on the transformation she experienced while attending the African/Caribbean Diaspora Leadership Conference, “Growing up in Miami, Florida, there were real dangers in not being able to walk, talk and act like an American. The tremendous pressure to conform and fit in was unbelievable. I remember a heartbreaking incident of a boy killing himself after a group of his friends discovered that he was Haitian. Though there is not that much pressure to conform today, attitudes towards immigrants continues to be discriminatory and dismissive. The prevailing cultural undertone is, ‘different is deficient.’” During the recent African-Caribbean Diaspora Leadership Training Conference in New York City, Ms. Fleurinor experienced a miraculous healing in her heart, mind and soul through a story told by Prof. Emile Townes, a leading womanist theologian and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Yale Divinity School, began the conversation with principles for transformative leadership: integrity, vision, courage, and “passion for the things that keeps us going when we are afraid.” Prof. Mercy Ambo Odoyoye, Director, Institute of Women in Religion and Culture in Accra, Ghana, exclaimed, “Embrace your full humanity!” Ms. Fleurinor expressed gratitude for the conference.}

Leading Beyond the Walls

The Church of the Resurrection will be coming to the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference in the spring to lead follow-up sessions to annual conference’s presentation of “Leading Beyond the Walls”

- March 4-5, 2011-Combined Northwest and Southwest Districts
- March 11-12, 2011-Combined Central and Southeast Districts at Paoli UMC, 81 Devon rRd, Paoli, PA
- March 18-19, 2011-Combined Northeast and East Districts
- April 1-2, 2011-Northeast District at East Stroudsburg UMC

Day One: 5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Day Two: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Each congregation will be invited to send a team of at least three people, including the pastor. More information about registration costs and sites will be forthcoming.

Exploration 2011

Exploration 2011, an event for young adults who feel God’s call to ordained ministry as a deacon or elder in The United Methodist Church, will take place Nov. 11-13, 2011, in St. Louis, MO.

The event provides a chance to explore the call to ordained ministry through worship, prayer, workshops, networking, and small groups.

Sponsored by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Exploration 2011 is open to young adults age 18 to 26. The registration fee will cover a two-night stay at the Millennium Hotel, meals, and program fees.

Updates and registration information will be posted on the event Web site at www.gbhem.org/exploration.

This year’s event will incorporate feedback we received through a longitudinal study begun at the 2009 Exploration. We hope to use what we have learned so far about the effect of these events on the discernment process to make each event more relevant to the participants,” said the Rev. Meg Lassiat, director of Candidacy, Mentoring, and Conference Relations.

The Design Team which is planning the event encourages campus ministries, annual conferences, and local churches to identify young adults who exhibit the gifts and graces for ordained ministry and to invite and support their attendance at this event.

The event will include speakers, worship, workshops, and small group interaction to help students hear, discern, and respond to their call to ordained ministry.
MINISTRY WITH THE POOR

December 2010

Alternate giving: Coins for kids

BY ANGELE PARKER

Your congregation is invited to support Methodist Services for Children and Families “Coins for Kids” Campaign. This new initiative is an opportunity for congregations in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church to continue their support of the Methodist Home for Children in a unique way.

Perhaps you are looking for a way to further engage the young people in your congregation and encourage their philanthropic spirit. Or perhaps you would like to offer alternative gifting at Christmas. Through “Coins for Kids” your congregation can designate the loose change offerings on a Sunday to Methodist Services.

The donations collected through “Coins for Kids” will provide support to children and families throughout Eastern Pennsylvania in many ways, including:

- Providing After School Programming for inner city youth
- Offering Community Counseling to individuals and families in need
- Helping families find safe and affordable housing
- Supporting single mothers find employment and daycare for their children
- Creating permanent homes for children through adoption

We are grateful for the ongoing, generous support of the congregations in the Conference and thank you in advance for your support of the “Coins for Kids” Campaign. If you have any questions or are interested in having a speaker from Methodist Services come to your church, please call Joan Shumate, Director of Community Relations, at 215-877-1925 ext. 116 or jshumate@methodistserVICES.org.

ANGELE PARKER, PH. D. IS PRESIDENT AND CEO of the Methodist Home for Children.

UM Neighborhood Services makes Christmas possible for low-income persons

BY SUSY KEENAN

United Methodist Neighborhood Services in North Philadelphia reaches out to low-income persons each year with a Christmas Shop. This year the shop is awash with new clothing and toys, all donated by the United Methodist Women's Ingathering, churches, and generous individuals. All items in the shop are affordable, with nothing over $10. The shop will be open from December 1 – 23, 2010, 9:30 – 5:00 p.m. Monday- Saturday.

Items needed for the shop are as follows: New clothing for women, men and children all sizes (babies, toddlers, children, boys and girls) hats, gloves, toys, board games, dolls. Dr. Mary White, executive director, issues this invitation: “If you have the time and would like to share the spirit of Christmas, come down and lend a hand in the Christmas Shop and meet our clients.”

Clifton UMC and ACME partner to provide Thanksgiving dinners

In a conversation before Thanksgiving, local parishioner and shopper Naomi Antenelli of Alden PA, a member of Clifton UMC, and Laura Rainer, Manager of the Acme in Clifton Heights devised a plan to provide Thanksgiving meals for local families.

As the Acme market solicited contributions from the checkout counters, Clifton United Methodist Church identified families to receive a Thanksgiving meal, complete with cooked 10 pound turkeys, mashed potatoes, stuffing and gravy. Ms. Rainer said, “It is important we contribute to our own community, and we are happy to do this.” On Tuesday evening the generous and spirited workers of the Acme market filled Pastor Scott Friedgen-Velitch's SUV with fifteen meals, and off he went.

The meals were given to individuals and families who might not have had an opportunity to celebrate Thanksgiving. The first meal was given to a retired nurse, who is the “Pied Piper” for the kids in her neighborhood. The kids helped her heat and serve the meal and they shared it together.

Other meals went to shut in families whose partners recently underwent surgery, and who were not able to get to the homes of loved ones this year. Besides leaving meals behind for the families to enjoy, Pastor Scott shared prayers and fellowship with recipients. Several meals went to African families in Collingdale so they could experience a traditional American Thanksgiving. One meal went to persons recently transplanted to the community from Liberia, via South Dakota.

Pastor Scott often says, “I believe our gifts must be located somewhere between our hearts and our stomachs, because sharing our faith often includes a meal!”
MINISTRY WITH THE POOR

December 2010

I n 2006, one of our members, Mr. Anthram Lazarus, asked our congregation, Lighthouse Fellowship United Methodist Church, to build a new church for his impoverished rural childhood village in India. The construction and supply costs amounted to about $44,000, including the purchase of land in 2007. Over the course of time our congregation gave over $13,000 through members' personal donations, while Mr. Lazarus' extended family raised over $10,000. A private benefactor generously donated $5000 for the freshwater well, but we still needed over $15,000 to complete the construction.

We want to convey to you the importance of believing God for impossible things! We prayed and voted to give the balance due from the last of our savings to complete the work. With less than 100 members in church every Sunday worshipping in a big facility needing repairs, giving all our savings has been a huge step of faith for our congregation. But trusting God is what makes all things possible. Before we even knew how much it would cost, we knew the Lord was calling us to take on this task. We sent the rest from the very last of our congregation's savings. Before the merger of Glenside and Abington UMC's to create our new congregation, Lighthouse Fellowship, we had a missionary come and speak. The congregation voted to give the whole offering to her even though we need a new roof. Within days, a community member contacted us saying, "We heard that you need a new roof, and we've come to give it to you." So here is the basis of our faith: if we give what we have, God will provide what we need. Often in our churches, we save for a rainy day, and it is pouring out! We're trying to save ourselves and we can't do it. If we give it all away, God will provide for our need if we are about his business.

Back in India, Mr. Lazarus' own father had been a poor subsistence farmer from a family of poor subsistence farmers. Traditionally, as the eldest son, Mr. Lazarus was expected to follow in his father's footsteps, but his father had a different plan. He insisted that his son go to the Methodist mission school in Vikarabad and become educated. Mr. Lazarus became a civil engineer and built many mission schools and churches in southern India. He and his wife, Sugandhini, a teacher, have two children who are doctors - just the second generation from their illiterate grandparents. (Did you know that only $20 a year provides one student's education, room, board, and supplies in a Methodist mission school in India?)

This past July, six members from our congregation traveled to India for 18 days to dedicate the new Grace Methodist Church with the Bishop of Hyderabad, Bishop M. V. Khristi, and to visit the Methodist mission schools and churches. Again and again we witnessed dedicated local Christians lovingly changing the destiny of an impoverished nation one precious life at a time. We were blessed beyond words. Whether the price tag is $44,000 or $20, we have found it possible and completely worthwhile to spend ourselves on the kingdom of God. We encourage you to do the same. Remember this: when we put our hope in God, we are not just putting our hope but our confidence in Him. Bishop Khristie has asked for doctors to come to work in the Methodist Mission hospitals in Hyderabad. We are about his business. We pray to convey to you the importance of believing God for impossible things! We're trying to save ourselves and we can't do it. If we give it all away, God will provide for our need if we are about his business.

By Cindy Brubaker

Lighthouse Fellowship builds new church in India

Methodist mission schools in India make opportunities available to children through affordable education.

Worshippers celebrate the opening of the new Grace Methodist Church.
Welcome new staff

James P. Brown

James P. Brown began November 22 as manager of Financial Services for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. His previous work experience included serving as finance director for the Latin American Community Center in Wilmington, DE, where he supervised three finance staff and managed over forty federal and state grants. James was previously a financial systems consultant for Gunnip & Co., Wilmington, DE, and comptroller for the Garnet Valley School District. A graduate of Widener University in Chester, PA, he holds both a Master of Science in Accounting and a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. James loves to coach baseball and basketball at the Brandywine Youth Club. James and his wife, Renee, have a son, Hayden. The Brown Family attends St. John’s Episcopal Church in Wilmington, DE, where he has served for two years as finance chair.

Contact: jbrown@epaucmc.org or 610-666-9090, ext. 224.

Tamara Clark

Tamara C. Clark began November 1 as support associate for Accounts Payable and Cash Receipts for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Tamara holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Temple University with a concentration in Accounting. She previously held the position of staff accountant at David A. Lopez & Co. in Philadelphia, where she provided financial accounting for individuals, small to mid-size companies and non-profits, including audits, reviews, compilations, and tax returns.

Tamara is a member of Midtown Parish United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, where she has served on the Building Committee with the responsibility of making financial plans for the building of a new church structure. She initiated the church’s use of part of its property as a Youth Lounge where youth could come to a safe place for faith and fun activities.

Contact: tclark@epaucmc.org or 610-666-9090, ext. 219.

NorthStar UMC warms up Black Friday shoppers

BY SUZY KEEGAN

Pastor Wendy Orzolek, pastor of new church NorthStar UMC, and a faithful team of five found a great way to warm up the Exeter Township community to God’s love. In the predawn hours they served up hot chocolate and coffee to anxious chilly shoppers waiting in line outside Target on Black Friday.

NorthStar has worshipped together twice this time: once in October and once in November. The Black Friday outreach was a way for the church to make its presence known to the local community and to share God’s love in a unique way.

Rev. Orzolek said, “Our Black Friday outreach was awesome! Yes, despite the crazy early hour, we had a great time. Even better, the reaction was as we had hoped—people were truly surprised and very appreciative of free coffee or hot chocolate while they waited in line for Target to open. What a great way to spread some kindness and joy on a typically frazzled, ‘me-first’ kind of day.”

The morning was not without its challenges. She explained, “Just as Tony was about to put on the backpack full of 5 gallons of hot chocolate, the beverage in less than one hour!”

The team also handed out cards with the message, “Merry Christmas! This is a simple way of sharing God’s love!” On the back of the card was an invitation to Christmas Eve services at the Dunn Community Center, which will be the third worship service for the new congregation.

Although some of the team members were skeptical about how shoppers would receive the outreach, and were also apprehensive about the welcome that they would receive from the Target store, all went well. Rev. Orzolek explained, “Target security barely paid us any attention. Maybe it helped that we also went around with a garbage bag at the end!”

She added, “It was a really fun way to connect with people and give a gift to the community and to help people see the love of God in a practical way! A huge ‘thank you’ to Tony, Linda, Chuck, Bob, and Gil for getting up early and serving with such a joyful spirit!”

“It was something simple to touch people’s hearts,” Rev. Orzolek said, “and open them up to hearing something else.”

Check out the photos at www.Facebook.com/NorthStarUMC.

Two congregations certified “welcoming churches”

Congratulations to the two new certified Welcoming Congregations in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference: Epworth United Methodist Church in Bethlehem and its pastor, Rev. Timothy Duchesne, as well as Valley Forge: St. Matthew’s United Methodist Church, and its pastor, Rev. Dawn Taylor-Storr.

Epworth and St. Matthew’s join five other Eastern Pennsylvania congregations which have been striving to be more welcoming and inviting congregations: Hope- land, Orwigsburg; Salem, Berwyn, Mohnton; Calvary, and West Lawn.

Pursuing Welcoming Congregation certification means reviewing a checklist. You can note welcoming activities in which your church already participates, and examine ways in which your church might become more welcoming and inviting. To obtain a copy of the award checklist, go to: www.umcom.org/rethinkchurch.

Bishop Peggy Johnson encourages all of our congregations to obtain certification: “I am thrilled to know that Eastern PA has two new certified ‘welcoming churches.’ This is evidence of sound doctrine and a commitment to evangelism. Many of the items on the checklist are simple to accomplish and yet many of our churches could be doing so much more.”

As a Welcoming Congregation you will receive an official letter, a plaque with seal and a few other items to help you celebrate and share the story of your church’s welcoming certification. Starting in January 2011, United Methodist Communications will be offering an online forum for all Welcoming Certified Congregations to share their successes, best practices and complete steps toward annual renewal of the welcoming certification status.

Rethink Church trainers are also available in every district to help train your church’s leadership in welcoming ministry.

For more information, contact Suzy Keenan, director of Communications, communications@epaucmc.org.
Plumbline on the Mainline: A Place for You!

By Lydia E. Muñoz

If anyone tells you that the process of church planting is filled with great joy and excitement, stop them immediately and ask them “so, have you planted a church lately?” The truth is that it is filled with great joy and excitement, but they are cleverly disguised in challenges, struggles, endless phone and personal contacts, countless hours of proposal writing, and a myriad of trips to the grocery store for refreshments to be ready for every event that you host.

However, sooner but most likely later, through divine intervention, things begin to line themselves up and those long days of working through contact after contact, and perhaps never seeing a rejection begin to bring back some results. Now I can guarantee you that the results will never seem exactly the way you have envisioned, but the more I work at this, the more I see that it’s true what Scripture says in Acts 2:47, “And the Lord added to their number.”

PlumbLine Fellowship in Narberth UMC is a new church start that began its birth process in July of 2009. Through many dangers, toils and snares, PlumbLine has been trying to work through the hard process of transforming an existing congregation that has been struggling to survive, into the vision of PlumbLine with a mission to be a place where people are called to become disciples of Jesus Christ working to bring spiritual depth and equitability in an unbalanced world. This has not been an easy task, and there have been moments of complete frustration. Nonetheless, the existing congregation has been engaged in the extensive work of discovering what it means to be a new church start, and developing the gifts to practice radical hospitality in order to welcome new folks.

One of the ways we strive for our mission is through the ministry of the Family Resource Center. Here families can receive food, clothing and legal consultation to help them with their utilities bills. Our Center also provides mental health assistance through our program, Circles of Care. This program is designed to create support groups for people in transition due to job loss, economic hardship and or immigration issues. We are diligently working with the community to create a much needed community center that will house several classes for all generations, after school programs, musical events, small group studies and worship.

Another place we seek to live out our mission is through our alternative worship service called The Well. The Well is a coffee house emergent worship, where people come to a relaxed experience of worship, engage in Biblical and theological reflection and participate in the Eucharist.

At The Well, we provide a complete meal to folks who come, offering them the message of Jesus Christ. Already this first weekend we expect to have 50 to 100 young people participate in a talent and dance show. This is a gift to be able to connect beautifully prepared table complete with candles and silverware, where everyone is treated the same. You are ushered to a seat and you never know who you will sit with because everyone is treated the same. This is true in all that we do in the name of Love. So at our coffee house Jesus-loving, Kingdom-building disciples could buy the local farmers market, buy the local butcher, buy the local baker, buy the local coffee, buy the local produce, and buy the local decaf coffee because our kitchen was out of the question. We wanted a soup kitchen was out of the question. We wanted to provide a warm meal for people with dignity and respect, so a soup center. We wanted to provide a warm meal for folks in need. We wanted to provide a warm meal for folks in need. In a soup center. We wanted to provide a warm meal for folks in need. In a soup center. We wanted to provide a warm meal for folks in need. In a soup center.

The Rev. Lydia Muñoz leads worship at Plumbline UMC.

Rev. Lydia Muñoz with son at "Re-verse Trick-or-Treat."

The Ministry feeds thousands of children a meal and teaches them about Jesus. “1.8 million children are living on street, looking in trash cuts and begging for something to eat,” he said. “It tears my heart, many will die without knowing the love of Jesus Christ.” The Ministry feeds thousands of children a meal and teaches them about Jesus.

Bishop Peggy Johnson’s words of encouragement: “Find some way your church can be involved in something international. Do you have one already? Then please find a second.”

The conference voted to adopt agenda and rules of order. Nominations for the Committee on Investigation were approved by vote.

Strategic Review Team, led by Rev. John Bhajjan, presented the proposed goals for the Annual Conference, which are divided into the four areas of focus: developing principled Christian leaders; creating new places for new people, younger people, more diverse people and revitalizing existing congregations; engaging in ministry with the poor, and improving health globally. These goals are for how the local churches so they may live into their ministry with purpose. Rev. Bhajjan said, “Look at these goals in the local context - in taking these goals to your congregation – and the conference to begin to resource into these goals. The goals are bottom up - not top down.”

The new strategy was approved by vote of the conference.

The Structure Review proposes a new structure for staff and boards for the Annual Conference. Jason Perkowski, chair of the Structure Review Team, said, “The heart is the local church – working cooperatively in localities to find ways to do ministry better together.”

The new structure was adopted by vote.

2010-17A Healthcare resolution

Rev. Tim Anderman presented Jim DiGuiseppi, who explained the proposed Health Savings Account (HSA) funding plan through Aetna with a high deductible. With a cost of $5,093,000 for 2011, this will bring a savings of $2,142,000 over BBC. With the HSA high deductible plan, an individual will pay $1000 and the conference will also pay $1000, after which there will be 100% coverage. Family coverage will be $2000 cost for employee, matched by $2000 from the conference.

If the conference stayed with the current plan, the cost would be $21.5 million over next 5 years. The HSA would save $17.1 million over next 5 years. 99.3% of facilities and 97% of doctors used today are currently in Aetna’s network.

With a friendly amendment to study the cost if everyone were required to participate including part-time local pastors, the resolution was approved by a vote of conference.

An offering received for the Congo Partnership was in the amount of $1265.51.

Mike Netzuk chair of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, and Peter DiNofia, Conference Treasurer, presented the budget for 2011, which was approved. The budget of $3.5 million for Conference ministry and $2,764,710 for General Church ministry was approved.

Mr. Jim Wilkin presented the revised Safe Sanctuaries Resolution. The resolution does not amend any requirements for background checks of church staff and volunteers who work with children and youth. This proposed amendment allows groups such as the Boy Scouts to submit their policies and procedures for screening, training and supervision to the conference Board of Trustees for approval. If the group receives the Trustee’s approval, they may then follow their own policies and procedures for screening, training and supervision. All other ministries of the church serving children and youth will continue to be reviewed in the requirements of the conference safe sanctuaries policy. The Resolution was approved.

The Camping Strategic Planning Team, chaired by Rev. Mark Moore, presented an update on the strategic plan for Youth and Camp ministry. The Camping Board will present a strategic plan at 2011 Annual Conference in May.
Delaware Conference Book Published

African Americans have been part of the formation of Methodism since it was re-established in the United States in the early 1700s. The history has been typified by trials and tribulations and that story is being presented in a new publication entitled, “Freedom Drawn From Within: A History of the Delaware Annual Conference” by Rev. David W. Brown.

The publication is the result of a year-long research effort by a committee that included clergy, historians and persons interested in preserving and telling the story of perseverance that characterized the African American experience within Methodism according to Bishop Peggy A. Johnson, the Episcopal leader for the Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences that includes parts of the Greater Delaware Valley where much of this history originated.

“The publication focuses primarily on the formation of the Delaware Annual Conference in 1864— the first Annual Conference authorized by the Methodist church to be defined by the race of its membership,” Bishop Johnson. “Even today, the issue of race can serve to either divide or bring together people and it is our hope that the proud history of The Delaware Annual Conference will educate people of all walks of life in building bridges as a human family.”

The Delaware Annual Conference was established in 1864 and operated until 1965 when it was merged into the mainstream of Methodism. The Delaware Annual Conference in 1864—the first Annual Conference authorized by the Methodist church to be defined by the race of its membership—was a major event in the history of American Methodism.

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The Delaware Annual Conference had an impact beyond Methodism in that it shaped the nation’s treatment (and eventual abolition) of slavery, the higher education of African Americans and the ongoing fight for equal rights in this country.

The publication is available for $15 on-line at epapendelarea.smartevents.com.

Cornwall mission team builds in Tanzania

No task is too big for God! Or so it seems to the members of a relatively small congregation in rural south-central Pennsylvania. Almost ten years ago the lives of Lucas and Limi Ndoro intersected with the people of Cornwall United Methodist Church. Lucas came to nearby Evangelical Theological Seminary on a scholarship to seek his Master of Divinity degree. Soon after he arrived he was invited to attend Cornwall church and the congregation welcomed him as family. They soon agreed to help bring Lucas’ wife Limi and their two sons to the U.S. and adopted the family as missionaries to Tanzania.

In 2001 a group of twelve from the church, including Lucas, spent a total of ten weeks in Burambo, Tanzania, building a new church in this village where Lucas had grown up. When Lucas and Limi returned to Tanzania in 2007 to teach and serve as administrators at Nassa Theological College they had accumulated four masters degrees. Limi’s degree was in Marriage and Family Therapy. Lucas came to nearby Evangelical Theological Seminary on a scholarship to seek his Master of Divinity degree.

In the end there were seventeen Cornwall team members who went, ranging in age from 15 to 71. The logistics of moving that many people around in Tanzania was challenging but all went well and project was an amazing example of ingenuity and teamwork. An advance team arrived three days ahead of the balance of the workers and purchased steel, tools, material and a generator/welder. In the end, without heavy equipment like cranes, thirteen steel roof rafters were fabricated, welded, erected and covered with roofing material. The heavy rafters were erected with teams using ropes and pulleys and then welded in place. This was a wonderful example of God’s blessings and wonderful teamwork.

The building is not yet finished but the local workers and contractors are doing a great job and the hope is to begin doing counseling there early next year. The task has just begun, however. Now there is an effort underway to form strategic alliances with Christian groups working in that area of Eastern Africa. FLCC can partner to do more effective counseling in the targeted areas. There is already a desire among many who experienced this opportunity to serve our friends in Tanzania. It is no mistake that the logo developed for the center is plural—Family Life Counseling Centers. Cornwall will never underestimate God’s power again.

Cornwall team members take time out from building to get to know local children.
Merger creates Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation

BY SUZY KEENAN

The newly formed Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation, with assets approaching $60 million, is poised for dynamic new growth to support Methodist churches in growing their mission and ministry.

The Foundation was created this year by a merger of two former foundations - The Eastern Pennsylvania/Peninsula and The Baltimore-Washington Area Conference Foundations, and was approved by vote of the Eastern Pennsylvania, Peninsula-Delaware, and Baltimore-Washington Annual Conferences. The effective date of the merger was July 1, 2010. The Mid-Atlantic Foundation now serves the three annual conferences with stewardship and investment services.

Jack Brooks, executive director, spent nearly three years developing and implementing a new strategy for the former Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula Foundation. This included designing new stewardship programs and materials, improving investment services, and seeking partnership opportunities.

“arly on in my vision when I began in 2008 was to concentrate on enhancing the two items at the very core of the Foundation’s business model,” Brooks said, “first: identify ways to dramatically improve our investment performance and investment platform, and second: reach out to strengthen every church’s finances by searching for new and meaningful ways to deliver stewardship resources.”

The results are very impressive. In the course of nearly three years, Brooks has more than doubled the size of assets entrusted to the Foundation’s investment management, from $26 million to $57 million currently. “We’ve achieved growth in two ways,” said Brooks. “First we enhanced investment returns by adding three new investment managers to diversify and improve overall performance. Second we actively solicited churches to commit investment reserves and endowments to our care as a way of contributing to our ministry and our growth.” Due to the scandals on Wall Street many churches are questioning their relationship with existing “for profit” investment managers.

There have been true ethical questions about how investment managers could have misused their clients’ interests first. “Here, at the Foundation, we are a 501(c) non-profit organization with the church’s interests at heart said Brooks. Any profits from our annual operation are reinvested in our organization as a way of sustaining our growth and capitalizing future programs.”

“My goal today remains the same as prior to the merger: to make the new Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation the investment manager of choice for all United Methodist Church assets,” Brooks explained. “This merger represents a continued step toward increased efficiency in managing assets by reducing investment costs, improving research and technology, and therefore better fund our unique stewardship resources and delivery.”

All these achievements seem more significant considering the challenging economic times during the worst recession since the Great Depression. “As an investment professional I am an eternal optimist. I always believe opportunities for organizational growth are present in both good times and bad if you are willing to accept the difficult challenges and make incisive, complex financial choices. The Foundation, like any of our churches and ministries, has essentially two choices - to thrive or decline. Unfortunately a third choice, just staying the same in a rapidly changing world, will rarely happen. Economic recessions force all organizations to refocus on efficiently using the capital resources they have, rather than focusing on what they could have done with resources they simply don’t have anymore. By accepting fiscal responsibility and oversight, you move forward to better position the organization and yourself for sustained growth as the economy turns. You emerge from a recession operating efficiently, pro-actively and with a hopeful and exciting vision for future growth and sustainability.”

The Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation manages investments for churches and through nominal fees, generates capital for programs supporting church stewardship and legacy giving. The fee structure for the Foundation is easy to understand: charge a competitive fee, half of which goes to the costs of managing the investment services, and the other half goes to run the mission and ministry, covering the foundation’s expenses. The Foundation’s focus is to develop socially responsible investments in accordance with the United Methodist Church while diversifying assets through a number of qualified and experienced money managers to reduce risk.

Beyond investments, the Foundation continues to develop new programs and resources for local church stewardship and planned giving, and informs churches on legacy gifts and legacy planning to help steward the church to the next generation.

“Many of our churches were created a generation ago by substantial gifts through the vision and planned gift in a member’s will. During this difficult economic time we need to reintroduce and encourage legacy giving as a way of ending our future and perpetuate the church for future generations to come,” said Mr. Brooks. He added, “I believe most people are inherently generous. We see people everyday answer the call to support a variety of causes like the earthquake in Haiti. What we’re focusing on as we move forward at the Foundation is to help council and match a donor’s desire to give a substantial gift, with all the possible ways they could give and guide them through that gifting process.”

The headquarters for the new Mid-Atlantic Foundation is in Valley Forge, PA, at the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference office, with two satellite offices in Fulton, MD, in the Baltimore-Washington Conference Office, and in Dover, DE, in the Peninsula-Delaware Conference Office. Mr. Brooks said, “As we grow, we will need to continue expanding staff and support for more localized services.”

Two staff persons currently work with Mr. Brooks to help manage the Foundation’s services. Tracy Brown has been executive assistant to the Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula Foundation since 2008. She graduated from Villanova University in 1993 with B.S. in Business Administration, majoring in Finance. Her background includes many years of experience in accounting. The first new hire since the merger is Frank Robert, associate director. See article at right.

Key support and guidance for the Mid-Atlantic Foundation is the Board of Directors. The Board is composed of talented clergy and lay people from all three Annual Conferences. Each member brings unique skills related to either stewardship or investment management. All are committed and actively participate toward the vision of the foundation, giving churches the best investment services and programming that can be provided.

“It’s my view the core business of the church and the Foundation is really to make more Christian disciples. Being good and responsible stewards of the financial gifts God has given us will fund this mission and make ministry possible for future generations. The Mid-Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Foundation exists to help churches become the best stewards possible of their financial resources and gifts received from God” Said Brooks. www.midatlanticfoundation.org

Frank Robert joins Foundation team

BY SUZY KEENAN

Frank C. Robert, Jr. is the new associate director for the Mid-Atlantic Foundation. He began September 15 in this new role.

As the associate director for the Foundation, Frank will be concentrating on supporting client churches and developing Foundation relationships in Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

Jack Brooks, executive director said, “Frank is a great addition to our team. We were impressed with Frank’s commitment to his local church as the lay delegate to the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference in addition to his background in both education and sales. I feel Frank’s communication skills - his ability to articulate our unique United Methodist mission and ministry - will be a key to developing future clients as we continue the rapid growth and expansion of the Foundation.”

Frank’s work prior work experience as an executive sales professional at Sanofi-Aventis included implementing a successful strategic marketing plan for medical products. He has also been a guest lecturer at Lynchburg College in “Networking and Rapport Building.”

For more than ten years, Frank was a senior professional health care consultant at Pfizer, where he was responsible for pharmaceutical sales to teaching hospitals, medical facilities, local area hospitals and primary care providers, for which he received numerous top sales awards.

Frank is also active in his local community as president of the Sykesville Town Council, where he oversees a budget of $3 million. He has organized several successful fundraising events for the College of William and Mary. His educational background includes a Masters of Business Administration from Loyola College in Baltimore, MD, as well as a Masters of Higher Education and a Bachelors of Art, both from the College of William and Mary.

Contact: Frank Robert, frrank@bwcumc.org or 800-492-2525 Ext 475

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