

EAST DISTRICT

E-ALERT FOR

January 10, 2017

Editorial Policy of the East District E-Alert:

Generally, articles will appear for only one week, and, if pertinent, will be posted on the East District website (<http://www.epaumc.org/districts/east>). Or, if you are on the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference website (<http://www.epaumc.org>), there is a link to the East District website at the bottom of any page. Previously published E-Alerts will be posted to the East District website.

This E-Alert is sent to Pastors and Church Offices on the East District and to lay people who have requested being added to the distribution list. Feel free to clip or copy any article for your church's bulletin or newsletter unless permission has specifically been granted to the East District for publication, in which case, request permission from the source. The District Office requests that pastors forward the E-Alert to church leaders and congregants who might find the E-Alert helpful and informative.

THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you from both Rev. Tracy Bass, District Superintendent, and Mrs. Clarita Krall, District Resource Assistant, for the generous Christmas gifts given to each of us just before the Christmas break. Thank you to each one who had a part in contributing to these collective gifts. Your thoughtfulness and your remembrance of us during this gift-giving time of year means a lot to each of us.

REMINDER

This serves as a reminder to all churches with unpaid balances on their 2016 apportionment billing to send in the year-end amounts due, as soon as possible, preferably by this Friday, January 13, 2017. Send directly to the Conference office using the [eRemittance Portal](#) or by sending a check made payable to "Eastern Pennsylvania Conference," accompanied by the church's Remittance form, to Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, The United Methodist Church, c/o James Brown, P.O. Box 820, Valley Forge PA 19482-0820.

2016 STATISTICAL REPORT

TO: Pastors

FROM: James E. Cruickshank, Conference Treasurer

Dear Pastor:

It will soon be time to prepare your 2016 Statistical Report. Senior Pastors, you are responsible for sharing this information with the appropriate church leaders. All churches are required to submit the Statistical Report using EZRA Data Management System of the General Board of Finance and Administration. The website address is ezra.gcfa.org. If you are not able to complete the report online, please contact your District Office to request a hard copy report.

Your **Username** is your church's **GCFA ID Number** (6 digits). You can find this on a copy of last year's Statistical Report, your monthly remittance statement, or you can get it from your District Office. There is one user per church but more than one person can enter data by using the same password. For your **Password**, please type in **stat2016**. You must use all lowercase and there are no spaces.

When you log in to EZRA Data Management System you will see a "**first time user login setup**" screen. It leads you through 4 screens. You **MUST** enter an email address on screen 2. When you get to screen 3, you are offered an opportunity to change your password - **BUT IT IS NOT MANDATORY** - and we suggest that you keep stat2016 as your password (just type in stat2016 in the "New Password" and "Confirm New Password" fields). When you click "Next" on screen 4 - it will take you directly to the STAT Home Page. Notice the "Menu" on the right. You can easily get FAQ, User's Guide and blank Report Forms there. Refer to the black tool bar across the top to easily navigate the site. For example: click on "Enter STATS" to go to the tables where you can enter your information.

IMPORTANT: For instructions about exactly what information is being requested please click on "Reports" in the black tool bar, then click on Reports in the drop down, then under Church Reports click on **Table Directions** to view or print line by line instructions.

After you have completed all of the information for the **four** required tables, have at least three persons review the financial information. **Your church's apportionment, benefits and insurance costs, and Conference-wide decisions and initiatives depend on you reporting this data as accurately as possible.** The pastor, finance chairperson, and treasurer should all review these numbers before final submission. On the GCFA reporting system, you have the ability to save partial information until a later time without submitting it. We have added a new table this year to collect data on the number of employees and volunteers at your church that we need for your/our insurance coverage.

The website will open on January 17, 2017 and the deadline for completing the report is February 17, 2017. Please call your District Office if you have questions about procedures related to statistical reporting or are unable to complete the information on line. Please send notification to your District Office upon completing the statistical report for your church.

Thank you for your help and for your faithful service to our churches and our Conference.

[View and download this information as a PDF.](#)

SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, February 28, 2017 is designated as **East District Day Apart** and will be a time centered on prayer. Location is the UMC of Huntingdon Valley (3470 Huntingdon Pike, Huntingdon Valley PA 19006). Stay tuned for more details in upcoming issues.

CHANGING RACISM

2017 dates for Changing Racism Workshops are **March 31-April 2** and **October 27-29**. Click [here](#) to go to the Conference website page for more information or to register.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Update on Rev. Stanley Krall from Clarita: Since I first wrote on December 20th, we have learned that my husband Stan suffered a spinal stroke on December 19th, causing paralysis from his waist down. After spending ten days hospitalized, he was discharged to acute rehab. Just yesterday we learned that he will be coming home from Moss Rehab Hospital on January 18. At Moss, in physical therapy

sessions, he has been working to strengthen and train his legs to walk again and to climb stairs. I want to thank all who have been praying for recovery of health for him and strength for both of us and our family. We have felt so very supported by all the emails, notes, visits, offers of help, and prayers of so many friends, colleagues, acquaintances, and even strangers. We thank God for each!

Remember **David**, the son-in-law of the Rev. Jacquie (part-time local pastor on the SW District) and Scott Sheely, who suffered a stroke in December. Also, **Jim**, Scott's father was recently hospitalized. Keep them all in your thoughts and prayers – Jackie, Scott, David, Adrienne, Jim and Janet.

Keep **Mrs. Joan Shumate**, wife of the Rev. Paul Shumate (retired elder), whose cancer returned and who is undergoing radiation treatments, and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

The Rev. Russell W. Streeper, a retired Elder of the Eastern PA Conference, passed away on December 15. During his ministry, Rev. Streeper served Phila.: Johnson Memorial, Phila.: Grace (Champlost), Lebanon: Kochenderfer, and Bethlehem: Epworth. He is survived by his spouse, Mrs. Diana Irene Streeper. Condolences may be sent to her at 911 E Canal Street, Lebanon, PA 17046. The service for Rev. Russell Streeper was held Tuesday, December 20, at Lebanon: Kochenderfer UMC.

RETREAT OPPORTUNITY

Bread for the Journey: A Celebration of Poetry and the Human Spirit – October 4th-October 7th, 2017 at Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center, 2495 Fox Gap Road, Bangor PA 18013:

This retreat offers four days of engaging with poetry as a means of helping us embrace both what is most meaningful to us, as well as the mysteries that surround us. We will turn to the richness of poetry as a means of deepening our capacity for clarity and courage, and we will also explore ways in which we can more effectively carry poetry out into a world which needs it more than ever.

Poetry, Lucille Clifton claimed, nurtures us toward greater compassion and justice by asking the question, "What is the human here?" It serves as a vessel for exploration and conversation because, as Galway Kinnell has put it, "Working on one's life and working on the poems are the same exercise."

Bread for the Journey engages participants with poetry as a dynamic way to reclaim the fertile ground of metaphor and image. It offers time to deeply listen and to ask open and honest questions of ourselves and one another in order to better understand our lives and renew our spirits. At Kirkridge, we create a safe space in which to experience and explore the beauty of living in the presence of mystery and awe. These four days will serve as a reminder that poetry, by aligning us with the power of the imagination, directs us toward a vision of a better world.

Faculty/Facilitators:

- **Rick Benjamin** has taught students from ages 4 to 98 at institutions as diverse as Brown University, the Rhode Island School of Design, New Urban Arts, and Epoch Assisted Living Center. A former poet laureate of Rhode Island, he now lives in Santa Barbara where he continues his commitment to building community through creative expression. He holds to the notion that poetry is both a wisdom medium and has the capacity to transform its practitioners at any stage of their life-cycle.
- **Judy Brownis** an educator, speaker, facilitator, poet and writer, whose work in organizations revolves around themes of renewal, change, learning, creativity, and dialogue. Her books include *A Leader's Guide to Reflective Practice*, two collections of her poetry (*The Sea Accepts All Rivers* and *Simple Gifts*), and most recently *The Art and Spirit of Leadership*.
- **Kenneth Carroll** is the author of *So What! For the White Dude Who Said This Ain't Poetry* (1997). Widely published, he has received the Washington, D.C. Mayor's Arts Award for Service to the Arts, and the Literary

Friends of Washington Award, among other recognitions. Active as a teacher, Carroll has been director of the DC WritersCorps and a past president of the African-American Writers Guild. He is married to playwright Joy Carroll and the proud father of three.

- **Kathleen W. Glaser** is a Center for Courage and Renewal facilitator who values using poetry to help facilitate reflection. A recipient of the Washington Post Distinguished Educational Leadership Award, she is a co-founder of the Chesapeake Public Charter School in southern Maryland. Her passion is creating trustworthy spaces for learning and community.
- **Michael S. Glaser** is a Professor Emeritus at St. Mary's College of Maryland where he received the Dodge Endowed Award for Excellence in Teaching. He has edited three anthologies of poetry, published several volumes of his own work and served as Poet Laureate of Maryland from 2004 through 2009. Most recently, he co-edited with Kevin Young the Complete Poems of Lucille Clifton.
- **Kurtis Lamkin** is a poet from Philadelphia who plays the Kora, a beautiful West African instrument. He has produced several cds, the latest of which is called Kora Poems, as well as a book of poems entitled Golden Season. Recently he was selected as a 2013-2014 Poetry Fellow by the Jubilation Foundation; and he is a 2014 grantee of the New Music Foundation for a new project, Big Fun. He lives in Charleston, South Carolina.
- **Mark Nepo** is a poet and philosopher who has taught in the fields of poetry, health, and spirituality for forty years. A New York Times #1 bestselling author, he has published fourteen books and recorded eight audio projects. Mark has appeared with Oprah Winfrey on her Super Soul Sunday program and his work has been translated into more than twenty languages. His most recent book is a collection of new and selected poems, published by Sounds True, *The Way Under The Way: The Place of True Meeting*. Forthcoming is: *The One Life We're Given: Finding the Wisdom That Waits in Your Heart*.
- **Deanna Nikaido** is a graduate from Art Center College of Design with a degree in Illustration. The author of *Voice Like Water* (selected by the Small Press Bookwatch, July, 2009) and *Vibrating With Silence*, her poems have also appeared in several anthologies and journals. She is a recipient of fellowships that have enabled her to study in Italy and Brazil, and is currently a poetry/publishing coach and design specialist for Bookinday. Deanna is also a certified practitioner of Jin Shin Jyutsu®.

[Click here to register or for more information](#)

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