



Camping: Pathway to our future

BY JIM HEATH

We are fortunate to have four vibrant camp and retreat centers in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. All totaled, Carson Simpson Farms, Gretna Glen Camp, Camp Innabah, and Pocono Plateau Camp welcomed literally tens of thousands of guests last year as summer campers, day campers, retreat guests, school groups, and planning teams from local churches. In addition, our camp and retreat centers continue to develop Christian leaders for future ministry in the church. Camping ministry is an extension of the ministry of the local church.

The Conference Camping and Retreat Ministry Board is tasked with overseeing our camping ministry. We are excited to announce that because of the commitment of many churches and individuals and the support of the Annual Conference, each of our camps is operating on solid ground. Although three of our camps carry mortgages, our future is looking bright. Pocono Plateau's dining hall, Innabah's multipurpose gymnasium, and Gretna Glen's retreat lodge and maintenance building each support the ministry of these camps.

The board is working with the directors and site committees of the three camps which hold mortgages. A funding initiative, "Pathway to Our Future," will be kicked off in the first quarter of 2012. Churches and individuals who have been

involved in and have supported our camping ministry in the past will be receiving a mailing from the individual camps. A letter outlining the four-year initiative, a brochure and commitment card will be included in the mailing.

The future of our camping ministry will be blessed and grow as campers and retreat guests come to our sites and encounter God in the unique community fostered in a camp setting. The future of our camping ministry will also be blessed as churches and individuals pray for the ministry and look to the future through faith-filled eyes. You are asked to pray for the camping ministry, its leaders and many volunteers and become personally involved by joining us on the "Pathway to Our Future." Contact any of our four camps and see how you can help.

Why is this initiative so important?

The operating budgets of Gretna Glen, Innabah and Pocono Plateau have been making mortgage payments for recently constructed buildings: at Innabah - the Recreation center; at Pocono Plateau, the Dining Hall; and at Gretna Glen, the Retreat Lodge and Maintenance Building. Those mortgages have placed an impossible strain on the budget, and caused the budgets to frequently run into deficit. This has, in turn, lim-

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Irving Cotto appointed to Northeast District Superintendency



Bishop Peggy Johnson announces the appointment of the Rev. Dr. Irving Cotto as the District Superintendent for the Northeast District of the Eastern PA Conference effective July 1, 2012.

Since 2008, Dr. Cotto has served as Director of Congregational Development for The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, with the primary responsibility of initiating new churches and faith communi-

ties. Under his leadership, nine new churches have been started in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. As part of his portfolio he has also been director of Latino ministries, and has seen the start of three

new Latino churches.

Following his ordination as an Elder in 1980, Dr. Cotto served as pastor at Emanuel Church, a Latino congregation he planted in 1977. In 1983 he

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February

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Methodist 101: February 1 - March 14. United Methodism 101 is designed for new church members and anyone else wanting to know more about the denomination and its history, teachings and structure. Cost: \$9.99. Pre-register before Wednesday, Feb. 1 at www.umcom.org

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2

VBS Showcase: Contact: Steve Toombs (stoombss@cokesbury.com or 1-888-900-0900). 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Salem United Methodist Church, 1401 Linden St., Allentown, PA 18102.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4

VBS Showcase: Contact: Steve Toombs (stoombss@cokesbury.com or 1-888-900-0900). 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Lehman Church, 300 S. York Road, Hatboro, PA 19040.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Financial Seminar with Bishop Johnson: Read more on page 15.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

VBS Showcase: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Royersford United Methodist Church, 380 Church St., Royersford, PA 19468.

THURSDAY, FEBRAURY 9

10 Commandments for Church Websites: GBOD offers free webinars to help your church grow. 6:30 p.m. Register at www.gbod.org/committee_resources.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Presentation by Gershon Baskin: 7:30 p.m. Contact: Rev. Bob Coombe -(215) 493-3345. Gershman YMCA, Broad & Pine Streets, Philadelphia, PA.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Safe Sanctuaries - Tips, Trends & Issues in Background Screening: 4:00 p.m. Login in for the visual portion at <https://umpct.ilinc.com/join/vkmwmfz>. Call in for the audio portion at 1-800-598-7441. Code: 5596370.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Yes! Yield to the call, Explore the call, Stay with the call: 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center, 87 Old Mine Road, Lebanon, PA 17042. Cost of \$35.00 per camper.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Spark Retreat: 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Asbury UMC, Allentown, PA. One-Day Retreats FOR Youth, led BY Youth! Cost is \$5 per person. 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Financial Seminar with Bishop Johnson: Read more on page 15.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13

General Conference

Listening Session: 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at Allentown: Asbury UMC, 1533 Springhouse Road, Allentown, PA 18104. All laity and clergy are invited to attend.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15

- SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Methodist School for Supernatural Ministry: You can register at [www.supernaturalmethodist.com](http://supernaturalmethodist.com) for Session #4. To attend this session you must have attended Session #1 or watched the DVD's from Session #1.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17- SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Retreat for Associate Members, Local Pastors, Student Pastors, Supply Pastors & Certified Lay Ministers: Pocometh Riverview Retreat Center, 136 Booker Wharf Road, Centreville, MD 21617. More information: Martha Callaway, 302-542-7011.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Free Youth Night: 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center, 87 Old Mine Road, Lebanon, PA 17042; camp@gretnaglen.org.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Bishop's Lenten Day Apart for Clergy: Read more on page 15.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Healthy Church Leaders - Key Factors: 6:30 p.m. GBOD offers free webinars for church leaders. SPRC has a key role for health of body, mind and soul for your pastor and leaders. Register at www.gbod.org/committee_resources.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Financial Seminar with Bishop Johnson: Read more on page 15.

In Memoriam

Rev. William Stinger

Word has been received of the death of the Rev. William Stinger, 93, retired local pastor, on December 8, 2011 in Conway, SC.

Rev. Stinger served the following appointments beginning in 1969: Phila: Sanctuary; Phila: Spring Garden; and Terre Hill: St. Pauls. He retired in 1984.

Rev. Stinger is survived by his wife of 58 years, Eulala; sister, Caroline Cummings; and many nieces and nephews.

A message of condolence may be sent to Mrs. Eulala Stinger, P.O. Box 697, Little River, SC 29566-0697.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Little River United Methodist Church, General Fund, P.O. Box 160, Little River, SC 29566 or Agape Hospice, 128-A Professional Park Drive, Conway, SC 29526.

Mrs. Ruth Miller

Word has been received of the death of Mrs. Ruth Essick Miller, 104, widow of Rev. Grant N. Miller. She passed away on Sunday, December 11, 2011, at St. Anne's Retirement Community.

Rev. Miller served the following appointments beginning in 1928: Pottstown; Brunnerville; Lebanon; Kochenderfer; Ironville; Jonestown CT; and appointments in Virginia, Holston, and Suquehanna Conferences. He retired in 1970 and died in 1997.

She is survived by two nephews, Ronald D. Essick and William D. Essick; and a niece, Nancy Essick Head.

To share your fondest memories of Ruth, visit www.lifecelebration.com.

Rev. Jo Ann Higgins

Word has been received of the death of the Rev. Jo Ann Higgins, 55, who passed away on Friday, December 16, 2011.

Rev. Higgins was a Licensed Local Pastor
Continued on page 14



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

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A Word from the Bishop

The Best Week

Bishop Johnson (left) plays a shop owner of the Confection Shop in the Marketplace during summer camp at Carson Simpson Farm.

The best week I had last year was spent at Carson-Simpson Farm Camp volunteering as a counselor with a group of children and youth

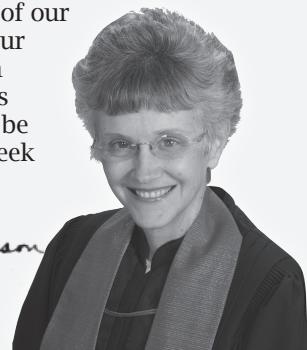
from the Mid-town Parish United Methodist Church. Every year this church hosts a week of overnight camping for their young people. The Christian development that went on under the trees, in the swimming pool, by the fishing creek and on the grassy field was a wonder to behold. I got to sing the old camp songs (some of them have not changed since I was a kid), talk about life with a number of young campers, help with a scavenger hunt, become an actor in the "Marketplace" learning center and see the stars at night. There are still stars in the night sky that are not obscured by the city lights.

I wish every church would sponsor a week of camp for their young people or would send their young people to one of our 4 wonderful camps. I wish that every church would raise funds for scholarships for young people who never get to go to camp but need to go to camp more than anything in

their young life. Finally I wish that every pastor would volunteer to serve as a counselor for one week at camp, or even a couple of days. If I can do it, you can do it! You will gain so much understanding of young people and ministry at camp. The Word of God can be modeled in Christian community there. The wonders of God's creation are the backdrop for lessons on environmental stewardship and praise to our awesome God!

Camp is a vital part of our Christian outreach in Eastern PA!
Use the gift of our camps in your local church ministry this year. It will be your best week ever!

Peggy A. Johnson

**Camping: Pathway to discipleship**

BY CHRISTOPHER KURIEN

By exploring the beauty of God's creation in our four beautiful camps, children, youth, and adults can enjoy and reflect on God's goodness. I have always marveled at the excitement of children when they share joyfully singing songs around the campfire! Camp experiences can help persons of all ages grow in their love of God, develop their potential as disciples, and lead others to faith in Christ.

Consider this example from our own family. In spite of several moves prior to her high school graduation,

our daughter, Ann was able to adjust to new situations well. During those years, she was elected president of the student senate in her senior year of high school; served as the Chair of the Conference Council on Youth Ministries; and is currently serving as the secretary of the sophomore class at Boston University. Her leadership gifts surfaced and were nurtured through opportunities that started in church: making announcements in church about Sunday School or youth group, being an acolyte, serving as a liturgist in worship, and especially in going to summer camps at Camp Innabah, Pocono Plateau, and Gretna Glen. She grew in her confidence and leadership abilities in part through her camp experiences. All these experiences help a child

to grow.

As a pastor in Reading, I encouraged the churches to collaborate with our camps. Camp staff came to Reading and worked with volunteers to offer week-long day camps for church and community children. Together we created great camping experiences in a local church setting. When we held our camp closing ceremony on Sunday with a wonderful choir of children, their parents and many grandparents from church and community came to the service. Our camp was a great way to invite neighborhood children and their parents into the church, and a great way to grow our congregation and make disciples. When children come, the parents come too!

When we take our vows as members of The United

Methodist Church, we pledge our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. You have an opportunity to fulfill your vows through the exciting camping program. We do have four wonderful camps in our conference and in this issue of the NewSpirit we have an opportunity to find out more about each of them.

Please keep our camp and retreat ministry in your prayers. Sign up for the many wonderful camp and retreat opportunities. Pledge your church's and your own financial support of the "Pathway to Our Future" funding initiative. Volunteer at one of our camps. There are so many opportunities; you will find your life enriched by the experience!

CHRISTOPHER KURIEN IS DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES for The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.



Carson Simpson Farm Christian Center

3405 Davisville Rd, Hatboro, PA 19040

www.CSFarm.org | 215-659-0232 | Fax. 215-659-5129



Carson-Simpson Farm is located in Hatboro, Montgomery County, PA. Our 60+ acre property backs up to the Pennypack creek and includes woods, wetlands, trails and large open fields. There are five covered pavilions, a lodge, pool complex, Chapel-in-the-woods, children's prayer garden, and an outpost area. Our activity areas include basketball, volleyball and gaga courts, a softball field and two playgrounds.

Carson-Simpson Farm Day Camp specializes in camping experiences for children age 3 through sixth grade. PEACE (Partners Equipping All Children for Eternity) Ministry Camps provide a group camp experience for low-income children through United Methodist churches and ministries of the Philadelphia area. These campers from 1st through 6th grade can come for day or overnight camp.

Children attending summer camp will have opportunities to: experience God's creativity in nature, form new friendships, participate in recreational activities, enjoy arts and crafts, music and swimming, learn about God in Bible Time, and choose from different electives each week.

Overnight campers stay in the dormitory on bunk beds. Family-style meals are served in the dining room located in the same building.

Our staff is a caring, diverse team of

individuals. Many are college students studying to be teachers. All of our staff are fully trained and knowledgeable in the various aspects of camp life. Carson-Simpson Farm adheres to the high standards of the American Camp Association. Our entire team works hard to ensure your child receives the very best experience and care.

The 2012 Summer Camp Program will begin on June 11 with a Pre-Camp week. This is a more relaxed week of camp before the regular camp gets into full swing. Camp is in session for 9 more weeks and ends on August 17th.

Brief History of Carson Simpson Farm

On April 14, 1919, Judge Alexander and Ella Simpson donated 65 acres of land to the Philadelphia Missionary

Society for one dollar. The stipulations were that the property was to be used as a recreation center for poor children, and a rest home for working girls and the wives and daughters of ministers. The ministry eventually expanded to include orphans and children from our inner city churches.

The Willow Grove and

Hatboro areas have seen much growth and change since the origination of Carson-Simpson Farm. The camp is owned by Metro Ministries, Inc., a ministry of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church. Currently Carson-Simpson Farm Christian Center utilizes every inch of space for many diversified ministries, and is dedicated to giving children the opportunity to experience God's redeeming love and power through our Christian Camping Ministry. The history of Carson-Simpson Farm Christian Center

will always be an important part of its definition even as time brings changes.



What Carson-Simpson means to me:

"The heart of Carson Simpson Farm lies in the people who work there. When you work at CSF, you don't just dedicate your time to working at a camp. You dedicate your time to Christ and invest Christ's love in the campers. When this is the mission of a camp, everyone reaps the benefits. All of the friendships, memories and growth has impacted my life forever...till eternity."

CRYSTAL YETTER, LIFEGUARD, SUMMER '06, '07

"My experience started in 2010, when we got a visit from the special people from Carson Simpson (Meg and Joanne.) We brought 8 children and 2 adults to camp and most of them never were outside of Kensington and would have never received a chance to attend a camp

at the Farm! Each year we have been there the whole staff make the children from St. Philip's UMC feel welcome and loved. At Carson Simpson we are always welcomed and well cared for - not just the children but also their adult leaders are welcomed. In the last two years we have had 10 children get to know the Lord. Thank you Carson Simpson for all you do and for caring about us. May the Lord always provide for your work, and supply your needs to continue to support inner-city children and leaders. Big Thanks!" **ELIZABETH A. KENNEDY, ST. PHILIP'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH.**



Innabah Program Center

712 Pughtown Road, Spring City, PA 19475

Phone: 610-469-6111 | Fax: 610-469-0330

www.innabah.org | camp@innabah.org



Camp Innabah, founded in 1929, sits on 179 acres in historic Chester County. The name "INNABAH" was given by the Navajo People to the daughter of Rees J. Frescoln, the man who donated the original \$5,000 to purchase the property. INNABAH translates to "May the Great Spirit Be With You Always."

Today the main site area includes five lodges, twelve seasonal cabins, a large dining hall, nature center, swimming pool, camp store, Kedron Recreation Center, Eggleston Hall, and Outpost. The day use area includes a large pavilion, restroom, and outdoor sports area. Each year, we are blessed to serve thousands of day and overnight guests.

We are preparing for summer camp 2012! Sign up to volunteer a day, week, or more: <http://www.innabah.org/volunteers/>. We need many volunteers, and for our special needs and other programs, we need a volunteer nurse or two at camp each week. Apply online for our 35 staff positions: <http://www.innabah.org/staff>, and plan to attend our interview weekend, March 3-5.

Summer 2012:

Day Camp: Preschool, Young Children's, and Themed Children's weeks including VBS Day Camp

Children: Art Expression, Children's Adventure, Children's Hilltop, Eco-Quest, Little Minnows & Little Minnows Plus, Mini Camp, Mini Camp Plus, Outdoor Adventure, Soccer I, Sports Spectacular, Ultimate Camp & Ultimate Camp Plus, Young Children's Adventure

Youth: Archery Camp, Art Expression, CILT Training, Creative Cooking, Creative Expression, Late Night Gym and Swim, Junior High Hilltop, Media Arts Camp, Night Camp, Senior High Adventure, Soccer II, Sports Spectacular, Summers Last Splash, Ultimate Camp &

Ultimate Camp Plus

Families: Family Jamboree (Labor Day Weekend), Grandparents & Me, Parents & Me

Special Needs: Now in its 47th year, for persons with developmental disability, ages 12 and over. Challenge 1-6, Camp Connection, Camp of Dreams, Deaf Adults w/ Special Needs

Upcoming events include a Golf Tournament at Spring Hollow Golf Course, May 2012, and Summer Open House, Sunday, June 3, 2012 - 2:00PM-5:00PM.



What Camp Innabah means to me:

Many, many years ago, we took our little boy, Scott, on a visit to Innabah with friends from our church. He was five years old. Scott asked us if it would be okay if he could "maybe go to camp"....we, as parents of course felt he was entirely too young to leave the "nest", but he continued to ask and ask and ask. Our "little boy" is now 34 years old and his entire life has revolved around Camp Innabah. He went to camp every summer for a week or maybe two...he grew into a preteen and truly wanted to work at Innabah. When he was old enough he became a volunteer and did whatever it was to be in his "special place". He worked the kitchen, the store, whatever. Then he was of the age to be in CIT and he was thrilled. He finally reached the age where he could be a counselor and that was his dream come true. Scott spent every summer of his life at Innabah growing up and he could never wait for those summers to begin...he met so many friends and he was so comfortable with himself in the environment at Innabah. I believe that he struggled sometimes in high school

dealing with his faith and wanting to be with kids that shared what he did with his Lord and Innabah gave him that most precious gift. At 34 years old, Scott met the love of his life at Innabah and they will be married at the camp September 2012. Yes Innabah transformed our son in ways that we could never imagine.....a coincidence - I think not!

LINDA TANTINO – PARENT/VOLUNTEER

If you told me to just pick one memory from Innabah that has impacted my life, I'd say you're crazy. Even trying to make a top ten list is borderline impossible. Innabah has become a second home for me. Being at Innabah and working there this past summer has helped me keep my faith in God. Kenny Royer - camper/summer staff age 16

I first came to Innabah as hilltop camper then a bike camper. This summer will be my 28th year as a volunteer with the Challenge camps. I met my best friend and my husband at Innabah. When Steve and I got married, we invited 100 people. ...52 of them were from camp, including the photographer, the organist, the scripture reader, the best man and the Pastor. I have raised my kids at camp. I think the best thing is watching my 5 kids loving camp as much as I do. Having a place where they can grow closer to God in a safe environment and having lots of people to look up to, is so very important. Wendy Schroeder - Program Director/volunteer/staff

I've been serving as a volunteer counselor for 8 years. I can remember the one year that my summer job conflicted with my week to volunteer at Innabah. At the end of my summer, I was left with this empty feeling because I had not served. It was at that moment that I vowed never to miss another summer!

TIFFANY BIDWELL – PROGRAM DIRECTOR/VOLUNTEER



Pocono Plateau Camp & Retreat Center

304 Pocono Plateau Road, Cresco, PA 18326

Tel: 570-676-3665 | Fax: 570-676-9388 | Email: camp@poconoplateau.org | www.poconoplateau.org

Pocono Plateau Camp & Retreat Center is a beautiful mountaintop setting of 750 acres of wooded land, two lakes, natural wetlands and a variety of habitats in the heart of the Pocono Mountains.

The Main Camp is nestled next to picturesque 25-acre Lake Pocono Plateau where accommodations are comfortable, with dormitory-style lodges featuring bunk beds and common bathrooms. Three meals and an evening snack are enjoyed daily at the central dining hall. The Adventure Camp provides campers with a rustic environment for experiencing God's creation. This camping experience emphasizes small group dynamics and community living in rustic cabins with bunk beds and a centrally located bath house. Campers prepare at least one meal daily over an open fire with all other meals served at the Adventure Lodge.

Summer camp is a place to try new activities, meet new friends, and have new adventures. There's plenty for children and youth to do at camp: crafts, archery, sling shots, fishing, boating and canoeing, swimming, daily Bible studies, singing, campfires, and s'mores.



Jr. High & Sr. High campers also enjoy challenge courses, high ropes, climbing tower and zip line. Some campers can choose specialty camps: horseback riding, rafting, rock climbing, nature exploration, music-oriented, mom & child and family-oriented.

Full week camps are available for children and teens who have completed 3rd grade through the 12th grade. Three-day and five-day sessions are offered for young children in 1st to 3rd grade.

Well-trained, volunteer and paid staff lead campers through spiritual development, maintaining health and safety, and teaching life skills. Registered Nurses reside on-site under a physician's standing orders. Certified lifeguards supervise all waterfront activities.

Camp provides an ideal environment for children and youth to mature spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically, while allowing them to explore nature and the outdoors. As campers enjoy the fun activities in the beautiful mountain-top setting, they discover God's amazing love and are challenged to grow in their personal faith in Jesus Christ. Many campers testify that a week at summer camp is a life-changing, spiritually-exhilarating experience.

A love of "The Plateau":

"During my many weeks of camp, I have received more faith building experiences than from any other Church activity. To be able to see children grow and their faith in God nurtured is the highlight of each week. I have learned more about my faith through the eyes of the children than perhaps they have learned from me. The friendships made at camp are so strong and everlasting. What the camps



at Pocono Plateau have given our two children in their faith development has been immeasurable. The experiences my wife, Jenn, and I have received have been priceless and we wanted to give something back to God and his community that will further the camping experience for all children, youth, and adults for many years to come. Colleagues at my office would always ask where I am going for vacation in the summer. No matter what else was planned, a week at Pocono Plateau's music camp was top priority. The summer camp and adult retreat programs in our conference are the backbone to our entire ministry."

ROBERT K. SPRINGER, POCONO PLATEAU VOLUNTEER COUNSELOR, MEMBER OF ASBURY UMC.



Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center

87 Old Mine Road, Lebanon, PA 17042

Phone: (717) 273-6525 | Fax: (717) 273-6045

www.gretnaglen.org | camp@gretnaglen.org



Gretna Glen has 203 acres and includes various styles of accommodations for up to 246 guests. This year we welcomed 10,329 guests through summer camp, retreats, outdoor education, work groups and team-building events. Many of these children, youth, and adults would tell you that being out in God's natural setting is just what they need to refocus, learn, and answer the call from God.

Gretna Glen started as a new church camp by the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1959. However, the history leading up to that point begins much earlier, in the late 19th century, with the Campmeeting movements popular at that time with many church denominations. The Mt. Gretna Campmeeting, founded in 1892 by the EUB, was to become a center for ministry, which continues even to today. From these roots, the ministry at Gretna Glen eventually grew. "Living as Christians" was the theme of that first summer of Senior High Young People's Camp and Junior High Camp. Some of the activities enjoyed by those campers were Bible studies, hymn sings, cook outs, and trail work.

Many things have changed through the years at summer camp. The accommodations, food, and activities have all advanced with time, but the foundation of Christian camping remains the same.

We are a place for children, youth, and adults to draw into a closer relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ so that together we can transform the world. As one camper shared with us, "Summer camp is the only thing in my life that I can always count on, everything else can change, but Gretna Glen is always here for me."

God's place apart. Transforming lives.

"Gretna Glen has been a lifelong awesome experience for our children Ryan, Mariah and Jenah. All of them started going to camp at 5 years old in the day camp program. They have been campers in Float to Flight, After Hours and Creative and Performing Arts to name a few. They have made friends and keep in touch with many of these friends and Counselors. They ask to return to camp every year. Ryan has served as a C.I.L.T for 3 years and loves working with the campers. Mariah looks forward to seeing her friends and making new friends every year at After Hours camp. Jenah enjoys the challenges and activities. She loves learning about God with her friends and Counselors. Gretna Glen has made a positive Christian influence in our children's lives. The five of us are very blessed to have Gretna Glen!" **DAVE AND DEBBIE KAUFFMAN, CAMPER PARENTS.**



Coming to a camp near you!



Camp Innabah • www.innabah.org
Carson-Simpson Farm • www.csfarm.org
Gretna Glen • www.gretnaglen.org
Pocono Plateau • www.poconoplateau.org

DISCOVER YOUR TREASURE

SIGN UP
TODAY!

For where your treasure is,
there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:21



Camp and Retreat looks forward

BY STEWARD WARNER

Making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

That mission statement for our UM church is what Camp and Retreat Ministry (CRM) is all about.

Did you know that in 2011 over 4,000 children and youth heard the gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ, built friendships, had fun, and grew in their faith through summer camp alone? That number doesn't include the hundreds of volunteers from local churches who helped staff those summer camps. And then there are the paid summer staff, many of them young adults and college students, who grew in their faith as they provided leadership as staff and counselors.

Camp is more than just summer camp for children. Our four EPA Christian Camps also have vital retreat ministries that reach more than 10,000 people each year. People from local churches United Methodists and others meet at our Camp Retreat Centers to provide spiritual nourishment for adults, youth, and children. Leadership groups use our facilities when they need to get away and dream and plan. Community groups use our facilities as a place set apart from the daily routine.

So imagine, between the 4,000 children and youth and the 10,000 retreat persons our four Camp and Retreat Centers have shared God's grace with more 14,000 persons in 2011. Our Camp & Retreat Ministries have reached more than 150,000 people in the past 10 years. That's amazing? Where else are so many people touched and nurtured for Christ within our Conference?

About 15 years ago, CRM embarked on a Capital Campaign to raise money to build additional buildings at three of our sites. While money was raised, it wasn't what was hoped for or expected. So a decision had to be made. Do we wait or do we build and work to raise the rest of the money later. Our facilities were badly in need of updating to keep us competitive and relevant. So the leadership at the time decided to build. We now

have dining halls, retreat centers, recreational center, and more at three of our camps that has helped to enhance and strengthen the ministry over the years.

The mortgage taken out to support these upgrades has become a weight around the necks of three of our four camps that is increasing making it difficult to pay for current ministry expenses and to plan for the future.

So the current CRM Board has approved a fundraising initiative "Pathway to our Future" which is focused on paying down the debt in the next 4-5 years to free up Camp & Retreat ministries so we can focus on present and future needs rather than being held back by past obligations.

We are blessed to have four wonderful Camp & Retreat Centers in our conference. They are Carson Simpson Farm (Phila area), Innabah (Pottstown area), Pocono Plateau (Pocono area), and Gretna Glen (Lebanon area). These camps are strategically placed to reach all areas of our Annual Conference.

Our nation, our communities, and our Conference are experiencing tough financial times. But there are still people who have the ability to give. We've already seen some of this generosity at several of our camps. But tough times don't last forever. We are seeking to place each of our facilities on solid financial ground to undergird and strength Camp & Retreat ministries. So when times get better we are ready to move forward. Please keep each of our Camp & Retreat centers in your prayers. Pray that God will continue to touch and transform lives of children, youth and adults. Pray that local churches will be strengthened in their ministries and their outreach to the communities around them because of the way CRM has supported, trained, and provided resources for their staff and members.

God is good, not only during good times but also during tough times. We celebrate the rallying cry for CRM. We are "*God's Place Apart - Transforming Lives.*"

REV. STEWARD WARNER IS CHAIR of the EPA Camp and Retreat Board.

Pathway to future continued from page 1

ited the way sin which the site can expand in ministry. With this funding initiative, the operating budgets will be more stable, and increased funds can be directed toward appropriate maintenance work and to program expansion.

How will the Funding Initiative work?

This initiative will allow persons to contribute directly to the payment of the principal. Our goals are both to remove the principal payments from the operating budget and to accelerate the payment of principal. The interest payments will continue to be paid by the operating budget so that all gifts will pay only principal and not be used for interest.

What gifts are needed:

180 payments remain on each mortgage. The plan is to have individuals, families, and churches "adopt a principal" payment. Our hope is to have the entire balance of the principal paid in 4 years, rather than the 15 years that remain on the schedule. Some churches and families maybe able to pay one principal payment each year for 4 years. Some families may be able to pay one principal payment over 4 years. All gifts will be deeply appreciated and will help accomplish this milestone effort. If, for each site, 25 churches and families are able to adopt "one principal payment a year," for 4 years, and 80 families are able to adopt one payment, paid in installments over 4 years, then this debt will be completely paid off!

What are the benefits of this initiative?

Accelerating the payment of principal will save over \$500,000 in interest over what would have been paid on the mortgage schedule. The interest that is saved will be used for reserve and major maintenance funds. Additionally, the funds that pay off the principal will not come from the operating revenue. This will help to keep the sites fiscally viable. It will also make available more funds to be invested in program and other services for campers and guests. This initiative will remove a significant hindrance to the future of the ministry!

Please contact these three camps directly to make your commitment to the Pathway to Our Future funding initiative:

Gretna Glen www.gretnaglen.org
Camp Innabah www.innabah.org
Pocono Plateau www.poconoplateau.org

Accreditation: Going the extra mile

All Eastern PA Conference Camps are accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). Accreditation identifies those programs which offer a solid foundation of health, safety, and program quality.

The ACA-Accredited Camp emblem has 50 years of parent trust behind it. Accredited camps provide the assurance that they comply with up to 300 health, safety, and program quality standards. It's solid proof



of the camp's accountability, credibility, and commitment, and evidence that they care! It demonstrates the camp has gone to great lengths, has been evaluated, and has passed the test!

It also shows camps continually seek expert counsel. Experts from many fields: The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Red Cross, etc., continually work with ACA to improve our camp standards program.

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Christian Camp and Conference Association

All Eastern PA Conference camps are members of the Christian Camp & Conference Association (CCCA). CCCA's mission is "to proclaim the power and benefits of the Christian camp and conference experience, and to provide leaders at member organizations with ongoing encouragement, professional training and timely resources. In other words, CCCA exists to maximize the ministry of its members."

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Your Local Cokesbury Representative

Rev. Irving Cotto to Northeast District Superintendent continued from page 1

was appointed to serve at El Redentor Church in the city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where he served for sixteen years.

From 1999-2008 he was the Senior Pastor at Asbury United Methodist Church in the city of Camden, New Jersey and transferred into the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference under the Episcopal leadership of

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar. At Asbury UMC he served as the Senior Pastor overseeing a multiple staff ministry which included an Associate Pastor, a GBGM 10-10-10- Missionary, and a Music Director. This parish is a multicultural congregation consisting of two main fellowships, speaking English and Spanish, representing at least 25 countries.

Dr. Cotto graduated with a degree in Psychology (B.A.) from Bayamon Central University, Bayamon, Puerto Rico. He earned a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) from Union Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. In addition, he obtained a second Master Degree in Pastoral Care and Counseling (M.S.) from Neumann University, a Franciscan institution in Aston, Pennsylvania. He is presently completing a Ph.D. in Theology through the Graduate Theological Foundation (GTF) in Indiana and the Instituto Teológico Internacional de Puerto Rico (ITIPRI). He is writing his dissertation in the area of Liturgy and Pastoral Care.

He has served on the Board of Ordained Ministry in both the Eastern Pennsylvania and the Greater New Jersey Annual Conferences and was a member of the Peace and Justice Coalition in Lancaster, the Board of Advisers for the Salvation Army, and many other community efforts aimed at bringing change and transformation to the city.

For many years, Dr. Cotto has served in a variety of capacities as a volunteer and as an independent contractor with a number of denominational agencies. He has facilitated many training modules for Lay Missioners, and has both written and implemented workshops on Liturgy and Worship as part of the National Plan for Hispanic Ministries. For ten years he was a volunteer Summer Camp Director with youth and children at Camps

Innabah and Gretna Glen. He has also been an instructor for many years in the Course of Study School at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, Texas and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston and Naperville, Illinois.

As a youth Dr. Cotto studied music with a private piano teacher and at the Institute for

Puerto Rican Culture in San Juan, Puerto Rico under a renowned musician, Dr. Francisco Lopez Cruz. An accomplished musician, he has composed hymns and leads worship events throughout the country.

Dr. Cotto is a member of the Order of Saint Luke and is founding Prior of the Spanish language Pennsylvania and New Jersey Chapter (PA-NJ). He is also a founding member of the American Association of Christian Counselors, a member of the American Counseling Association, the National Association of United Methodist Evangelists and the Society of Pastoral Theology. His interests include music, reading, movies, liturgical studies, and traveling. He is married to Lilian Lucrecia de Paz, a Local Pastor and church planter, presently serving at Lehman UMC in Hatboro, PA. They have three grown children: Julio, Andres, and Alejandro.

"I look forward to seeing what the congregations on the Northeast District are doing in terms of vital ministry and engaging their communities," Dr. Cotto said, "and to being available to resource the churches, working with clergy, laity and congregations. It is important our clergy feel renewed and supported. My main interest is in having our churches be a vital witness in the community. It doesn't matter what size a church is; whatever gifts they bring, God can multiply!"

He added, "I look forward to listening and learning about district churches, hearing their stories, plans, and dreams as they make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

Dr. Cotto succeeds the Rev. Bronwyn Yocum, who will begin her new appointment as senior pastor of Grove UMC in West Chester, PA, on July 1, 2012.

Contact: icotto@epaumc.org..



Appointments

Bishop Peggy A. Johnson announces the following appointments, effective July 1, 2012, except as noted:

- Bronwyn Yocum is appointed to Grove United Methodist Church
- Irving Cotto is appointed to be District Superintendent for the Northeast District
- Samuel Kofi Ashley is appointed to Mt. Pocono United Methodist Church
- Tracy Bass is appointed to Paoli United Methodist Church
- Gil Clark is appointed to Janes United Methodist Church in Rising Sun, Maryland, in the Peninsula Delaware Conference
- Charles Clinton Cole is appointed to Downingtown United Methodist Church
- Misty L. Fuller is appointed to Phila.: Sayers Memorial United Methodist Church
- Gary Jacabella is appointed to Berwyn United Methodist Church
- Bradley Schutt is appointed to serve Pottsville: First United Methodist Church, effective November 1, 2011.
- Mark Young is appointed to First United Methodist Church of Phoenixville

Appointed to retirement:

- Philip I. Ponce
- Thomas Steger
- Lorelei M. Bach
- John H. Lynch
- William Chrin
- Connie Asquith
- John T. (Jack) Wright
- Stanley J. Krall
- Terry A. Mills
- Amy C. Smith
- Carol V. Lawfer
- David A. Knotts



You are invited to:

A kick off retreat for:

IMMIGRANT WELCOMING CONGREGATIONS

On: March 31, 2012

From: 10 AM to 4 PM *Lunch will be provided. Donations accepted.*

**At: Wesley Methodist Church
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To send your response by March 15, 2012

Please contact: Carmen Sol Cotto

Justice Discipler

Rapid Response Team

Immigrant Welcoming Congregations

csolcotto@aol.com

(267) 980-3971

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Loan Fund open to investors



The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Loan Fund is now open to investors. The minimum investment is \$1,000.

In addition, the Loan Fund makes loans to church acquisition, repair and construction of real property and not for program. The minimum loan is \$10,000.00 and the maximum amount which can be borrowed is \$750,000.

The following documents are available online:

- Loan Fund Investment Form
- Most Recent Loan Fund Offering Circular
- Unaudited Balance Sheet (Sept 2011)
- Income Statement (Sept 2011)

<http://www.epaumc.org/resources/finance/loanfund>

In Memoriam continued from page 2

tor appointed to West Chester UMC from September 1, 2010 to December 16, 2011.

She is survived by her husband, Geoffrey, daughter, Megan, her mother, four sisters, nephews, nieces, and great-nieces.

Condolences may be sent to her family at 1115 Nobb Hill Drive, West Chester, PA 19380-1055.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be given to West Chester UMC, 129 S. High Street, West Chester, PA 19382. They expect to set up an educational scholarship fund in Jo's memory.



MID-ATLANTIC

United Methodist Foundation, Inc.
Stewardship and Investment Management

Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation announces Clergy Legacy Fund

The Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation has teamed with the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference to announce an exciting new path for clergy to participate in legacy giving; The Clergy Legacy Fund of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference. This fund has been established by the MAUMF as an unrestricted general endowment fund for the future benefit of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference and generations of Christians to come.

The Foundation is inviting the Clergy of the conference to take a leadership role in conference stewardship and make future dreams of The United Methodist Church come true. In the coming weeks Clergy will learn more details of the Endowment, including the

simple way they can name the fund as one of the beneficiaries for their retirement plan upon death. This visionary approach to funding an endowment is just one of the exciting features. Confidential gift counseling and planning will also be provided by the Foundation staff. All conversations will be held in the strictest confidence to encourage Clergy to truly explore this new path for tithing.

To take the next step, contact the Foundation office at 800-828-9093. They will send you a free brochure describing the launch schedule and additional details of this new program. This new path is an opportunity for all to give a small part back as a lasting legacy to assure the continued work of the Church for generations.

Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation completes strategic plan

In April of 2011 the Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation set out to develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan to help guide and grow the recently merged Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation. Over the past few months the plan was developed through a series of special planning meetings, surveys, client input, and meetings with the leadership in each Annual Conference they serve. The results recently announced is a strategic direction covering how the Foundation intends to grow and serve partners in ministry for the next few years.

Since 2008 the MAUMF has experienced a 3 fold increase in assets managed for the Conferences and Churches. This has included partnering with over 150 additional church groups and ministries. In addition they continue to offer new investment options while keeping the core commitment to the

Social Principles of The United Methodist Church.

The plan was approved at the November board meeting of the Foundation. Recently it was shared with the Council for Finance and Administration board of the Conference. The vision as outlined in the plan is "Financially healthy conferences and congregations to multiply God's work in the world". The mission is to "Increase the financial resources of our ministry partners and encourage extravagant generosity by being the premier financial manager for United Methodist members and organizations so that we resource the making and engaging of disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world".

The plan is available for viewing at the Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation's website at [www.midatlanticfoundation.org](http://midatlanticfoundation.org).



Bishop's Lenten Day Apart for Clergy

Tuesday, February 21, 2012

**Montgomery Square UMC
1900 County Line Rd. at Limekiln Pike
Montgomery Twp, PA**

8:30 a.m. - light continental breakfast

9:00 a.m. - Keynote presentation: The Disabled Servant in Isaiah 53 with Keynote Presenter, Dr. Jeremy Schipper, Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible, Department of Religion, Temple University, whose most recent publication is "Disability and Isaiah's Suffering Servant."

10:30 a.m. - Worship and Communion led by the EPAUMC Rapid Response Team (Immigration response) – The Immigrant Welcoming Church



SCHIPPER

CONCRETE STEEL & PAINT

A film about crime, restoration and healing.

Men in prison join with victims of crime to create a mural about healing. Their struggle to find creative common ground raises challenging questions about punishment, justice and reconciliation in America.

St. Matthew's UMC of Valley Forge and the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference will present a Prison Ministry Event on Saturday, March 24, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. This event is free of charge and open to the community.

Come together with other persons concerned about prison ministry to watch "Concrete, Steel, and Paint," a documentary set in Philadelphia. According to the film's producers, the film brings together prisoners and crime victims: "Men in prison join with victims of crime to create a mural about healing. Their struggle to find creative common ground raises chal-

lenging questions about punishment, justice and reconciliation in America."

Learn more about getting involved with prison ministry and connect with other prison ministries.

RSVP: www.StMatthewsVF.org, email admin@stmatthewsvf.org or call 610-688-7055.



Bishop's Days on the Districts

Bishop Johnson, the District Superintendent of record, Peter DiNofia (our conference treasurer), Jo Fielding (our conference pensions and benefits officer) and other conference lay leaders will be presenting the state of the conference report and share plans for improving our financial picture. We will also worship together and celebrate the many wonderful outreaches and ministries of our churches. Lay and clergy of all churches are urged to attend one of these events around the conference. If you are unavailable on the day of the presentation on your district you can attend another district day.

The powerpoint presentation used at each event can be downloaded from <http://www.epaumc.org/news/stories/bishop-district-days-2012>

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5, 2012

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Coatesville: Olivet UMC
(Southeast District)

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 12, 2012

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Leola UMC
(Southwest District)

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2012

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Westcosville: Bethany UMC
(Northeast District)

7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Mt. Pocono UMC
(Northeast District)

SUNDAY, MARCH 11, 2012

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Valley Forge: St. Matthews UMC
(Central District)

7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Mohnton: Calvary
(Central District)

SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2012

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Lebanon: Kochenderfer UMC
(Northwest District)

7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Frackville: First UMC
(Northwest District)

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