

Annual Conference 2014: A Time of Worship, Witnessing, Work

BY JOHN COLEMAN, EPA CONFERENCE
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

After all the preliminaries—registration, rehearsals, a prayer walk to consecrate the arena, and clergy and laity meetings—the 2014 session of the EPA Annual Conference gets underway Thursday, May 15, 2 p.m., at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, Pa.

Barry Lee, a local musician and co-leader of the popular Native American band Spirit Wing, will offer a ceremonial “blessing of the ground” in honor of those indigenous people who first occupied that ground. Then worship will follow with Holy Communion and preaching by Bishop Gabriel Yemba Unda, leader of Africa’s new East Congo Episcopal Area.

And finally, after the traditional singing of Charles Wesley’s anthem “And Are We Yet Alive?” the roughly 990 conference members will get down to business, heeding John Wesley’s rules for Holy Conferencing, under the guidance of Presiding Bishop Peggy A. Johnson. Throughout the busy two days, ending Saturday, May 17, many will try to keep focused on their core purpose, expressed by the conference’s missional theme, “Growing Vital Congregations.”

New Conference Secretary the Rev. Lloyd Speer will lead the body through initial procedures, followed by the introduction of guests, nominations for conference leadership, a Statistical Report on the state of the conference and the first resolutions to be considered. One of those resolutions will call for a yearlong commemoration of the former, all-black Delaware Conference—its beginning 150 years ago in 1864 and its dissolution 50 years ago in 1964, followed in 1965 by the establishment of the present-day racially integrated Eastern Pa. Conference.

Then will come the much-awaited keynote address by the Rev. Mike Slaughter, popular, visionary pastor of the influential megachurch Ginghamburg UMC in Tipp City, Ohio. He will conclude his keynote message with a Q & A session Friday morning.

Also on Friday the conference will recognize new clergy retirees, who numbered 19 as of mid-April, and hear a celebratory report on the Capital Campaign to pay off pension obligations for pre-1982 retirees. The campaign, approved at the 2012 annual conference, surpassed its ambitious goal to raise \$3 million.

Conference members will also celebrate the 150th anniversary of Simpson House, the conference-affiliated as-



Eddie Fox makes faith-sharing come alive

The Rev. Eddie Fox, kneeling near the end of the Faith Sharing training event he led March 8, is prayed for by the Rev. James Todd (unseen) with the Rev. Christopher Kurien, Bishop Peggy Johnson and Dr. Mary White laying on hands. Dr. Fox, who heads the World Methodist Evangelism Institute, enthralled nearly 200 EPA Conference members with his preaching and teaching for nearly five hours, offering stories and strategies for sharing one’s faith. See Dr. Kurien’s reflections on the event on **page 3**. (John Coleman photo)

sisted living and nursing home facility where many retired clergy have resided over the years.

In the Celebration of Ministry, scheduled for Friday afternoon, the conference Connectional Ministries staff will report on their efforts to partner with churches on a broad array of events and ongoing ministries over the past year. They will report on

Continued on page 5



Guest speakers to preach what they practice

BY JOHN COLEMAN, EPA CONFERENCE
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



Rev. Mike Slaughter



Bishop
Gabriel Yemba Unda



Bishop
Peggy A. Johnson



Rev. Dr. Byung
Woo Cho

Members of the 2014 session of the EPA Annual Conference, meeting May 15-17 at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, Pa., will hear from two United Methodist clergy leaders who may epitomize the conference’s missional theme, “Growing Vital Congregations.” The roughly 990 lay and clergy members who attend should benefit from the wisdom of both the Rev. Mike Slaughter, lead pastor of the renowned Ohio megachurch Ginghamburg UMC, and Bishop Gabriel Yemba Unda, leader of Africa’s new East Congo Episcopal Area.

Slaughter, a popular speaker, author and church-growth visionary, emphasizes developing congregational vitality

through small groups, creative use of technology, and a passion for mission outreach and evangelism. He will address the conference Thursday night and Friday morning, May 15-16, ending with a question and answer session and a book signing.

Bishop Unda, elected in 2012 by delegates to the rapidly growing Congo Central Conference, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), will preach in his native French during Thursday’s opening worship service. His East Congo Area is based in the Maniema Province’s capital city of Kindu, in the Kivu region that borders Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the Central African Republic. The EPA Conference is deeply involved in mission in the DRC through its Congo Partnership

Continued on page 3

MAY

MAY

Older Americans Month: a time to "recognize older Americans for their contributions and also provide them with information to help them stay healthy and active. This year the focus is on injury prevention, with the theme, Safe Today, Healthy Tomorrow. For more information visit www.ncoa.org.

MAY 1

EPA Retirees Luncheon: Fireside Tavern, 1500 Historic Drive, Strasburg, PA. Cost: \$16.00. A luncheon to celebrate the retirement of the 2014 class of retiring clergy. Open to all retirees, spouses and surviving spouses. Register online at <https://epaumc.smartevents.com/public/events/2014-retirement-celebration-luncheon>.

MAY 15-17

EPA Annual Conference: Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, Oaks, PA. Register online until May 2.

Spring EPA Camp & Retreat Ministries events are listed on page 9.

JUNE

JUNE 5

Clergy Transition Workshop: Clergy receiving new appointments are expected to attend the Clergy Transition Workshop June 5, at the EPA Conference Center, from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

JUNE 21

3rd annual United Methodist Day: Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. **Address:** 3830 Dorney Park Rd., Allentown, PA. A day of thrilling fun and fellowship at one of America's greatest amusement parks. Our UMC coupon affords a \$20 discount when you present it at the Dorney Park ticket window. Contact Ross Brightwell at rossbrightwell@verizon.net or call 215-643-1269.

JUNE 28

United Methodist Day at the Phillies: 3:05 pm (vs. the Atlanta Braves), Citizens' Bank Park, 1 Citizens Bank Way, Philadelphia, PA. Tickets: \$23-\$34. Order by May 28 at www.phillies.com/methodist or call John O'Connor in the Phillies Sales Office at 215-463-5000, ext. 5012.

Annual Conference Worship Highlights

Worship services are always a highlight of Annual Conference in EPA. This year they are being designed by the Revs. Lydia Munoz, Monica Guepet and Bron Yocum.

Popular music leader Mark Miller and his band will play on Thursday and Friday, May 15-16. Munoz and the Rev. Irving Cotto will lead music on Saturday, May 17.

The Rev. Candy LaBar will again create thematic altar displays for each day. The opening Communion worship will have an African motif, and the memorial service Saturday will display Korean liturgical elements, since the preachers for those services will be African and Korean, respectively.

EPA STAFF TRANSITIONS

BY JOHN COLEMAN, EPA CONFERENCE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



The Rev. Anita Adams Powell, Superintendent of the Central District, will become Dean of the Cabinet July 1, succeeding the Rev. James Todd in that role. Initially ordained in the American Baptist Church, Dr. Powell joined the EPA Conference and became associate pastor of West Chester UMC and then founding pastor of the UMC of the Open Door in Kennett Square. She has Master and Doctor of Divinity degrees from Palmer Theological Seminary and has been a schoolteacher, counselor, college and seminary administrator, and director of community agencies.

Felicia Anderson, formerly at the EPA Conference Office of Urban Ministry, is the new Administrative Assistant to the Rev. Christopher Kurien, Connectional Ministries Director. She has over 20 years of executive secretary experience, working with the FDA, the University of PA and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, as well as Eastwick UMC before joining the Urban Ministry office.



(John Flinchbaugh photo)

Sarah L. Filizzi, former EPA Conference Desktop Publisher for the past five years, joined the staff of Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, Pa., as Assistant to the College Pastors. Filizzi, who performed many tasks on the Conference staff, was married in December and relocated to the Harrisburg area. "It has been a great learning experience to see how our churches work together, sometimes unknowingly, to further the Kingdom," she said.

Lindsey Cotman joined the EPA Conference staff in April as a temp-to-hire Desktop Publisher. A 2013 graduate of Kutztown University with a degree in Professional Writing and Media Studies, she formerly was a web content writer and editor for an online marketing company.

people to Lighthouse Korean UMC's opening worship celebration Sept. 27, 2009, making it one of five Korean-American congregations in the EPA Conference at that time. He moved to the conference with his wife, EunMi, from New York. Lighthouse Korean shares the facilities of Lighthouse UMC in Glenside, which has a growing Korean-American population.

After she preaches Friday, Bishop Johnson, now in her sixth year of leading the EPA Conference, will ordain seven candidates as full elders and commission nine candidates, six as provisional elders and three as provisional deacons.

GUEST SPEAKERS TO PREACH WHAT THEY PRACTICE
continued from page 1

that supports medical, educational and economic development efforts in Central Congo.

Also preaching during the two-day conference will be Presiding Bishop Peggy A. Johnson at the Service of Ordination Friday night and the Rev. Dr. Byung Woo Cho, founding pastor of EPA's own Lighthouse Korean UMC in Glenside, Pa., who will preach during the memorial service Saturday morning.

Described as a "dreamer and spiritual entrepreneur of ministry marketplace innovation," Mike Slaughter came to the historic Ginghamburg church in Tipp City, Ohio, in 1979 and led its dramatic growth from a weekly average of 90 worshipers then to well over 5,000 today on three church campuses. Emphasizing growth through small groups for optimal learning and ministry engagement, it is the fourth largest United Methodist congregation in the U.S. and considered one of the most influential churches in America.

Slaughter, a United Methodist elder and distinguished evangelist, is expected to share his passion and formula for growing vital congregations through evangelistic outreach and broad-based mission involvement. He is a leader of the popular "Change the World" movement and a relentless advocate for outreach to the oppressed people of Darfur, Sudan, named by the U.N. as "the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today."

Ginghamburg has invested nearly \$6 million in Darfur relief since it began The Sudan Project in 2005, and it also serves more than 40,000 people annually through local outreach ministries in its surrounding

communities. Slaughter's ninth book, *Dare to Dream*, published in 2013, is about "creating a God-sized mission statement for your life."

Bishop Unda, elected to a four-year term, has a God-sized mission challenge in his Congo area, with impassable roads and frequent violence that prompts constant security concerns. His only safe, reliable transportation is by airplane.

"I see people travelling with loads on their heads and shoulders across the episcopal area, and these are the people I have been elected to serve," he said after his election. "My plan is to reconnoiter the entire episcopal area and ascertain the needs of the various ministries of the church, and then find ways to create an effective delivery system for the development of East Congo."

Unda, whose mother died when he was 8 months old, was raised by missionaries and his extended family. Ordained in 1971, he has served as a pastor and a chaplain of United Methodist schools, sometimes facing the threat of violence to do his ministry. He lost his wife, Omba Charlotte Unda, to malaria in February 2007 and has become an impassioned promoter of the denomination's No More Malaria campaign to eradicate the deadly but preventable disease.

A former member of the United Methodist Board of Discipleship, he is one of four bishops leading 14 annual conferences that form the Congo Central Conference. He knows five languages: Swahili, Lingala, French, Otetela and some English.

The Rev. Byung Woo Cho welcomed more than 330



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The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of
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Bishop Peggy Johnson - Philadelphia Area Bishop
John Coleman - Director of Communications
Lindsey Cotman - Graphic Design and Layout

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Faithfully Yours

Set apart for holy conferencing

Welcome to the time of preparation for the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference, a time when we prepare to be set apart to do the conference's legislative work and seek, through prayer, worship and witnessing, to do God's will.

John Wesley called the meetings of the early Methodists "Holy Conferencing." The Greek word for "Holy," hagios, means "other," "different from the world," or "set apart for God" (www.biblehub.com). Like our forefathers and mothers we are called to a sacred time of worship, learning, prayer, and conversation with God in the center of it all.

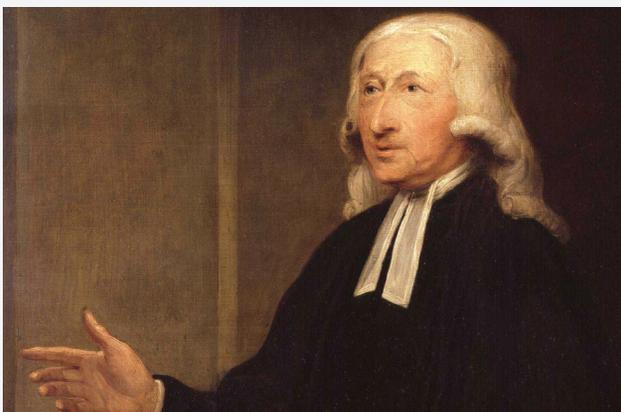
How exciting that we have the newest United Methodist bishop from the continent of Africa, Bishop Gabriel Unda, with us for our opening service of Holy Communion. He is coming to open our eyes to the missional needs of the world and the evangelistic success of the church on his continent.

And what a privilege to sit at the feet of the Rev. Mike Slaughter, lead pastor of the mega-church, Gingamsburg UMC. He will bring us three seminars on how to grow vital congregations.

Also who would want to miss the solemn moments when we ordain and commission women and men for ministry, and when we honor our clergy retirees? Moreover, we will hear a sermon from the Rev. Dr. Byung Woo Cho, as we remember those who have passed on to the Church Triumphant since our last meeting. There is something holy here, something set apart and precious in God's sight!

As we relate to one another in conversation and debate, in learning together, and in sharing our minds and hearts (which can often be of different perspectives), we are called to have an attitude of holiness. Unlike the world, when we disagree we are to do so in a Christ-like way.

In his writings John Wesley reminds us to ennoble our words in the spirit of grace, seasoned with



salt and intended to minister grace to the hearer. (Wesley's Works, 10:856-857). The Northeast Jurisdiction of the UMC adopted the following rules for Holy Conferencing:

Remember that every person is a child of God. Listen before speaking. Strive to understand from another's point of view. Speak about issues; do not defame persons. Disagree without being disagreeable. Pray in silence or aloud before decisions. Let

prayer interrupt your busyness. Strive to accurately reflect the views of others.

It would be well that we follow these rules during our annual conference and indeed, during all our meetings with one another.

I call all of us to prayer and fasting as we prepare for our May 15-17 meeting. Pray for God to do a new thing among us and to use all that we say and do for good and for his purpose.

One of the priorities of Holy Conferencing for John Wesley was that these meetings would always encourage social holiness. So may we take from this conference new ways of reaching out to the poor, the marginalized and the lost of this world. And may we receive a new spirit, a Holy Spirit, of growth and vitality to share with our congregations.



Peggy A. Johnson



The Rev. Dr. Christopher Jacob Kurien

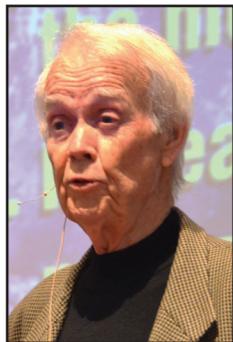
Learning to share our faith

BY THE REV. DR. CHRISTOPHER JACOB KURIEN, DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES

Nearly 200 people gathered at Bethany UMC Wescosville in Allentown for the Faith-Sharing training led by Dr. Eddie Fox, Executive Director of the World Methodist Council on Evangelism.

From beginning to end participants were reminded that faith-sharing is very much a part of our Methodist DNA. Therefore, faith-sharing ought to take primary place in our personal witness and practice of faith and throughout the life of our churches and ministries.

Dr. Eddie Fox, who retires in 2014 after 25 years in his position, shared how the training that participants received at Bethany was the same offered by the World Methodist Evangelism Institute in many places around the world. He also told us how instrumental these trainings have been in fostering tremendous growth in the churches of Africa and Asia.



Dr. Eddie Fox

He quoted one of John Wesley's more ominous statements: "I am not afraid that the people called Methodist should ever cease to exist in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist

as a dead sect, having the form of religion and not the power."

For some the word "evangelism" is not culturally relevant or modern enough. Yet, evangelism or faith-sharing is at the very heart of who we are and what we need to do in order to avoid becoming a dead sect. Put simply, faith-sharing is not an option. It is fulfilling Jesus' Great Commission, his charge to us his faithful body of believers.

Many participants expressed appreciation for the event in their evaluations, writing:

- *Don't be afraid to witness. I learned the (best) approach is (by) an invitation, and grace precedes being found. I have been inspired to invite family members, when we gather for Easter dinner, to ask me about my loving relationship with Jesus. Also I'm encouraged to invite a friend and 2 neighbors to come to worship.*
- *I have never before experienced such a plain-speaking but powerful approach to faith sharing. I learned how to talk about Christ in an easier way without pushing Christ on people.*
- *I will implement the faith sharing. I have many great ideas to take back to my congregation.*
- *Reaffirmation of Wesleyan principles and their importance in our faithwalk as UMs.*
- *I love this Faith Sharing NT (New Testament) as a gift to new members or for those reaffirming their faith.*
- *Preacher Fox's enthusiasm and love of Christ is contagious. I hope to return home with his excitement in sharing the good news.*



We recorded and hope to make a DVD of this recent faith sharing training available by Annual Conference. I do hope that every congregation will take advantage of the training, and take decisive steps to put what they learned into practice.

During this season of Eastertide and during Pentecost which follows, it is my prayer that we rediscover our faith-sharing DNA, and take bold steps to share the powerful, life-changing message of God's love shown in Jesus Christ.

Let us follow in the footsteps of the first disciples who proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Let us follow in the footsteps of early Methodists who changed their world through powerful, persuasive faith sharing that addressed the holistic needs of the body, mind and soul.

In every encounter, through our personal evangelism as Christ's ambassadors, let us share the blessing of our deliverance and salvation, indeed, the blessing of our faith, with the world.

EPA Annual Conference to vote on 24 resolutions

BY JOHN W. COLEMAN, EPA CONFERENCE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Editor's Note: This NewSpirit article about resolutions proposed to the 2014 Annual Conference is only an abridged summary and lacks many of the details of each resolution. Members to Annual Conference are urged to read the entire resolutions, which can be found on the conference Web site at www.epaumc.org/AC2014. You may also request a hard copy of the resolutions from your district office.

Members of the EPA 2014 Annual Conference will deliberate over two dozen resolutions, rendering their decisions after wading through numerous “whereases” and “be it resolved.” The resolutions range from church closures to advocacy for global concerns, from avoiding church trials to changes in clergy housing standards and retiree health care policies. And finally, they include recommendations for funding of 14 Conference Advance Specials.

Resolutions for “discontinuance” of three churches represent the final step in a process that includes a charge conference vote, consent from district and Cabinet leaders, distribution of property and other assets, and finally transfer of historical documents to the conference archives. Crozierville (Resolution #2014-01) and New Covenant in Drexel Hill (#2014-02) both closed in late 2013; and historic Narbeth's closure (#2014-07), if upheld, will be final July 1.

RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE RESOLUTIONS

The EPA Board of Pension and Health Benefits will present five resolutions to the conference session for approval. With predictions fairly certain that health care insurance carriers will inflate premiums in 2015, the board proposes that it have the flexibility, prior to the next conference session, to change insurance carriers or modify the conference's insurance plan to reduce any premium increase that exceeds 10 percent. (#2014-03)

The board also resolves that the full pension and disability payments to any duly retired or disabled clergy member of the conference in 2015 be designated as rental/housing allowance, a designation allowed by the Internal Revenue Service. (#2014-04)

The benefits board further proposes that the Adoption Agreement to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) be endorsed for 2015 as the base retirement plan for all clergy under episcopal appointment in the conference, except for those on incapacity leave who do not receive Comprehensive Protection Plan disability benefits. The resolution (#2014-05) sets the Past-Service Rate for the pre-1982 Ministerial Pension Plan at \$502 for retired clergy covered under that plan. And Resolution #2014-06 seeks approval of the conference's required Comprehensive Funding Plan for fulfilling all its benefits obligations in 2015.

A final benefits resolution (#2014-13) concerns retiree health care, allowing the board the option in 2015 to enroll with AmWins or another similar health insurance exchange plan. The move could relieve the conference of daily administration tasks related to retiree health care and provide retirees with a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) and annual subsidy, plus a medical plan with more “one-on-one assistance,” flexibility and options. The resolution tries to stem the conference's fast-expanding future unfunded liability burden for Post-Retirement Health Insurance.

The resolution reports that 32 out of 57 conferences no longer offer a retiree health plan because of

future unfunded liability containment. Many report that individual plan usage and a subsidy not tied to the premium resulted in decreases of a third or more of their post-retirement future liabilities as well as reduced annual medical costs for retirees. Moreover, the resolution contends, more affordable cost rates may become available through AmWins or other individual plans by 2015, which is why the board requests authority to change retiree medical insurance carriers or plans for 2015 before the next annual conference convenes.

While spouses will continue to be eligible for retiree health benefits, the resolution outlines proposed eligibility and coverage changes, including the discontinuation of the Pre-Funding plan with no future enrollments as of December 31, 2014.

Resolution #2014-16, presented by the Disability Concerns Committee, also addresses a clergy health concern, proposing that the Joint Committee on Clergy Medical Leave, along with other relevant bodies, examine the fairness and feasibility of the 2012 General Conference action that discontinued the payment of benefits for non-severe mental illness after two years. It recommends that the committee be tasked to bring a report to the 2015 Annual Conference, along with a plan of response that may include sending a resolution to the 2016 General Conference to reconsider this policy that applies only to mental illness.

Resolution #2014-08 proposes new housing guidelines and parsonage standards, as requested by the 2013 Annual Conference. The Bishop's ad hoc Housing Task Force's detailed document represents the first comprehensive revision since 1991. Meanwhile, Resolution #2014-15, presented by Mark Moore of the Commission on Equitable Compensation, recommends a 2 percent increase in minimum starting salaries for full-and part-time pastors in 2015.

RESOLUTIONS ON CHURCH LAW

Seven resolutions that may incite debate on the conference floor address both sides of the issue of church trials that prosecute clergy who violate the United Methodist Book of Discipline's prohibition against performing same-gender marriage ceremonies.

Resolution #2014-09, presented by the Rev. Joseph DiPaolo, relates to “Affirming our Covenant and Accountability.” It asks the Conference to hold all clergy accountable to their covenantal vows of ordination and to call upon those who cannot abide by that covenant to “withdraw themselves from our connection,” in order to avoid judicial proceedings.

Resolution #2014-10, presented by the Rev. Joan Trout, calls for “Affirming Standards of Sexual Practice.” It asks the conference to reaffirm that the Discipline's prohibition against homosexuality is a prohibition against “practices but never persons.” It thus rejects charges that the church is “engaged in discrimination against persons” and denies that the church “causes harm to anyone” by demanding its clergy practice “celibacy in singleness and fidelity in marriage.” But the resolution also calls upon the Conference to emphasize “its commitment to remain ‘in ministry for and with all persons,’” regardless of sexual orientation.

Resolution #2014-19, “relating to Christian love and unity,” calls upon the Conference to “avoid resorting to the last resort of church trials” and keep focused on Jesus Christ's priorities “which focused less on human sexuality...and more on matters such as peace, poverty and prayer.” Presented by Ruth Daugherty,

the resolution calls for “a wider church where all people feel safe and welcome” and where members are more determined to “stay in respectful conversation with each other.”

Resolution #2014-20 asks the Conference to call for any Board of Ordained Ministry or District Committee on Ministry member who commits a chargeable offense, or who publicly defies its rules or advocates doing so to “consider voluntarily withdrawing” from that board or committee. The resolution, presented by the Revs. Bob Wilt, John Longmire and Joan Trout and also by Mary White, bases its conclusion on a need to protect “the integrity” of the board and committees charged with overseeing the practice of ministry.

Three other related resolutions come collectively from Arch Street UMC, Drexel Hill UMC, Penns Park UMC, Calvary UMC (University City, Philadelphia), First UMC Germantown and Swarthmore UMC.

Resolution #2014-22 calls upon the Conference to affirm, adopt and promote a “Statement of Principle” approved by the 2012 Northeastern Jurisdictional (NEJ) Conference that supports the “civil and ecclesiastical rights and privileges of all persons, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons” and that opposes church laws that restrict their rights and privileges. The 2012 NEJ statement affirms as acting in faith with that principle, and with the commandment of Jesus Christ, anyone who conscientiously violates church law to offer “the ministries and sacraments of the church to all persons on an equal basis.” It also views anyone who would punish such violators of church law as acting contrary to the denomination's “highest ideals” and risking “grave harm to LGBT persons, their loved ones...faithful clergy and the United Methodist Church itself.” The resolution, which the Rev. Herbert J. Snyder will present, further calls upon the Conference to admit that such extensive “grave harm” was caused by the church trials of former clergy members Irene “Beth” Stroud and Frank Schaefer.

Resolution #2014-24 asks the Conference to affirm Bishop Peggy Johnson's Dec. 16, 2013, public statement that, “Church trials around the chargeable offenses that relate to the LGBT community are not helpful. They use time, resources and energy that could be better used for the ministry of the church. I will continue to try in every way to avoid having church trials, as far as it depends on me...” The resolution, to be presented by Wilhelmina Young of Arch Street UMC, describes church trials as contrary to Jesus' ways of resolving conflict and to the goal of achieving “just resolution of differences in the Body of Christ.” It further asks the Conference to make church trials for charged offences related to the LGBT community a “matter of last resort,” and it demands that the EPA Conference Communications Office use all appropriate media to promote that official position “in response to such charges or a trial anywhere in the denomination.”

And Resolution #2014-23 asks the Conference to support passage of bi-partisan bills before both houses of the state legislature (HB and SB 300) that would amend the state's Human Relations Act to ensure LGBT persons “freedom from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations.” The resolution, to be presented by the Rev. Sharon Vandegrift, asks that Bishop Johnson and all clergy and lay members be encouraged to communicate the Conference's endorsement of the bills to state lawmakers and to Gov. Tom Corbett, who also supports the bills.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

“JOURNEY TOWARD WHOLENESS”

Two other resolutions address discrimination in another context: from opposite ends of the conference’s past and present struggles with race.

Resolution #2014-12 calls for “A Yearlong Commemoration of Our Journey toward Wholeness” to celebrate both the birth of the former, all-black Delaware Conference in 1864—150 years ago—and the vote to dissolve it a century later in 1964. The first of many racially segregated conferences in early Methodism, it resulted from oppressed African Americans’ yearning for dignity and self-determination through black leadership and more control of their own churches and ecclesial affairs. Members and churches of the Delaware Conference located in the Eastern Pa. area officially merged with the white Philadelphia Conference in 1965, and thus, the racially integrated EPA Conference was formed. It was a precursor to the broader desegregation and merger that produced The United Methodist Church in 1968. The resolution, to be presented by the Rev. David Brown, who leads a joint committee representing the EPA and Peninsula-Delaware conferences, suggests activities for a yearlong commemoration that will also honor the 50th anniversary of the 1965 conference merger.

Resolution #2014-11 moves the quest for meaningful racial integration into the present by offering a “Process for Making Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointments.” Submitted by the Conference Commission on Religion and Race and the Healing the Wounds of Racism Core Team, it will be presented by the Rev. Scott Friedgen-Veitch and Mert Shane, members of the respective groups. The process responds to growing cultural diversity in many communities, the need for more cultural competence and sensitivity among congregations and leaders, and the Cabinet’s commitment to make cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments annually. It recommends open dialogue, careful assessment of readiness among congregations and clergy, and training events, in addition to providing appointment transition and intervention teams and other ongoing support.

MISSION OUTREACH; GLOBAL JUSTICE

Four other resolutions encourage churches to look and reach outward, beyond themselves, to respond to missional needs and concerns in their communities, across the conference and around the world.

Resolution #2014-14 calls for the Conference to communicate to the U.S. President, Secretary of State and U.N. delegation concern for the prejudice, injustice and persecution suffered by Christians living in many countries across Africa, the Middle East and Asia—especially those under majority Muslim control. Submitted by the Rev. J. Timothy Fisher and the Church Council of Bushkill UMC, the resolution describes examples of persecution of Christian minority groups in Muslim countries and requests the Conference to ask top U.S. government and diplomatic officers to advocate for their protection and fair treatment “as a basic and integral part of any negotiations and conversations with all nations wherein Christians are found.” It also resolves that the United Methodist Board of Church and Society be asked to advocate to U.S. leaders on behalf of victimized Christian minority groups and that the Board of Global Ministries be asked to produce resources to help churches and conferences engage in collaborative mission outreach to those groups.

The resolution further urges the Conference to advocate to the National and World councils of churches through their United Methodist representatives and to encourage EPA churches to engage in prayer, study and advocacy on behalf of persecuted Christians.

Resolution #2014-18 addresses the “Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza” caused by the containment of Palestinian residents there by Israeli guards and severe restrictions on the flow of survival necessities into that troubled region of the Middle East. The resolution, to be presented by George Bergey, comes from the Bishop’s Task Force on Israel-Palestine, a task force called for by the 2013 Annual Conference in response to appeals from U.M. missionaries and Palestinian and Israeli advocates for more humane and lawful treatment of Gaza’s people. It asks the Conference to support “human rights and the free flow of humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza” and to advocate to U.S. officials for pressure on both Israel and Egypt to ease severe restrictions at their North and South checkpoints into and out of Gaza. The task force also wants churches to support the efforts of various humanitarian aid agencies, including UMCOR, and to take a yearly offering for UMCOR’s humanitarian relief work in Gaza.

Resolution #2014-17’s focus, however, is on “Local Church Outreach and Mission Work.” It encourages EPA congregations to increase such work “by at least four hours a month,” either independently or cooperatively. Presented by the Rev. Mark Terry and Oxford UMC’s Missions Committee, the resolution asks churches to report at their charge conferences how those additional hours “in ministry with the poor” are spent serving their local communities.

14 CONFERENCE ADVANCE SPECIALS

Resolution #2014-21 reflects the EPA Conference’s commitment to ministry with the poor by recommending 14 Conference Advance Specials, which are ministries that need and may receive designated, “second-mile” giving support from churches that have first paid their financial commitments to the conference and the general church. The resolution, submitted by the Rev. David J. Davis, EPA Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, asks for approved projects to have access to needed funds beginning June 1.

The projects and amounts recommended for 2014-2015 are:

- Cokesbury Summer Reading and Lunch Program: \$3,000
- Hempfield Academy: \$4,000
- Hope Christian Counseling: \$3,000
- Hope on the Hill: \$3,500
- Lehigh Valley Outreach Depot: \$9,000
- LUMINA: \$10,000
- Methodist Services for Children and Families / Methodist Family Services of Philadelphia ((MSCF/MFSP): \$2,000
- Midtown Parish UMC Sanctuary Development Campaign: \$200,000
- Mount Zion Food Cupboard Ministry: \$2,600
- New Journey Community Outreach: \$10,000
- Northwest District H.U.B.: \$5,000
- Red Bird Trailer Mission Team: \$6,000
- Spiritual Renewal Ministries: \$10,000
- United Methodist Neighborhood Services: \$20,000

Descriptions of approved Conference Advance Special projects will be available on the conference Web site after Annual Conference.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014
continued from page 1

diverse conference-wide ministries that include congregational development, camp and retreat centers, youth and young adults, and urban and Latino congregational ministries.



Dr. Mary White
EPA Conference Lay Leader

Dr. Mary White will present her final Annual Conference Lay Leader’s report, the day after the session body honors her for eight years of distinguished service as Conference Lay Leader. Bishop Peggy Johnson will preach and preside over the service of ordination, always a high moment of any annual conference session.

There will also be an update on the resolution approved at the denomination’s 2012 General Conference that calls upon annual conferences to work toward healing relationships with Native Americans, or indigenous persons, and to hold Act of Repentance services during their 2015 conference sessions.

Saturday’s agenda includes what should be an uplifting presentation by EPA youth.

The conference will also recognize Certified Lay Ministers and memorialize lay and clergy members who have passed on since the last session. The Rev. Byung Woo Cho, founding pastor of EPA’s Light-house Korean UMC in Glenside, Pa., will preach the memorial service.

There will be additional presentations by United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men, who will also provide 50-pound bags of potatoes donated by the Society of St. Andrew for conference members to take and share with neighbors in need among their communities.



Rev. Lloyd Speer
New Conference Secretary

Three special offerings will be received during the two-day conference to provide higher education scholarships for lay and clergy students, and to support the EPA Conference’s Congo Partnership that funds medical, educational and economic development mission efforts in Central Congo.

Finally, the conference’s business sessions will include election of new conference board and committee members and a new Conference Lay Leader for 2014-2018. Members will also deliberate and decide on a proposed 2015 conference operating budget. Throughout the session members will also debate and vote on 24 resolutions proposed to the body.

What time the session will end Saturday is anyone’s guess. But when all is said and done, conference leaders hope that all the worship, witnessing and work will somehow edify the people and evoke the promise of “Growing Vital Congregations.”

Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church

Definitions of “vital” include “manifesting life,” “essential to life,” “indispensable,” “affecting the validity or truth of something” and “full of life and vigor; energetic.” (*Webster’s New College Dictionary*, 2009) These definitions apply to the “works of faith and labors of love” of many EPA Conference members

and congregations that strive to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Their works include worship and praise, teaching and learning, praying and consecrating, sharing and serving, and ultimately offering Christ to the world. Here in these images is but a glimpse of our vitality.

Photos by John Coleman unless otherwise credited.



New Vision UMC’s choir sings at the 2014 Central District Conference.



Young liturgical dancers at Hopewell UMC’s 2013 Planting Seeds for Growth Conference.



Attendees at the Hispanic Ministries training for non-Latino churches in March pray for Pilar Molina, whose husband was jailed as an undocumented immigrant.



Two young campers at Pocono Plateau enjoy their encounter with nature. (*Pocono Plateau photo*)



Bob Kreider (right) helps another volunteer at the LUMINA service agency’s Professional Clothing Bank for job seekers, housed at Otterbein UMC in Lancaster. (*LUMINA photo*)



Certified Lay Ministry candidates pose with guides after their final class in March. They will graduate June 1.

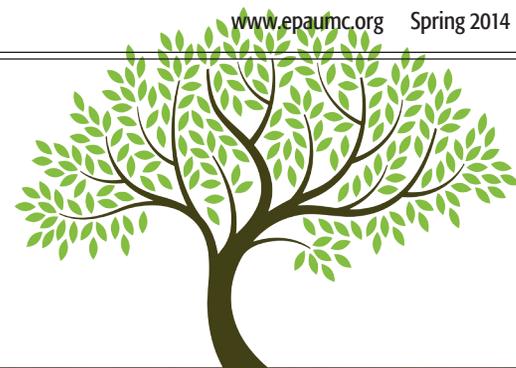


The Rev. Andrew Foster, who taught the final Certified Lay Ministry class, anoints Ruth Portzline for her new CLM calling.

Youth en...
March.

Church Growing Vital Congregations

“We always give thanks to God for all of you, and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and your steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3)



Debra DePrinzio and Bob Simcox (inset) lead a volunteer Disaster Response team at a Coatesville home damaged by winter ice storms.



Krystl Johnson teaches youth about healthy relationships during a Safe Dates workshop at St. Daniel's UMC in Chester.



Members of the EPA Conference Council on Young Adult Ministries gather during a recent planning meeting. (Jonathan Davis photo)



Engage in a team building exercise during the Northeast District Tools for Ministry seminar in



Patrick Friday and Karen Weiss of UM Global Ministries converse via Skype with a missionary in Central Asia at the 2014 EPA Celebration of Mission in April, as nearly 150 participants witness the live global connection.



The Rev. Irving Cotto, Northeast District Superintendent, teaches a class in pastoral covenants and evaluation at the district's second Tools for Ministry seminar in March.



Members of the EPA Board of Lay Ministry pose with Conference Lay Leader Dr. Mary White (second from left) who chaired her final meeting in April.

Church leaders learn tough truths from stewardship expert

BY JOHN COLEMAN, EPA CONFERENCE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

“We’re struggling,” said the Rev. Steward Warner of his church, First UMC Perkasio. “That’s why we’re here.”

“Here” was the “Keys to Effective Financial Ministry” seminar at Glen Mar UMC in Ellicott City, Md., Feb. 25, led by financial stewardship author and expert Clif Christopher and sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation. The foundation, a non-profit financial investment resource for the Eastern Pa., Peninsula-Delaware and Baltimore-Washington conferences since 2010, has invested generously to have Christopher speak to church leaders on several occasions. He will return to our area twice in the fall and again at the 2015 EPA Annual Conference.

Warner, who brought three church members with him, said the five-hour seminar shed new light on his church’s challenges. He was not alone in that assessment, as more than a hundred attendees paid close attention to Christopher’s pearls of wisdom, often nodding their heads, chuckling at his humor and taking notes.

The only question that remains, Christopher acknowledged later, is how many will actually shine that light into the dark corners of their struggling church finances and begin to make needed changes. Some might, but many will not, he mused. Yet, if they hear it again and again, some might finally decide to break with traditional modes and mindsets that keep their churches poor when they could be rich.

RICH CHURCH, POOR CHURCH

After their last giving campaign and before coming to the seminar, Warner’s team read *Rich Church, Poor Church* (2012), Christopher’s latest of three revealing books on the sociology of church finances. Now more of the church’s leaders are reading it. Soon they will begin to dialogue and put some of its teachings into practice, their pastor vowed. “We have to do something, and this information will help us,” he said.

That information came in three sections during the seminar: “Rich Church, Poor Church”; “Capital Campaign Keys to Success”; and “Planned Giving is Easy Money.”

“A failure to articulate our mission and how we’re accomplishing that mission is our greatest failure,” Christopher told the crowd. He named low expectations, lack of effective leadership and oppressive debt as the other chief obstacles that hinder people from giving to many struggling churches.

“People are giving—just not to your church,” he asserted, citing increasing donations to nonprofit groups but declining donations to religious groups in particular. “People want their gifts to make an impact, to change lives,” Christopher explained. He named the one key “product” that churches must of-



(From left) The Rev. Steward Warner discusses key points with his leaders from First UMC Perkasio--Ben Botti, Bernie DuBois and Laura Tooker--after the stewardship seminar. (John Coleman photos)

fer and promote to givers: “a changed human being, a changed life altogether.”

A former pastor and a certified church growth consultant, Christopher founded his Horizons Stewardship firm in 1992 and has helped raise over \$1 billion for churches.

Competition for charitable dollars is greater than ever, he said, and churches cannot compete with nonprofits that are better at presenting their mission and benefits in more compelling ways. He cited three reasons people choose to give: belief in the mission; confidence in the leadership; and assurance of fiscal responsibility and sustainability. So communicating a bold vision and vitality is essential, while portraying a dearth of resources is unlikely to rally support.

PASTORS SHOULD KNOW MEMBERS’ GIVING

While members must feel confident they know their leaders, pastors whose job involves nurturing stewardship must also know their members, including their commitment to giving, according to Christopher.

“There’s not a line of work that I know of where guessing is better than knowing,” said the giving guru, citing a surprising statistic that nearly 74 percent of pastors don’t know what their members give or who their top givers are, and only about 26 percent do know. It was visibly the most uncomfortable moment of the seminar for some, as if to prove his statistics.

One EPA clergy attendee later reported asking to see her church members’ giving amounts when she returned home. Her alarmed finance secretary balked at first, she said, but finally brought her the books when she promised not to let anyone else know.

She said she was shocked at the giving records of some leaders who had much but gave little and some

UPCOMING CLIF CHRISTOPHER VISITS TO OUR AREA:

Sept. 17: Avenue UMC, Milford, DE

Sept. 18: Mt. Hope UMC, Ashton, PA

Oct. 21: Wescosville: Bethany UMC, Allentown, PA

who had little but gave much. She was also shocked to see another of Christopher’s predictions bear truth: that about 20 percent of the members were paying about 80 percent of the church’s bills.

“There was a lot of important learning in that room today,” said Jack Brooks, Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation (MAUMF) executive director. “Some will begin to realize why so many of our churches are failing in stewardship when they could be succeeding, and some may finally begin to make changes. But we’re going to keep trying to help.”

The foundation, which provides training in stewardship, endowments, investments and fiduciary best practices, will bring Christopher back to our area three times in the fall. It also plans to launch its new Financial Leadership Academy with the first class in January 2015.

The agency managed more than \$75 million for more than 300 clients in 2013; and it paid more than \$5.5 million directly to clients’ ministries, while providing matching grants of more than \$30,000 for ministry support. It also advised and assisted the EPA Conference in its successful capital campaign.

For more information about the foundation and upcoming events, visit www.midatlanticfoundation.org or contact Jack Brooks at jbrooks@epaumc.org.



What rich churches tend to focus on:

The church’s mission
Discipling members
Passion for ministry
Choosing leaders based on stewardship
Desire to succeed and see members grow
Christian education and tithing as expected
Stewardship emphasis all year long
Communicating stories of transformation

What poor churches tend to focus on:

The church’s survival
Appeasing members
Fear of rejection
Choosing leaders based on reputation
Desire to please and see members content
Christian education and tithing as optional
Stewardship emphasis once a year
Communicating fiscal information

ADAPTED FROM *RICH CHURCH POOR CHURCH*, BY J. CLIF CHRISTOPHER

Camps & Retreat centers spring into summer

BY JOHN COLEMAN, EPA CONFERENCE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

EPA's four Camp and Retreat centers are busily hosting various spring events for all ages, providing a warm-up for the even busier summer camp season ahead. Still to come in May are several open houses, the Gretna Gritty Mud Run and Walk-a-thon, Camp Innabah's Golf Outing, Carson-Simpson Farm's Spaghetti Dinner, retreats for seniors, youth and young adults, and Pocono Plateau's Mothers and Daughters Retreat, following their Fathers and Sons Retreat in April.



Camp Innabah's Easter egg hunt rewarded some with colorful, edible eggs. (Camp Innabah photo)

Gretna Glen's Spring Blast in April welcomed 46 children. Its summer goal is 1,200 campers total, including 180 for its Camp Can Do for young cancer patients and 21 for its MDA Camp for kids with Muscular Dystrophy.

Pocono Plateau's target is 700 summer camp registrations. Innabah's goal is 900. The latter will offer exciting new camps this



Confirmation class at Gretna Glen included an outdoor Bible lesson before an old, rugged cross. (Photo courtesy Gretna Glen)

year: Experiments and Explosions for science and engineering types, and Fins and Flippers for budding swimmers. Camp SERVE will take senior-high youth offsite to do local service projects. And those who attend the Around the World in 7 Days Camp will go even further virtually as they gain a new, global understanding of multiculturalism.

The 2014 summer camp theme is **Get Real: Finding Your True Self in Jesus**, and there will be daily scripture lessons and activities to help campers discover more about Jesus and more about themselves. To learn more visit the EPA Conference Web site (<http://www.epaumc.org/camping>) and the individual Camp & Retreat Center sites: www.innabah.org, www.gretnaglen.org, www.poconoplateau.org and www.csfarm.org.

RESOURCING CHURCHES FOR MISSION AND MERGERS



The EPA Congregational Development Office frequently offers clergy and laity presentations and dialogues on church growth strategies and resources. The office, coordinated by the Rev. Gordon Hendrickson, will sponsor lunchtime dialogues during Annual Conference in May; and in late March it convened two small leadership gatherings. One group heard **Peter Wernett** (pictured above on the right) explain new resources available at **MissionInsite**, which offers demographic research, or "location intelligence," to help churches envision and strategize for church planting, expansion or transformation in fertile communities. Another gathering heard **Dirk Elliott** (below, on the right) discuss **Vital Mergers**, the title of both his 2013 book and the process he teaches to help churches conjoin their congregations like blended families to create transformational ministry together. Listening to him here are the Revs. Susan Moore, Gary Nicholson and Quentin Wallace. (JOHN COLEMAN PHOTOS)



CAMP & RETREAT MINISTRIES UPCOMING SPRING EVENTS

May 9: Annual Camp Innabah Golf Outing, Spring Hollow Golf Club. Team Registration cost is \$350 and includes a cookout lunch, 18 holes of golf with cart, and a catered dinner and awards ceremony at the conclusion of the tournament. Registration & Lunch: 11:30 am. Start: 12:30pm. Visit www.innabah.org for more information or to register your foursome.

May 10: Gretna Gritty Mud Run and Walk-a-thon Fundraiser, at Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center. Featuring competitive and non-competitive races for all ages through mud, rocks, monkey bars, fire, water and other fun obstacles. Register at www.gretnaglen.org/gritty.

May 10: Carson Simpson Farm Open House, 9 am to 12 pm. Come tour the site, meet the staff, ask questions, and register for camp. Any camper who registers at Open House will receive a gift. We'll have face painting, gag, and giant 4-square for guests to try. There will also be drawings to win camp apparel. No registration or RSVP is required for the open house.

May 13: Spring Fling Senior Adult Day, at Gretna Glen Camp, 9 am to 3 pm. Cost: \$20 is planned just for adults, with exceptional programs, snacks, a hot lunch, bingo, crafts, and opportunities to stroll around camp and observe nature, birds, or spring wildflowers! Join us for a spring day filled with fun activities, special entertainment, and sharing laughter with friends.

May 16-18: Pocono Plateau Camp's Mother and Daughter Retreat From Friday, 7 pm, to Sunday, 2 pm. Enjoy an adventurous, spirit-filled weekend together singing, creating art, building kinship and friendship, and worshiping God. For mothers and daughters 6th grade to adult. Cost: \$90 for Mom; \$85 for 1 daughter; \$75 for each additional daughter.

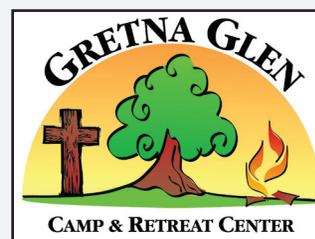
May 17: Carson Simpson Farm Spaghetti Dinner, 5 - 7 pm. Bring your family and friends for a delicious meal at camp. All-you-can-eat spaghetti, salad, bread, and desserts. Call the camp or get an order form from the website to purchase tickets. www.CSFarm.org.

May 18: Camp Innabah Open House, 2 to 5 pm, 712 Pugh-town Road, Spring City, PA 19475. 610-469-6111.

May 18: Pocono Plateau Camp's Summer Camp Open House, 1:30 pm to 4 pm. Become familiar with our camp. Take a tour and enjoy boating, hiking and refreshments. Check out our new Adventure Site Bath House.

May 18: Gretna Glen Youth Group Night, 5:30 to 8:00 pm. We support church youth ministries by inviting groups to come for fun and fellowship monthly on third Sundays.

May 30 to June 1: Pocono Plateau Camp's Young Adults Retreat (for ages 18-30). From Friday, 7 pm to Sunday, 1 pm. Join Christian peers for a weekend of fellowship, spiritual growth and exploring God's kingdom. Spend a weekend in the woods hiking, boating, canoeing, high-rope challenges, night games and campfires. New discounted cost: \$65 each.



May 31: Gretna Glen Open House, 10 am to 4 pm. Join us as we open our doors to show off all we have to offer! Come for tours, games, a cookout, boating, fishing and more!

In Memoriam

Mrs. Joan H. Myers

Mrs. Joan H. Myers, wife of the Rev. David M. Myers, a retired elder and former district superintendent, died April 2, 2014. She was an active member of United Methodist Women and a delegate to Jurisdictional and General conferences.

Memorial contributions may be sent to Hospice and Community Care at 685 Good Drive, PO Box 4125, Lancaster, PA 17604 or to Lancaster: First UMC for their Memorial Fund. Mrs. Myers is survived her husband and two adult children. Condolences may be sent to: The Rev. David M. Myers, 300 St. Mark Avenue, Apt. 3338, Lititz, PA 17543.

Mr. John Gerald Flynn

John Gerald "Gerry" Flynn died March 11, 2014. He was lay supply pastor of Johnson Memorial UMC Philadelphia, a chaplain in the police department and a retired police captain.

He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Beverly E. Flynn (nee Hughes); three adult children and their spouses; six grandchildren; and a brother. Memorial contributions may be made to Johnson Memorial UMC, 3117 Longshore Ave. Phila., PA 19149.

Mrs. Alice B. Parker

Alice B. Parker, wife of the Rev. John T. Parker, a retired elder, died March 2, 2014. She joined her husband in serving churches in the EPA Conference: Kemblesville, New London, Wissahickon in Philadelphia, Coventryville, Olivet in Coatesville, Mountainhome, Fox Chase in Philadelphia, Haws Avenue in Norristown, St. John's in Paradise, and Elysburg, from which he retired in 2006. Donations in her memory may be sent to the American Diabetes Association (www.diabetes.org), P. O. Box 11454, Alexandria, Va. 22312.

Rev. J. Fred Parkyn

The Rev. J. Fred Parkyn died Oct. 3, 2013. He served Primitive Methodist churches in Wisconsin in the 1950s and in Pennsylvania in 1966-1983, and was president of the Primitive Methodist Church Conference in 1975-1979. As a missionary, he established a K-12 school in Quiche, Guatemala, that today enrolls over 5,000 students. Parkyn joined the EPA Conference in 1983, serving as pastor at Gradyville UMC and Alice Focht UMC in Birdsboro. He retired in 1994.

He is survived by his wife of 29 years, Ruth Dollar Braden Parkyn; his sister, three sons and a daughter, 12 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Donations may be made in his memory to Save the Strays Animal Rescue, 1670-9 Springdale Drive, #143, Camden, SC 29020.

Mrs. Lois Josephine (Shank) Yeakel

Lois Josephine (Shank) Yeakel, wife of retired Bishop Joseph H. Yeakel, died March 5, 2014, in Waynesboro, Pa. She and Bishop Yeakel were married 65 years. They have five children, nine grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Friends may honor her with gifts to the Camp Casowasco Gift Fund at 158 Casowasco Dr., Moravia, NY 13118, Attention: Mike Huber. Condolences may be sent to Bishop Yeakel at 201 Quincy Court, Unit D, Waynesboro, PA 17268.

Mrs. Anna J. Beale

Anna J. Beale, wife of the Rev. Kenneth L. Beale Sr., retired elder of Ambler, Pa., died March 4, 2014. Her husband served Wesley, Mt. Hermon & 22nd Street,

and Taylor Memorial UMCs all in Philadelphia, and Jarretstown for 33 years before retiring in 1992. She worked in the library of Beaver College, now Arcadia University, and was a secretary at Jarretstown UMC for 30 years until her retirement in 1992. She also directed television programming as a resident volunteer at Gwynedd Estates Retirement Community in Lower Gwynedd, Pa.

Besides her husband, she is survived by two adult sons and their wives, six grandchildren, three sisters with husbands and other relatives. Donations in her memory may be made to CLC Ministries International, P. O. Box 1449, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

Mrs. Alice B. Parker

Alice B. Parker, wife of the Rev. John T. Parker, a retired elder, died March 2, 2014. Her husband served several churches in the EPA Conference: Kemblesville, New London, Wissahickon in Philadelphia, Coventryville, Olivet in Coatesville, Mountainhome, Fox Chase in Philadelphia, Haws Avenue in Norristown, St. John's in Paradise, and Elysburg, from which he retired in 2006. He also served as supply pastor to Millers Crossroads in 2007.

The Rev. David M. Dickson

The Rev. David M. Dickson, 86, died Feb. 18, 2014. He retired in 1993 after serving several EPA Conference churches: Clearfield-Marticville, Hatboro, Mahanoy City, Mahanoy City-Gilberton, New Holland, Easton First, Oxford, Wallingford Old Union and Analomink. David volunteered with Habitat for Humanity of Lancaster, Meals on Wheels and a hospice. He was a counselor at Camp Innabah and participated in the Appalachian Service Project.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Carol (Edwards) Dickson, their four adult children and their spouses, six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren and a half-sister. Donations in his memory may be made to Habitat for Humanity or a local food bank. Mrs. Dickson's address for condolences is: Laurel Place, #303, Cornwall Manor, PA 17016-0125.

Mrs. Barbara Anderson

Barbara Anderson, widow of the Rev. Harry Robert Anderson, died Feb. 14, 2014. A member of East Stroudsburg UMC, she was a longtime Christ Servant Minister. Her husband was a local pastor who served Hendriks, Schuylkill Haven and Schuylkill Haven Covenant UMCs, and also Neola UMC in retirement. She is survived by her son.

Rev. Lydia Clary Moore

The Rev. Lydia Clary Moore, a retired elder, died Feb. 5, 2014. Donations in her memory should go to Metropolitan Ministries, 2002 N. Florida Ave. Tampa, FL 33602.

Rev. David Paul Unangst

The Rev. David Paul Unangst died Feb. 3, 2014. A pastor for 47 years, mostly in the EPA Conference, he served Memorial UMC in West Carrollton, Ohio, St. Paul UMC in Mount Carmel, Pa., Covenant UMC in Bath, Pa., and Long Memorial UMC in Neffsville, Pa. After retiring he served part-time at Salem UMC in Rothsville for the past 5 years. Unangst was also a chaplain for several police and fire departments.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Mary Ann (Holsinger) Unangst, a son and daughter, four granddaughters and his sister. Donations in David's memory may be made to Salem UMC, 1744 Old Rothsville Road, Lititz, PA 17543, or to LUMINA, 20 E. Clay St., Lancaster, PA 17602.

Mrs. Jane Marie Cummings Bower Harris

Jane Marie Cummings Bower Harris died Jan. 27, 2014. She was the wife of the Rev. Paul Harris, a deceased UM elder who served: the Tannersville, Catsauqua and Steelton circuits; Eddystone; Mt. Zion in Darby; CC Hancock in Springfield; and in retirement, Crozierville and St. Mark's in Boomall. They co-founded support groups for people with hearing loss. She earned two master's degrees in reading education, directed Christian education at a Presbyterian church, and was Assistant Editor of Children's Publications at the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education.

She is survived by five adult children, seven adult grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be made in her name to Heifer International, 1 World Avenue, Little Rock, AR, 72202; or to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), 475 Riverside Drive, Room 1520, New York, NY 10115.

Rev. Robert S. Mussmon

The Rev. Robert S. Mussmon died Jan. 1, 2014. He was a retired associate member of the EPA Conference, serving Lampeter UMC, Strasburg; Wesley UMC, and the three churches of the Mt. Nebo Circuit. He was a Spiritual Director at the Rawlinsville Camp Meeting for several years and also a charter member of the Willow Valley Retirement Community Board.

In addition to his wife of over 67 years, Mae (Hoisington) Mussmon, he is survived by two sons, three daughters, 12 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren and a foster sister. Donations in his memory may be sent to Mt. Nebo UMC in Pequea, Pa., or to Hospice and Community Care, www.hospiceandcommunity-care.com.

Rev. J. George Mamourian

The Rev. J. George Mamourian died Jan. 3, 2014. He was a retired elder of the EPA Conference who served numerous churches: Pomeroy, Phila.: Faith, Phila.: St. Luke's on Snyder Avenue, St. Nathaniel's Episcopal, Springfield: C.C. Hancock, Lima, Media: First, Swarthmore, and Coatesville: Olivet. He was also Superintendent of the Mary McLeod Bethune District.

He is survived by his wife, Linda (Lawson) Alexander, three children and six grandchildren. Contributions in his memory may be sent to UMCOR (the United Methodist Committee of Relief), PO Box 9068, New York, NY 10087.

Mrs. Viola Mae Miller

Viola Mae Miller, the wife of the late Rev. Donald F. Miller, died Dec. 21, 2013. She is survived by two sons, two daughters, 12 grandchildren, 24 great grandchildren and a sister.

Memorial contributions may be made to Easter Seals, 233 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2400, Chicago, IL 60606 or ateasterseals.com, in honor of her granddaughter, April Miller.

Rev. Kenneth L. Kline

The Rev. Kenneth L. Kline, a retired full elder of the EPA Conference, died Dec. 20, 2013. He was the pastor of Zion Evangelical United Brethren Church in New Berlinville, which became St. Andrew UMC during his tenure. He also served Emmanuel UMC Fleetwood. After retiring he was visitation pastor and pastor emeritus at St. Andrew UMC. He also taught for 24 years as an adjunct professor in the religion department of Albright College.

He is survived by his wife, Jeanette (Ertman) Kline, his daughter, two sons, six grandchildren, and two brothers. Memorial contributions may be made to St. Andrew UMC, PO Box 434, New Berlinville, PA 19545.



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CCS congratulates Eastern PA Conference of the United Methodist Church on commitments over \$3.7 Million

Fulfilling Our Covenant: Promises of Our Past ~ Foundation for Our Future

The Eastern PA Conference of the United Methodist Church is composed of nearly 450 churches serving 125,000 members in 16 counties. The Conference was faced with the challenge of how to address the financial shortfall in their commitment to retired clergy and their spouses. A multi-faceted strategy was employed, including a Conference-wide fundraising initiative called *Fulfilling Our Covenant* to raise \$3 million, to meet the needs of the clergy pension program. CCS worked with Conference leadership, clergy and lay volunteers to develop a plan that allowed the many different faith communities to participate. The effort has raised more than \$3.7 million to date.

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Look for NewSpirit's special four-page insert in the Summer 2014 issue, with information, insights and inspiring testimonies from our successful Capital Campaign.