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The Healthy Church Initiative

A Pathway to Healthy Disciples involved in Healthy Ministry Leading to Healthy Churches



CARE TEAM
Article
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2009 Annual Conference

June 11, 12, 13
(Thursday-Saturday)

University of Maryland-
Eastern Shore

Princess Anne, MD

Get Ready to Reach In!

“Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.” - John 15:4

We are getting ready for this year’s Annual Conference which is being held Thursday, June 11 through Saturday, June 13 on the UMES College campus in Princess Anne, MD. The theme of this year’s Annual Conference is “Reach In!” As you remember, I hope, from the last two Annual Conference’s, “Reach In” is one of the stations of our Healthy Church Initiative.

We have spent this last year “Gearing Up.” This past year we rolled up our sleeves and put our minds in gear as we discovered or

rediscovered our Neighborhoods, looked at the gifts in both our communities and in our congregations, and as we worked on becoming more effective leaders and healthier churches. We have worked to put Covenant Ministry plans in place to help focus our ministry so that we could have a greater impact in our local community and the world, be more effective, empower our clergy and laity for ministry, and have accountability for accomplishing the ministry and being the people that God has called us to be. This is great and much needed foundational work that will be ongoing in the local churches throughout our Conference.

As we continue this ministry of gearing up and to move forward in the building of God’s

Kingdom, we need to challenge ourselves this year to “Reach In!” To “Reach In” and abide in the Vine so that we can truly bear the Fruit that brings the growth of God’s Kingdom and the transformation of the world. We are called, challenged by the words of Christ to abide in him for it is only by abiding in Christ that Christ can truly abide in us. “The heart of Christian spirituality and the basis of Christian mission is communion with Jesus, a mutual indwelling.” (The Wesley Study Bible p. 1311)

We cannot bear the fruit of God, the fruit of Christ, unless we work on this mutual indwelling. So this year get ready! We are going to “Reach In!” We are going to focus on talking with God, on nurturing and caring for



Rev. Dr. Sandra Steiner Ball

others, on Spiritual Formation and renewal individually and in groups so that we can be Healthy churches and Healthy disciples truly equipped to reach out successfully in mission and ministry to build God’s Kingdom, make Disciples of Christ, and Transform the World.

Come And Be A Part Of The Big Four!

By Rev. Anne Pruett-Barnett

On Thursday, January 29th, twenty one persons from our annual conference joined over a thousand other United Methodist leaders from other annual conferences, General Boards and Agencies, for the training that takes place in the January following each General Conference. The idea was that people who lead need to be equipped and trained for their task; so that, as they seek to follow Christ faithfully, they can lead effectively wherever they are planted.

An overarching theme of the day was that we, the people of The United Methodist Church, are called to “open hearts, open minds, and open doors!” Notice that *open* in our United Methodist lingo is no longer an adjective but an active verb! At the General Church quadrennial training in Jacksonville, Florida, the participants were called to “draw the circle wide” and reminded that “no one stands alone, we’ll stand side by side.” (from the anthem

Draw the Circle Wide, Light/Miller) Training will soon be available on RethinkChurch, the newest round from UCom and Igniting Ministries. It continues to offer new and useful ways to help us open our churches, our ministries and ourselves to experiences of God in Jesus Christ and to *invite* and *welcome* others to do the same.

You will be hearing a great deal about the *big four*! And no, I’m not talking about the *final four* in college basketball! The training

included *four areas of focus* (the *big four* of The United Methodist Church) which have “been set in motion to reinvigorate The United Methodist Church.” It is believed that these “4 areas of focus plus nearly 14 million members = 1 transformed world for Jesus Christ.” They provide “unprecedented opportunities” to “draw the circle wide” so that the local church, the annual conference, and the various legs of the General Boards and Agencies will be able to partner most effectively

in living out the good news of God’s love made known in Jesus Christ. The United Methodist *big four* include:

- o Developing principled Christian leaders for the church and the world;
- o New places for new people and renewing existing congregations;
- o Engaging in ministry with the poor;
- o Stamping out killer diseases of poverty by improving health globally.

You may be reading these and thinking “What in the world do these *big four* mean?” or “They don’t have anything to do with our local church or the direction for ministry and mission in which our annual conference is moving.” *Au contraire!* They do! They have everything to do with *Healthy Initiatives!* And it is the responsibility of the twenty one persons who came to Jacksonville to connect you with the *big four!* Invite us into a holy

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Those who attended include Caitlin Smith, Jacqueline O’Brien, Andrew Whitehead, Billy McKee, Yvonne Penn, Bill Ross, Demetrio Beach, Betty Gooch, Sandra Steiner Ball, Anne Pruett-Barnett, Amy Yarnall, John Mitchell, Kevin Goodwin, Shane Hinderliter, William Westbrook, Shirlyn Henry Brown, Jeanel Starling, Bernadette Beckett, Boyd Etter, Ron Bell, and Jonathan Baker

BOYD'S BLESSINGS:

By the time you read this, you may have attended an event entitled "Re-THINKCHURCH." It was held at Kent Island UMC on Saturday, February 21st. National leadership guided participants in honing their skills in the area of "radical hospitality." This was the first of five "practices of fruitful congregations" identified by Bishop Robert Schnase in his recent book. I was unable to attend the training in Kent Island, but received a copy of a Training Participant Book while attending "Living the United Methodist Way" in Jacksonville, Florida in January.

In a recent meeting in a local church, concern was expressed over whose responsibility it is to contact first-time visitors. I replied that my reading and research indicates that when both pastor and people in a church participate in visitor follow-up, a good first impression is frequently the result!

The Training Participant Book for ReTHINK CHURCH offers some simple strategies we can use in our congregations to show we care about those who took the time to attend a worship service, class, or other activity:

- Contact first-time guests within 24 hours (by phone, e-mail, a letter, or a visit.) (I suggested that both the pastor and a designated church member should do this for each visiting family.)
- Provide opportunities to

explore membership prior to joining the church so people know what the church believes and what it expects from them.

The training also offers insight into what can work in reclaiming those who slip into inactivity in the life of the church:

- Implement an "Absentee Intervention Team" to track attendance, watch for patterns that may indicate that someone is leaving the church, and intervene before it is too late (3-4 weeks is the critical window.) This was known as Operation In-Reach in a church where I was a previous pastor.

- Have a Caring Outreach Ministry to make calls perhaps twice yearly to all member households and once yearly to all those non-members who regularly attend the church. (Calling members to invite them to participate in the annual financial or stewardship campaign would not count for this purpose. This effort would simply seek to say, "We care about you because Christ cares for us," and have no other particular purpose!)

These and other strategies provided by ReTHINK CHURCH seek to welcome persons to Christ and the church as they enter the "front door" and to prevent the discouraged or distressed from slipping out the "back door" of discontent.



Rev. Boyd Etter

Mississippi Mission Trip – Katrina Recovery Project – Asbury UMC - Smyrna

Submitted by Art Ricker

This past October Doug Covert and I traveled with members of Doug's former church to Biloxi, Mississippi as part of a work team helping residents there who are still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Katrina. Biloxi and Gulfport are showing strong signs of life – many homes and businesses have been restored. However, 3½ years later, much work is still left to be done and those still on the waiting list, whose homes are not yet

livable, are in deep need of hope and assistance.

To help with these needs, Asbury is organizing a trip for adults from the local congregation in March 2009. At an informational meeting held early in January fourteen people expressed a desire to become part of this team. We will be driving from Smyrna on Saturday, March 21st, and arriving the next afternoon. Work activities will be Monday through Friday, with the return trip on Saturday and

Sunday, March 28 and March 29, 2009.

We will be staying in a facility (with beds) that has been built for recovery work teams adjacent to Heritage United Methodist Church in D'Iberville, MS. Out of pocket expenses will be around \$350 per person for travel, food, and lodging in route. Funds from our Annual Bazaar and the Second Sunday Missions offerings will be used for purchasing supplies and reimbursing the host church for use of their facilities.

Baker Family Lounge Dedicated at Epworth Church

Rev. David and Florence Baker and Rev. Jonathan and Donna Baker were honored Sunday, January 11th as the Baker Lounge was officially dedicated in the new Epworth United Methodist Church. Together, they have 105 years of ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church—30 of those years in the Epworth Community.

Rev. David Baker served from 1943 to 1947 and after retirement, returned to serve part-time for 11 years as Minister of Visitation. Rev. Jonathan Baker served Epworth from 1982 to 1996 and returned January 2008 to lead the church as it moved from its historic location on Baltimore Avenue to the new 48,000 sq. ft. facility on Holland Glade Road.

David & Florence and Jonathan & Donna are models for love and witness, ministry and service as they have shared and continue

to share their passion and talents at Epworth in the choirs, hand bells, organists, clown ministry, card ministry, United Methodist Women, Disciple class studies and Walk to Emmaus. Through their efforts, the Lewes-Rehoboth Beach Association of Churches (LRAC) was created and the New Life Thrift Shop and Christmas



Revs. David and Jonathan Baker

Joy Program were begun. A relationship was established with our sister Church Jamaica and the movement towards being members of the Reconciling Ministry

Network was initiated.

The Baker Lounge is a room dedicated to hospitality and welcome. A place where learning takes place in weekly bible studies and a place of prayer as women gather at dawn to pray for their church family, their own family and friends and the world. Anxious brides can feel comfortable as they prepare for their big day. It is a place where grief and loss can be shared and pain can be laid down as in the GriefShare Program. It is the adult church library and a respite for quiet meditation.

The Epworth Church and local community have been truly blessed by the ministry of Rev. David Baker and Rev. Jonathan Baker, and also by the gifts of Florence and Donna, as they exemplify the ideals of hospitality and welcome, of learning and peace and of prayer.

Millville UMC in Mission

Submitted by Lorena Stone

This past year Millville UMC has been a church in mission – locally and globally. Putting it in financial terms, we have given almost eleven thousand dollars in gifts of money and material items. We have helped families with their bills, provided food, packed shoeboxes, supported causes, lent bicycles to international students, bought Fair Trade coffee, and shared our love and caring with those we know and those who are unknown to us – but who are all children of God. And, of course, we've raised our voices in prayer to God for all those he's asked us to help.

Although we try to let our light shine throughout the year, the Advent Season is when it

seems to shine brightest. This year we provided the warmth of 81 blankets through UMCOR we mailed 10 packages to our military friends and family, we brightened Christmas for two families with more than 50 gifts and two artificial trees, and we purchased 1 llama, 2 shares of a goat, 1 sheep, 1 pig, 1 trio of rabbits, 2 hives of honeybees, 2 flocks of chicks, 2 flocks of geese, 3 flocks of ducks, 1 earth basket, and a mini-forest of tree seedlings through HEIFER International.

We continue to support a family of a single mother and her four daughters that we adopted last year, and we've begun the New Year by voting to establish a Covenant Relationship through the ADVANCE with Miguel Mairena in Nicaragua.

Trinity UMC (Laurel) Challenges Congregation to Go! Fish!

Submitted by Pastor Julie Lewis

Sunday, January 18th, the Evangelism Team at Trinity UMC kicked off their evangelism program based on the new resource from Cokesbury called: Go! Fish! The first component of this program is TIME: Together in Ministry Everyday. The Evangelism Team has challenged every member to volunteer in their community at least 90 minutes in 90 days. We had a volunteer fair after the service that brought people from various organiza-

tions in the community that need volunteers.

The idea behind this is to reach out into the community and fish for people by showing the compassion and caring of Jesus Christ in tangible ways. One of the points of the program is that fish don't jump into the boat; you have to go out and fish. We need to be out in the community "fishing" as it were in order to reach new people for Christ. We set a goal of 12,000 volunteer minutes by Easter Sunday (the end of 90

days) and will be keeping track of those minutes, hopefully having a celebration Easter Sunday as we reach or exceed that goal.

Trinity UMC challenges other small member congregations to take a look at this program and become faithful fishers of people. It is a program that does not require a lot of financial resources, just time. See if you can energize your congregations to get to work in their communities and show Jesus to those who desperately need the love of God.

Soup Social At Christ UMC, Laurel

Wanna be needed? Wanna feel special and please God at the same time? Wanna be the hands and feet of Jesus? Become a

part of our newly formed Soup Kitchen ministry for our community: "Free Soup Social" Happening every Tuesday evening at 5:30

p.m. downstairs in our church kitchen!! For further details, call David Elzey 875-1424.

From the D.S.

Dear Friends,

In John 1:46, of the Contemporary English Version of scripture, Philip excitedly invited Nathanael to come and see Jesus, the one Moses and the Prophets had spoken of. Upon learning that Jesus was from Nazareth, Nathanael asks, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Phillip says, "Come and see." Nathanael did go, met Jesus, and experienced a life changing encounter with Jesus Christ the Son of God. He became a disciple.

Most churches are invitational. Word of mouth, personal invitations, advertising, outreach ministries, banners and balloons, door hangers, all proclaim Jesus with an invitation to come and see. In our culture of skepticism today, the response is often, "Can anything good come from the Church.....Your Church?" Quite often, they have had no experience with a congregation or community of faith. They only know what they have heard and seen on television, YouTube and Facebook.

Sometimes their experience has been painful, disillusioning, and hurtful. They may have been on the receiving end of something harmful in the church, or they may have witnessed gross inconsistency between what was proclaimed on Sunday, and how it was lived out in the congregational life. Some people try church again only to be reminded why they stopped belonging in the first place. Some persons do come and see, and love it. They immerse themselves in the life of faith. They meet Jesus and are changed.

Recently, some excellent training was offered in our Conference entitled, "Rethink Church." It is the next level beyond Igniting Ministries. It was loaded with ideas, suggestions and resources that local churches could use to extend the invitation to come and see - come and see that Jesus is alive and real; come and see that the church offers effective,

life changing ministry in the name of Christ; come and see where they can serve Christ. The material covers the spectrum from

simple greeting in worship to reaching out into the community to evangelism and discipleship development. This is a tremendous resource for local churches. Persons on each district were trained to be trainers and available to churches as a resource.

The challenge is to develop a culture within a community of faith; a congregation that fully backs up what people come expecting to see. The challenge is to have clear consistency between what the various forms of invitation promise, and what is actually happening. The challenge is to be able to unequivocally and honestly say, "Yes" when someone asks, "Can anything good come from the Church.....Your Church?" In simple words, the ability to honestly answer "Yes," is determined by whether or not we walk the talk. How we live together in our congregational life, how we function as a church family has to back up the promise of the invitation. Healthy churches are not perfect churches. However healthy churches are congregations of believers who are seriously committed to a life together characterized by love, forgiveness, compassion, passion for Christ, and service to Christ. The answer, "Yes," is lived out in authentic discipleship. When we invite and the people come to our churches, what will they see? May our lives together be such that they clearly see Christ and are changed as Nathanael was.

Blessings,

Bill



Rev. Bill Sterling

by Kristi Rada

On February 7th the worship band from Kent Island UMC, Ransomed, held a concert to raise funds for their upcoming trip to Nashville, TN in the beginning of March. The evening was full of wonderful praise and prayer to our living Savior! Many who attended were not just from Kent Island but also from all over the Peninsula-Delaware Conference. A Love Offering was taken at the end of the

evening and of course fellowship and dessert followed. Ransomed has been invited to play for an organization called "Band with



a Mission." They are the leading Artist Development and Independent A&R Company in the world. As a band, Ransomed is truly humbled by the gift that God has gifted to them. They view this as an opportunity to worship their Savior, nothing more and nothing less. The band members include Tommy Alton, Cindy Bidinotto-Slate, Curtis Pearson, Warren Scull, Helen & Frank Stamm and Kristi & Dane Rada.

New Window at St. Mark's Reflects Service

Watching workmen install the new stained glass window at St. Mark's UMC, The Rev. Gary Moore couldn't help but be overwhelmed by the vision before him. The "Christian Service Window" installation in the church's new chapel represents the culmination of a well-traveled collaboration between Rev. Moore and Lay Leader Jim Denney. The overall design is based on The Church of Pilgrims window; many local features make the St. Mark's window one of a kind. A small skipjack vessel represents the bounty and the treasure of the Chesapeake Bay, and the "hope"

that it will always be so. The Eastern Shore is represented by a



farmer on a tractor, with the word and symbol of "faith." Farmers hope faith planted seeds will grow and produce. St. Mark's Senior Pastor, the Rev. Gary L. Moore, is depicted in an Army uniform with a clerical shawl indicating his status as a chaplain with the Delaware National Guard. Next to him, an Easton Firefighter wearing a Station 60 helmet represents sacrifice. Of the Christian service figures represented, the current Youth and Family Pastor, the Rev. Darlene Dixon, is shown. Besides her, a doctor with a stethoscope represents the medical profession.

Mt. Olivet Youth Group Stepping Out In Faith

The Olivet Youth Group of Galena, Maryland is stepping out in faith and looking for faith-partners to help sponsor and host a Group Workcamp at the Kent County High School in the summer of 2010. www.groupworkcamps.com. Over 400 youth and adults will travel from all over the USA to attend this camp in Kent Co. MD, where 50 teams of 6 will renovate and repair the homes of elderly and disadvantaged

persons here in our local area. We are not looking for money. We are looking for volunteers to partner with us to organize this event. We need people who are interested in helping with: ladders, site selection, hospitality, public relations, materials, vendor coordination, debris removal, site coaches, church reps, business reps, social agency reps, and more!

Why not ask for one of our volunteers to visit your youth group or Church Council for a

short PowerPoint presentation of the upcoming project.

Please contact Rev. Larry Jameson or Mrs. Dawn Webb for more information. Rev. Larry Jameson, 117 S Main St., P.O. Box 154, Galena, MD 21635-0154. Mobile: 410.708.5190. Home: 410.648.5212. larry@larryjameson.com. Mrs. Dawn Webb, 152 Sassafras St., Millington, MD 21651. Home: 410.928.5724. dwebb1992@gmail.com

Upcoming Event

Easton District United Methodist Women Spring Event-"Diversity"-Music Ministry. Rev. Yvonne Penn is the host pastor. Saturday, April 4, 2009: St. Luke UMC in Cambridge, MD. Start

time is 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Women of every denomination are encouraged to attend. Area churches are invited to share their gifts and talents through their music ministry such as Liturgi-

cal Dance, Mime Ministry, and singing. Please contact Brenda O. Gaines, the Easton District Communications Coordinator for further details and to be included at msbren13@yahoo.com

2009 Fall Mission Trip

My name is Doug Holmes of Kent Island UMC and I will be leading a mission team to Gulfport, Mississippi on November 7, 2009 and returning on November 15, 2009. I am

limiting the number of volunteers to 10. Our first team meeting will be held at Kent Island UMC in September. Mississippi is still in need of our assistance and who

ever volunteers will be greatly blessed. If you are interested in going, contact me at e-mail holmesdaj@atlanticbb.net or cell phone 410.490.7145.

District Page: The Easton District Page is printed within the Peninsula-Delaware Conference Pages in the first issue of each month during the spring. The next District Page will be printed in the April 10th issue. Please submit all photos and articles to the District Editor, Tonya Pinkett, or the District Office by Friday, March 20th. Please be aware that we have only three issues left before our summer break. Consider sharing your ministry with other Easton District churches.

CARE TEAM CONCERNS: Stranger Danger? Or is the church open to all?

If "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," (Rom3:23) then surely there is room for "Church Participation by a Registered Child Sex Offender." The UMC considered this question at the 2004 General Conference and readopted it as Resolution 8009 in the 2008 Book of Resolutions (See pages 919-921 for the resolution in its entirety.) The Social Principles of The UMC declare: "We recognize that family violence and abuse in all its forms – verbal, psychological, physical, sexual – is detrimental to the covenant of human community. We encourage the Church to provide a safe environment, counsel, and support for the victim. While we deplore the actions of the abuser, we affirm that person to be in need of God's redeeming love."

Increasingly, churches are faced with a dilemma in their attempt to be faithful to both of the last two sentences above. Assuring the safety of children in our care, our facilities and our programs is a sacred duty. We must weigh that duty in the balance with what often seems the conflicting value of participation in the life of the church by a convicted child abuser. Being part of a worshipping community is not the only way for a person to experience God's redeeming love,

but is an important one. ... **Welcoming a child sex offender into a congregation must be accompanied by thorough knowledge, careful planning, and long-term monitoring.**

A convicted and/or registered sex offender who wishes to be part of a church community should expect to have conditions placed on his or her participation...



The following steps should be taken in order to be faithful to the Social Principles' commitment both to safety from abuse and to ministry with abusers:

Local churches should:

- hold discussions in the church council and in adult education settings about the possibility of facing the situation of a convicted sex offender returning to or joining the church. These discussions should be held and general agreements reached about actions to be taken should the

church find itself in this circumstance.

- develop a carefully constructed and openly negotiated covenant between the offender and the church community. The covenant should include agreements in the following areas: participation in a professional counseling program for at least the entire time of church membership or participation; adult "covenant partners" to accompany the offender while on church property or attending church activities; areas of church facilities that are "off limits;" restrictions on leadership in or on behalf of the church; no role in church that includes contact with children or youth; any additional conditions for presence or participation; and
- assure that the covenant is maintained by having it written and signed by the offender, the pastor(s), and the chairperson of the church council. While confidentiality of victims should be respected, the covenant should not be secret. Monitoring of the covenant should be taken seriously as a permanent responsibility.

Contributed by Rev. Sally Dolch sdolch@comcast.net. (Rev. Dolch is a member of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference CARE Team [www.pen-del.org/CARETeam]).

Native American Ministries

Native Women's Gathering

One hundred and fifty (150) Native American women, pastors and laity gathered together in Albuquerque, New Mexico to nurture and be nurtured. Crafts, storytelling, music, dance, worship celebrations and field trips refreshed the spirits of all who participated. The glow of refreshed women out-shined the New Mexico sun! Surly the presence of God was in this place!

This event was sponsored by the Native American Comprehensive Plan (NACP) of the United Methodist Church. Jean Norwood, Ragghi Calentine and Boe Harris were part of the leadership team and presenters.



Flying With Eagles

Nestled on top of a hill, surrounded by trees, with the river below, and wild life abundant is Living Springs. A United Methodist camp that began 80 years ago in Lewisville, Ill.

20 Native youth from the four directions of the US gathered in the camp lodge for five days of leadership training. Honoring their tribe, their culture and themselves, these young people were challenged to grow in wisdom so they might take these skills and knowledge and return to their home land to be leaders.

Making good choices, participating in a sweat lodge (purification ceremony), learning about the importance of returning Native bones back to the tribes for proper burial (Return To The Earth Project), visiting burial mounds on private property and at a museum, making burial bundles to be placed in a small box representing the "Return To The Earth Project" to take home,



challenge courses for team building, rock climbing walls, making a Native American flute and many classroom presentations filled their days.

Flying With Eagles is sponsored by Native American International Caucus (NAIC) of the United Methodist Church. It has been in existence for fifteen years. Ragghi Calentine and Rev. Carol Lakota Eastin have been coordinators for most of these years. Flying With Eagles is funded by a grant from the North Central Jurisdiction. This grant is never enough to fully provide for this important youth program. Donations are always appreciated and you may donate by contacting Boe Harris, nakakakena@juno.com, or call her at 302.628.1547.

Young People's Ministry

Struggling to reach young adults? Need some resources for young adult ministry? Just need some good ideas? Help is on the way!

Young People's Ministries has produced a new young adult ministry resource that will be distributed to all of our churches in the very near future. This twelve page resource guide is filled with ministry tips, programming ideas, information for college students, and more. A copy will be mailed to every pastor serving an appointment in the Peninsula-Delaware Conference and to everyone who has already registered as the young adult ministry contact for their church.

Are you looking for some young adult ministry training? "Elevate" is a new training event for leaders and potential leaders of young adult ministries in congregations and campus ministries. It will be held July 10-12, 2009 in Pittsburgh, PA. It is sponsored by the Northeast Jurisdiction of the UMC and is made possible through a grant from the Vision Table.

The event will feature speakers and worship leaders serving in diverse settings across the juris-



Shane Hinderliter

diction. Participants will gather for times of worship, large group forums, workshops, and times of fellowship with people from areas throughout the northeast.

The cost of the event is only \$129 per person for early-bird registration. This includes registration, lodging (double occupancy), most meals, and more. To make it even easier to attend, Young People's Ministries is offering free round-trip transportation to the first 20 people from the conference who register for the event! Visit our website, umyoungpeople.org, to download a brochure.

Please contact me at shinderliter@pen-del.org or 1.877.736.3351 x 15 with any questions.

Peninsula-Delaware Conference United Methodist Men

By Mr. Charles E. Brummell, Jr.
President

September 2008 has passed and 2009 affords each of us a new beginning.

The United Methodist Men (UMM) of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference has a story worthy to communicate to others that involves our purpose, mission and ministries.

On September 6 & 7, 2008 the United Methodist Men held their 51st Annual Religious Retreat Celebration at Camp Pecometh in Centreville, Maryland.

Approximately seventy (70) men and women were in attendance for 1 ½ days in spite of the unfavorable weather caused by a storm. The theme for the celebration was "Effective Lay-Leadership in the Local Church" presented by Rev. John Mitchell. We thank Bishop Peggy A. Johnson, Rev. Michael Johnson, Easton District Superintendent, Rev. William Sterling, Rev. Dr. John F. Mitchell (senior pastor of Hockessin UMC, Rev. Jack Shitama, Director of Camping
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Communicator

Peninsula-Delaware Conference

139 N. State Street, Dover, Delaware 19901

E-mail: tward@pen-del.org Website: www.pen-del.org

Phone: 302.674.2626 Toll Free: 1.877.736.3351 Fax: 302.674.1573

Peggy A. Johnson, Bishop

Sandra Steiner Ball, Director of Connectional Ministries

Tamara Ward, Editor, Layout & Design, Commun. Coordinator

Penny Carney, Assistant Editor

Linette Warren, Subscriptions

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Should Socially Responsible Investing Include Business Ethics?

Over the past few months it has become apparent that Americans are increasingly interested in the topic of business ethics and the role they played in the current economic meltdown. Employees, investors, and consumers have become aware of the corporate culture divide that exists in business between a company acting ethically, and its ability to maintain profitability. The end result is a broken chain in the covenant of trust that binds the company together. Employees feel expendable and no longer trust a company to value their contributions. Investors no longer trust the company's financial statements, audits, or bond rating. Consumers just don't trust anyone anymore which is reflected in such a low consumer confidence index.

Understandably, people now direct additional anger toward overpaid company executives saying "they just don't seem to get it." Recent examples include the auto manufacturers taking private jets to ask the taxpayers for money and financial companies spending lavishly on trips and golf events while taking money to remain financially solvent. Don't get me started on the reward of excessive Wall Street bonuses for the very

people who were involved with this investment mess to begin with.

A recent *International Herald Tribune* article was titled, "From Madoff to Merrill Lynch, 'Where was the ethics officer.'" Many investment companies employed ethics officers, but I doubt many were at the top of the executive compensation list. The position was one of necessity but not of importance. When working in the investment business I was required to attend many sessions on "Ethics" as a component of my annual continuing education requirements. Interestingly this always was oriented around the potential ethical dilemmas and choices that I could face as an Investment Advisor, not how ethical our company management or board of directors were in making choices.

As responsible Christians, we invite Christ to become our internal ethics officer and the Bible our Ethics Manual. The Golden Rule of Christianity, Matthew 7:12 "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is generally referred to as the *Ethic of Reciprocity*. Nearly every religion in the World, ethical system, or philosophy includes some concept requiring each person to treat another person in a decent

manner. The hardest part for organized religion is to consistently teach followers this applies to all human beings, not just fellow believers.

Today the debate on business ethics expands to include the topics of corporate social responsibility, government regulation, self-regulation, environmental impact, and equitable compensation. The center of the debate remains as it has for thousands of years, how the human race should treat each other. United Methodists are additionally guided in social responsibility by the *Book of Discipline*. Great detail is given on the policy of Socially Responsible Investments. The policy states: "in the investments of money, make a conscious effort to invest in institutions, companies, corporations, or funds whose practices are consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles." Perhaps its time for us to add "and a business that exhibits the *Ethic of Reciprocity*."



Jack Brooks

arose that the ship threatened to break up, throwing Jonah in the drink.

The United Methodist Men and others stayed faithful to the causes and beliefs that the United Methodist Men practice under the doctrine of the gospel.

So it was on that day in September. The storm named "Ike" came raging up the East Coast (Eastern Shore) with Camp Pecometh in its path.

The storm brought rain, high winds, high tides, threatening floods and destruction to the area and at times, there were some frightful moments.

The Methodist Men and myself extend our expression of gratitude to those that participated in

any capacity to make our celebration a successful event.

With God in the planning, it was a celebration filled with excitement and enthusiasm, and spiritually motivated through songs, prayer was educationally oriented which set the stage for an informative and successful gathering. The Holy Spirit was invited to dwell among his children.

If we hold true to our faith, the Gospel and through prayer, our blessings will come two-fold. Jonah's prayer to God, during his ordeal, attested to that fact. (Jonah 1:1-10)

If we were not obedient, disciplined, disciples we could have experienced a similar predicament as did Jonah. Then we would not have witnessed the awesomeness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Yet again He created and calmed the raging storm just as He did for Jonah and the sailors aboard the ship bounded for Tarshish.

Cokesbury Connection

Our current economic situation might tell us we believe more is better, enough just isn't enough. Pastor and popular author Adam Hamilton tells us Enough IS enough when God is doing the giving. We are not sure when Adam Hamilton sleeps because he has produced another cutting edge, timely resource to help us during these challenging times. It is called "ENOUGH: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity." This is a 5 session/DVD small group study. Explore Bible teachings on faith, wealth, generosity & simplicity...and at the same time discover deep joy. My husband's parents used to say; "We never had enough until we started tithing." Let Adam Hamilton show you and your church the joys of a healthy, spiritual relationship to money. You may order from Cokesbury. DVD is item 843504004606 for \$39 and the book is 9781426702334 for \$10.

Recently, a very inspiring workshop was held at Kent Island UMC, sponsored by our conference and UM Communications. It was called "ReThink Church." This is the next phase of Igniting Ministry training. For the past four years the slogan of the UMC has been "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors...the People of the United Methodist Church." ReThink Church would like for us to change "Open" from an adjective to a verb...the UMC is made up of people who "open hearts, minds and doors," of seekers for the transformation of the world. There are many helpful (and FREE) tips for you and your church at www.rethinchurch.org. Also, to move your congregation beyond the welcome, try BEYOND 30 SECONDS: Developing a Welcoming Congregation



Madeline Beall

(Kit is #514829 for \$49.95)

Cokesbury is constantly trying to bring you the best resources and training opportunities. Our latest venture into the world of technology is Webinar Trainings. Please go to <http://Cokesbury.webex.com> (no www) to check out how you can register for a live web seminar or download a recorded session.

This can be very helpful for VBS and Christian Education trainings.

ON SALE!!!

ALMOST EVERYTHING!

Parameters and Banners, Choir Robes, Music, Church Signs, Gift Bibles, Disciple Short-Term Bible Studies. Get information on www.cokesbury.com or contact me with any questions you may have.

Blessings on you and your church during this Lenten and Easter Season. It is a good time to ReThink everything, isn't it! This can include Repentance, Covenant, Boundaries, Grace, Sin, Suffering, and Death. Our post-Easter ReThinking can include what we (Re)think about Sharing, Healing, Wholeness, Love, Life and especially CHURCH!

Madeline Beall
Toll Free: 1.877.792.5419
Email: mbeall@cokesbury.com



United Methodist Men Continued from Page 4

and Retreat Ministries, Mrs. Betty L. Gooch, Conference Lay Leader and a host of other spiritually significant persons for their attendance.

Those that participated could have chosen to stay at home in our comfort zone but we braved the weather and came out. We could have been like Jonah, the son of Amittai. The word of the Lord came to Jonah saying go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it because it's wickedness has come up before me. But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. The Lord sent a great wind on the sea and such a violent storm

Share the goodness of life with those who hurt.



Giving to One Great Hour of Sharing enables the United Methodist Committee on Relief to keep our promise that 100 percent of your designated gift goes entirely to specific causes.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

UNITED METHODIST STUDENTS WORLDWIDE SAY Thank You!

Your support for:

- The Ministerial Educational Fund
- The Black College Fund
- The Africa University Fund
- United Methodist Student Day
- World Communication Society (Student Scholarships)

Does make a difference in enabling us to serve more persons more effectively in "Preparing A New Generation of Christian Leaders."

Richard Morris Matthews, President
James King, III, General Secretary
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United Methodist Church
1000 Park Ave. N.E., Atlanta, GA 30309

TOUCHED by the HEART of
SALISBURY**"Living the Dream"**

"Be mindful to be a blessing, especially to those of the household of faith; those who belong to God's family with you, the believers."

(Galatians 3:10)

This Communicator article catches me between two very important events.

The first is the celebration of Black History Month and the second is the April 18th event when the Peninsula-Delaware Conference will hold the Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium at Wesley College.

As we celebrate the election of the first African American President and his first three months in office I can't help but take a second look at all the people who fought for racial and social justice in this country. At Salisbury Urban Ministries we clearly see that poverty has no respect of person. We see people of every race and culture struggling to meet their basic needs. What is ever so powerful is to see the community, businesses, churches and people of varying economic means, coming together to help feed the hungry, clothe the naked and provide hospitality to the poor. But, I'm taken back when I read Dr. King's "I Have a Dream Speech" while looking at the congregations that make up the Body of Christ in our nation. I ask myself, "When Dr. King spoke of rising from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice; was he talking only to the nation or was he speaking a message to the Church as well?"

When Dr. King said; "We must not be guilty of wrongful deeds; let us not seek to satisfy our thirst

for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred; was he talking only to the nation or was he speaking to the Church as well? When he dreamed of sons of former slave owners and former slaves sitting down together at the table of brotherhood; was that at the nation's table or was that at the Lord's Table in the House of God? When he said, "I have a dream of little black boys and black girls joining hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers, was he dreaming only of this happening in the streets of our cities and towns and not around the altars and in the pews of local churches?"

Let me explain what I mean. There is no constitutional law or amendment that says churches must be integrated congregations. There is no constitutional law or amendment that says a church's membership must be 50% Anglo and 50% African American. We all know that in every city and in every town in America the eleven o'clock hour is the most segregated hour on a Sunday morning.

Now why is that when so much blood has been shed, so many lives have been sacrificed, so many prayer have been prayed and so many dreams have been dreamed of a world where people of every hue and color would come together as brothers and sisters in a spirit of brotherhood and unity? Why is the Church still one of the most segregated places you can find in America?

What programs – what plans do we have in our churches mission statements or vision statements that say we will seek to be an inclusive congregation?

What action steps are listed in our Charge Conference reports under evangelism that calls us to inclusivity?

Do we really believe God has called our nation to unity and not the Church as well? Do we really believe God is okay with us being segregated congregations scattered across the nation holding private worship services with invisible Jim Crow signs on our doors saying, "For Blacks only," or "For Whites only," or "For Latinos only" or "For Hispanic only?" Would not God be pleased to see Churches where Blacks, Whites, Latinos, Hispanic and other ethnic groups who wanted to worship Him would come together - holding hands with one another at the table of the Lord worshipping and giving glory, honor and praise to Him?

Is this just a dream? Yes, it is a dream, but it is a dream that is deeply rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For Jesus has commissioned us to go and make disciples of all nations - of all people, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Good News of the Gospel is for all regardless of their color, ethnicity, social class or human condition. The household of God is not distinguished by color lines or class lines but the household of God is made up of all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The family of God is multi-colored, multi-ethnic, multi-national. And so the Apostle Paul says, "Be mindful to be a blessing, especially to those of the household of faith; those who belong to God's family with you, the believers."

"First Sunday" Celebrations

Does "First Sunday" have a special meaning to you?

For the members and surrounding community of Ayres UMC in Pittsville, the first Sunday evening of each month offers an opportunity to come together in an informal worship and praise service. Two years ago, the NOWW (Nurture, Outreach, Worship, and Witness) Committee, under the leadership of Jan Rollins and Pastor John Hinkle, Jr. began Saturdays in the Park. These weekly summer evening services

are held at the Pittsville Community Park across the street

from the church. In a desire to offer something year-round the idea of First Sunday services was born. Held in Ayres' Fellowship Hall, First Sunday offers the opportunity to reach members of the community who may not be able to attend morning services and/or want a different style of worship. The mix of worship,



Phil Davis shares his music ministry at the February First Sunday service held at Ayres UMC

music ministry, food, and fellowship has proven quite successful as attendance has exceeded expectation every month so far – including the recent February service held on Super Bowl Sunday!

St. Stephen's UMC Happenings

The UMYF is off and running for 2009 at St. Stephen's UMC in Delmar, DE. With youth leader, Harry Edwards, and his wife, Terry, the youth meet every Sunday evening at 6pm and are very busy planning good things for this year. Harry and Terry have been members of St. Stephen's for five years and are very excited about the youth group. Since their first meeting in early January, the group has already grown and they sponsored a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner on Tuesday February 24th at Camelot Hall. "Christ Connections" is their name and they are connecting with Christ in more ways than one!

Calling All Ushers

Do you live close to or near Princess Anne? Are you seeking a way to serve at the Peninsula-Delaware Annual Conference on the campus of the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore June 11-13, 2009? Rev. Fred Duncan, Head Usher, is looking for an inclusive group of clergy, laity, young, not so young, male and female willing servants of God to volunteer for all or part of the three days. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Rev. Fred Duncan 302-645.9426.

St. Stephens's Walk Across America Club and Healthy Activities are expanding once again! The funds earned last year from our Huey Award were spent on something the entire congregation can benefit from and will enjoy. They have purchased a Wii Game System, Wii Fit, and a flat screened TV on which to see it. The goal is to keep everyone moving and to have fun while doing it. Wii Sports includes boxing, bowling, golf, tennis, and baseball.

Camp Registrations in Full Swing

Even with the uncertain economy, summer camp registrations are ahead of last year's pace. So don't delay in getting your campers signed up. If your child has never attended, you can register, pay the \$50 deposit, then come to the Open House on April 25 or 26. Then if s/he decides it's not for them, we'll refund your deposit. And, new this year is EZPay. Register your camper by April 1 and you can divide the balance due into six manageable monthly payments. For more information, go to www.pecometh.org or contact Julie Lutz at 410.556.6900, x128 or julie@pecometh.org.

Local Methodist Nominated for Outstanding Service

Mr. David Duitscher, a lay member of Christ United Methodist Church in Salisbury, was nominated and became a recipient of the Jefferson Award by the Holly Community.

The Jefferson Award is a national recognition of outstanding volunteer service to the community and is administered locally by the CBS affiliate WBOC-TV 16 and FOX 21 of Delmarva. He is one of 16 persons invited to attend a banquet from which one will be chosen to go to the national level.

Mr. Duitscher has served for many years as a Director of Chaplaincy for Deer's Head State Hospital and Coastal Hospice by the Lake. His duties include visiting patients and providing spiritual care for the 80-90 patient residency. For many, especially the long term residents, he and



the other chaplains are the only spiritual contact available. He has conducted funerals and memorial services for several deceased residents, including one trip to Baltimore.

Although his lay ministry covers a range of spiritual varieties, he models what it means to be a United Methodist serving in the world. Donna Clark, also a member of Christ, described Dave this way "if there is anybody that walks the walk and not just talks the talk, it's Dave." Congratulations on the nomination!



District Page: The next Salisbury District Page will be printed in the April 10th issue. Please submit all photos and articles to the District Editor, Rev. Shirlyn Brown (shirlynbrown@aol.com) by Friday, March 20th. There are only three issues left before our break so be sure to submit your stories and photos soon.

From the D.S.

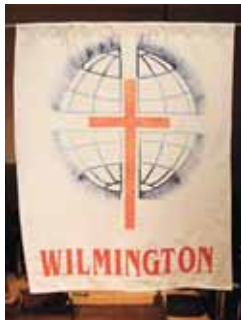
I want to take this opportunity to share with you an update on two important items from our Wilmington District Conference which was held on November 8, 2008 at Asbury United Methodist Church in New Castle. At our District Conference, where Wilmington District pastors and Wilmington District Lay Members of the Annual Conference were in attendance, a report was presented from the Wilmington District Council concerning the availability of short-term grants for 2009 and there was an annual report given by the Wilmington District Committee on Urban Center Ministries. These two committees have met since that District Conference Session and actions have been taken.

The Wilmington District Council Grant Committee has received, reviewed and approved seven (7) grants. These grants were awarded based upon the criteria previously established by the District Council. A key criterion was that the ministry project receiving funding would be a joint project of the requesting United Methodist church and another entity (United Methodist congregation or another 501(c)3 group.) Congregations receiving grants were Aldersgate UMC, Wilmington, De.; Asbury UMC, New Castle, De.; Cokesbury UMC, Port Deposit, Md.; Marshallton UMC, Wilmington, De.; St. Daniel's UMC, Port Penn, De.; St. Georges UMC, St. Georges, De.; and, St. Paul's UMC, Wilmington, De.. A total of \$6,300 was distributed.

District Lay Academy Scheduled for April

The Wilmington District Lay Academy will begin the week of April 20, 2009 and conclude the week of May 18, 2009. Sessions will be held at Christ UMC in Elsmere on Mondays, Elkton UMC on Thursdays, and Union UMC (Bear, DE) on Saturdays. There is a position on the Board of Lay Ministries for someone

The Wilmington District Committee on Urban Center Ministry (WDCUCM) has received the end of the year



financial report from William E. Westbrook, Jr. our Annual Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services, and is now prepared to make available Grant Request Application Forms for the 2009 Grant Year.

As per the action taken at our Wilmington District Conference Session, \$20,000 will be distributed for the 2009 Grant Year. Wilmington District pastors and Wilmington District Lay Members of the Annual Conference will be receiving a communication from WDCUCM through our District Office. (and/or read article to the right of this one)

Once again, I want to express my personal appreciation to the members of these two committees and, specifically, to the respective chairpersons, David Jones and Patricia Bryant Harris for their work on behalf of our District ministries.

Your Partner in Ministry,

William M. Fitzhugh

By Rev Dr Patricia Bryant Harris, Chairperson

The Wilmington District Committee on Urban Center Ministries (Committee) is accepting grant proposals effective March 7, 2009. All proposals are due no later than Wednesday, April 15, 2009 with award notification being made by June 1, 2009. The Program Grant Period must cover July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010.

Funds for these grants are the income earned during 2008 from the principal funds of the Silverbrook United Methodist Church property sale. The Committee is empowered to grant 80% of each preceding year's income for the purposes of supporting urban ministry within the City of Wilmington. The income during 2008 amounted to \$23,015. The funds available for grant

WDCUCM SEEKING GRANT PROPOSALS

awards in the upcoming Program Grant Period total \$20,000. (this includes \$2.79 remaining from 2007 grant funds plus \$18,412.28 from 2008 income earned) An action by the Wilmington District Conference in November, 2008 authorized monies be distributed from the principal (if necessary) for the 2009 grant award funds so that the total grant award funds available for distribution would be \$20,000. Therefore, \$1,584.93 from principal was allocated making the total grant funds available for award \$20,000.

RFP packets can be obtained by contacting the Wilmington District Office: Call 302.571.1471 or E-mail wilmingtondistrict@comcast.net. Due to the limited grant funds available this year as compared to the approximate \$54,000 last year, the eligibility of applicants is limited to United Methodist Churches, United

Methodist Church organizations, and United Methodist non-profit agencies located within the geographic boundaries of the City of Wilmington. In 2008, applicants were accepted from United Methodist and non-United Methodist churches, church organizations and non-profit agencies. The Committee was pleased that during the first year of its ministry, grant funds were distributed within the United Methodist Church and beyond the United Methodist Church. The community of the City of Wilmington was able to benefit in a variety of ways and this outreach was also another way of living out "open hearts, open minds, open doors." Though this type of distribution will not be available this year, it is our hope that the grant funds awarded will continue to carry the "good news" throughout the City of Wilmington.

Gallery at Grace Presents



"Diverse Traditions - Universal Vision"

by award winning artists, Sandy Stevenson and Lois Jones, sharing a passion for expressing their view of the world.

The Opening Reception will be held on Friday, April 3, 2009 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. There will be refreshments and music by Johannes Brass Ensemble during this reception. The show runs through April 26.

Grace United Methodist Church is located at 900 Washington Street in Wilmington.

GALLERY HOURS:
MON.-THURS., 9 AM TO 3 PM,
FRI. 9 AM TO 1 PM
Handicapped Accessible

To reach the gallery you may contact them in several ways: by telephone 302.655. 8847 or by email at grace@gracechurchum.org. The gallery also has a website where you can visit for more information: www.gracechurchum.org

"JoyShop" at Moore's Chapel

Moore's Chapel United Methodist Church on Blake Road in Elkton, Maryland will be hosting a Spring Community JoyShop Ministries "Seeking God" workshop on April 17 and 18.

This event is also sponsored by Elkton Presbyterian Church and Media Mennonite Church.

The teacher for this event is Anita Keagy, a national speaker from Washington Boro, Pennsylvania and the founder of JoyShop ministries. She is a great encourager whose mission is to get people to spend time with God everyday in Bible study and prayer. All are encouraged to attend.

The doors will open at 6:30 p.m. on Friday.

- Friday night sessions include: Worship and Anita's testimony

On Saturday the doors will open at 8:30 a.m. and the day will include: Announcements/Worship, three sessions with Anita and a time to practice the principles that are taught and lunch.

The cost per person is \$20.00 which includes lunch, a binder with all the workshop materials as well as a pocket testament, bookmark and highlighter.

For more information please contact: Ruth Ann Johnson at walnutsprings_21921@yahoo.com or call 410.398.4313

'Way to Go Guys!

Give a 'big round of applause' (ask a Scout for a demonstration of this!)

to the Leeds UMC, Elkton MD

Cub Scouts Pack 120 and our Boy Scout Troop 22! These young men, with their leadership and family's encouragement and support, donated a

massive amount of canned and non-perishable food items for donation to the Rock Church Food



Pantry. The items were gathered during their annual canned food drive on February 14, and truly show a heart of caring and com-

munity involvement on the part of these young people. Leeds UMC has been the chartering organization for these Scouting groups since 2004. Pack 120 donated 340lbs

of goods and Troop 22 donated 30 lbs. The need in this area is great and these items will be a blessing. Thanks again Scouts!

District Page: The Wilmington District Page is printed within the Peninsula-Delaware Conference Pages in the first issue of each month during the spring. The next District Page will be printed in the April 10th issue. Please submit all photos and articles to the District Editor, Denise Scoles Knettlar (altofire150@yahoo.com) by Friday, March 20th. There are only three issues left before the break so please highlight your ministries by submitting stories and photos for the district page.

Quadrennial Training Continued from page 1

conversation in which we share our specific piece of the training; the ideas for ministry and mission we received. Comments from some of the participants include:

Yvonne Wallace-Penn: Allow us to share with you how we connect with those who live in our neighborhood (surrounding the church) and why we the people of faith should be concerned on ways we can impact Public Policy for a Healthier World.

Jeanel D. Starling: The sessions I attended focused on Strengthening the Black Church, Network Group for Spiritual Formation, Ending Global Poverty: What can we do?, Developing Health Care Ministries in the Local Church, and Becoming Transforming Congregations by Fostering a Culture of Disciple Formation. These are all areas we have discussed before. With new techniques and strategies, I believe it is time for all of us to step up and step out more and really begin to address how to improve our missional initiatives to transform and turn the world upside down.

Kevin Goodwin: This was my 3rd Quad training event and the best part was the personal contacts with General Board people I have been emailing for years. Second to that was the

opportunity to share with others doing the same work in their Conferences. This year's Conference Appeal aligns nicely with the Four Points; raising funds for at least three of the four.

Bernadette Beckett: The church should engage in ministry with the poor by recovering, renewing, and refreshing. United Methodist's engage in ministry with the poor by looking poverty in the face. In other words, we have to hear the poor, accept the poor, and serve the poor. It is imperative that we embrace them because whatever we do or don't do, we do to Jesus (Luke 4:16-21).

Jonathan Baker: in addition to the inspiration of our plenary and worship settings, I was fortunate to attend several workshops helping to flesh out the four focus areas. A workshop "Forming and Sustaining Leaders in the Cycle of Grace" reminded us of the importance of helping people learn to lead out of spiritual center that would be continually formed and informed by the Holy Spirit. Recruiting persons into leadership and sustaining them requires attention to helping people find ways to be spiritually formed so that leadership does not evolve into unhealthy practices and use of power. Each local church and Conference should be very intentional about developing intentional leadership development programs.

Another workshop, "Stew-

ardship and the Congregation's DNA", raised questions about how churches and Conferences develop a culture of stewardship that become their DNA. In many situations this DNA is unhealthy and needs to be changed, which is difficult. Various strategies were offered as ways to shift the culture with most giving emphasis to modeling change and working with new members and leaders over the years to alter the DNA. Creating new outreach opportunities provides entry points for new persons and the involvement of existing persons and begins, over time, to change attitudes and cultures.

An exciting workshop entitled, "Beyond Always: Local Churches and Ministry with the Poor" offered testimonies from various churches throughout our connection to the creative ways in which they were involved in ministry "WITH" the poor. The emphasis was on "with" the poor; not doing things "for" the poor as a way of including them in the total life of the church and valuing them. This ministry is not an option for local churches – it is a mandate of the Gospel with each church needing to discern how it is to live out this ministry and discipleship. One major sign of a vital congregation is their ministry with the poor.

Boyd Etter, Dover District Superintendent: "One of the workshops I attended addressed

developing a year-round culture of generosity. Too often we see stewardship as a seasonal situation-- how we will raise next year's budget. In these times of economic challenge, God is giving us an opportunity to put God and generous giving first."

Betty M. Gooch: Are you ready for a change? This was one of the questions that was asked during "Living the United Methodist Way: Turning Worlds Upside Down." There were workshops to help prepare us to become better leaders. As we learn how to develop our leadership skills, we were reminded that good leaders are well informed, listen to the members of the congregation, help with making the plans for the church and out into the community. If we are going to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world then we have to be the hands and feet of Christ. Lord, I am ready for a change.

Unlike the *final four* college basketball tournament, which is a couch potato activity for most of us, The United Methodist version, the *big four*, calls for us to actively participate! It's not just about receiving the information passively; it's about how to actively participate in bringing the *big four* to fruition in our local churches, our communities, our districts, the annual conference

and throughout the world!

As the Gospel of John comes to an end, in the 21st chapter, Jesus asks: "Do you love me more than these? Feed my lambs...Tend my sheep...Feed my sheep...Follow me!" Join the team that went to Jacksonville, be a part of the *big four*, and follow Jesus! If you need more information on how to incorporate the *big four* into your ministry, call or email one of the twenty one participants. We'll be delighted to share our experience with you.



The PDW Congo Partnership Team is asking for continued prayers for the violence to cease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Also, we ask for prayers for Bishop Yemba as he attempts to lead the UMC in the DRC Episcopal Areas under his jurisdiction under these trying circumstances. Pray for this Team to discern the best ways to support the projects we know will reach the least of these brothers and sisters while they struggle to find shelter, food and medical care. God bless you and thank you for your prayers.

Conference Calendar of Events

March 2009

- 15-17 Board of Ordained Ministry Candidate Interviews, Rehoboth Beach: Atlantic Sands Hotel
- 16 Annual Conference Worship Team Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 6:00 p.m.
Board of Ordained Ministry Technical Readers and Writers Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 7:00 p.m.
- 18 Spiritual Formation Task Force Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 3:30 p.m.
- 21 Black Methodists For Church Renewal Meeting, Dover: Whatcoat UMC, 10:00 a.m.-1200 p.m.
- 23 Credit Union Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 1:30 p.m.
- 24 Candidacy Mentor Training, Camden: Whatcoat UMC, 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- 25 Christian Service Team Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 5:00 pm
Volunteers In Mission Team Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 6:00 p.m.
Peter D. Weaver Partnership Team Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 7:00 p.m.
- 28 Conference UMW Spring Event, Salisbury: Asbury UMC, 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- 30 Extension Ministers Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 6:00 p.m.
- 31 Strengthening The Black Church Committee Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 4:00 p.m.

April 2009

- 2 Personnel Committee Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Committee on Native American Ministries Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 9:00 a.m.
- 3 Personnel Committee Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- 4 Easton District United Methodist Women Spring Event, Cambridge: St. Luke UMC, 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- 8 Annual Conference Sessions Team Meeting, Wesley College-Room # 206, 4:00-6:00 p.m.
- 10 GOOD FRIDAY Resource Center CLOSED
- 14 Black United Methodist Preachers Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 11:00 a.m.
- 16 Conference Board of Lay Ministries Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 7:00 p.m.
- 18 Wilmington District UMW Spring Event, Stanton: St. Mark's UMC, 9:00 a.m.
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium, Dover: Wesley College
- 20 Board of Ordained Ministry Full Board Meeting, Bear: Cornerstone UMC, 9:30 a.m.
C.A.R.E. Team Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Credit Union Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 1:30 p.m.
- 21 Council on Finance and Administration Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 9:30 a.m.
Personnel Committee, BFEM Resource Center, 1:00 p.m.
Financial Seminar Committee, BFEM Resource Center, 1:00 p.m.
Insurance Committee Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 3:00 p.m.
Investments Committee Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 3:00p.m.
Board of Pensions Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 5:00 p.m.
Christian Service Team Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 5:00 p.m.
Volunteers In Mission Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 6:30 p.m.
Conference United Methodist Men Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 7:15 p.m.
- 22 Equitable Compensation Meeting, BFEM Resource Center, 3:00 p.m.
- 25 3rd. Annual Camp Pecometh Quilt & Auction Day, Centreville, MD.: Camp Pecometh, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.