

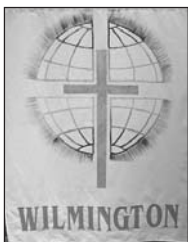
From the D.S.

I am writing this knowing that the date for this issue of the *Communicator* is April 14, 2006 which is Good Friday. I also know that many will not read this article until after Easter. I believe that it is important for us to remember that there is no Easter until after Good Friday, there is no resurrection until after crucifixion, and that there is no new life until after there is a death. These realities from the life of Jesus of Nazareth can be symbolic for what must happen in our own spiritual lives. If we are to experience (personally, congregationally, from a district and conference perspective) new life, if we are to be "resurrected into new life," then something has to be crucified, something has to die in order for something new to spring forth. New habits often require the death of some old habits. New commitments often require the death of some old commitments. New priorities often require the death of some old priorities. After Lent comes Eastertide, after Good Friday comes Easter, after death we are to experience resurrection ("new life") – there lies our hope individually, congregationally and corporately.

Resurrection involves change. Change involves uncertainty, fear, and anxiety. I do not know about you, but for me new life brings its own level of stress. Change, new life, for you, for me and for us will require faith, trust and commit-

ment. In these 50 days between Easter and Pentecost, I invite you to pray with me for discernment concerning what needs to die in us, in our congregations, in our district and in our annual conference in order for God to resurrect us into new life. We are to be a Resurrection People. I am convinced that we are to die to selfishness, greed, pride, revenge, injustice, and hate and be resurrected as self-giving, generous, humble, forgiving, just and loving servant leaders. I am also convinced that in our congregations, in the district and in our annual conference we are to die to maintaining our congregations, our buildings and our ministries and we are to be resurrected to being engaged in vital and dynamic ministries that both nurture the congregation and reach out to the communities where we are and beyond. Please join me in praying for discernment and courage to be what God is calling us to be. We need the discernment to know what needs to be changed and we need the courage to make those changes in order that we might be faithful to God's will for us in the months and years ahead. If in your prayer, meditation and reflection time there are specific insights that come into your consciousness, please send them to me for I would appreciate hearing from you.

Your Partner in Ministry
William M. Fitzhugh



Elkton Area Churches Gather to Proclaim "A Holy Lent"

On Ash Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m., the clergy and congregations of the Elkton area United Methodist Churches came together in worship to begin the season of Lent as a family. The Rev. Karen Bunnell and the members of Elkton UMC hosted this assembly and their Senior Choir provided the musical offerings. The Rev. Bert

Jicha of the Cherry Hill/Baldwin Charge brought the message from the Book of Joel. We were invited to journey through this forty-day season by self-examination, repentance, prayer, fasting and self-denial, by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word and observing a "Holy Lent." The Rev. Gloria Penn of Providence UMC, Rev. Don Alford of Union UMC and

Rev. Rick Vance of Leeds UMC all participated in this service of Holy Communion and the imposition of ashes. Rev. Kyung Mu Koo of Moore's Chapel UMC had been scheduled to participate as well, but was prevented by illness. We left in silence with the charge to prepare ourselves; body, soul and spirit, through the disciplines of the season for the coming of the

St. Paul's Odessa Youth celebrated Mardi Gras



The youth of St. Paul's Odessa celebrated Mardi Gras by inviting their friends to a "Fat Sunday" celebration – Making masks, participating in balloon races and of course, partaking of the "fat!" Each student who brought a friend got a prize and everyone had a blast!

Mission in a Day

On February 11, three people from the Wilmington District participated in our "Mission in a Day" by journeying a short distance to Mission Central in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Braving threats of a Nor'Easter, Rev. Patti Collett of St. Paul's UMC, Wilmington, and Charlene Blanchard and Rev. Karin Tunnell of St. Paul's Odessa, drove health kits and more to the center in Mechanicsburg, PA (a 1½ hour trip from St. Mark's in Stanton).

The staff at Mission Central is extremely helpful at this fantastic facility, offering tremendous insight into their mission and ministries which literally provides assistance around the world.

Your Conference Disaster Relief Task Force has organized two more days when you and your church can participate in this relatively easy and low-cost mission. This is a perfect opportunity for an entire family to do mission because even grade school children can participate in some of

the work projects (like putting together Love Boxes, and counting items in health and school kits); the work environment is pleasant with clean restrooms, low humidity, no bugs and access to lunch. Plus you really see how a cooperative mission can evolve from just one person's dream! Next Mission Days are Wednesday, May 24 (from 1-4 pm, plus travel time) and Saturday, October 21 from 10-4 pm (plus travel time). To sign up, contact Rev. Karin Tunnell at 302.378.2420.

Children Celebrate Ash Wednesday



Eighty Five children from The Bethesda Academy participated in the imposition of Ashes with Reverend Isabel Gardner on Ash Wednesday at Bethesda UMC, in Middletown, Delaware.

Two-day Grant Writing Session scheduled for Friday, April 28, 2006, and Saturday, April 29, 2006

All are welcome to attend a TWO day Grant Writing Session scheduled for Friday, April 28, 2006, and Saturday, April 29, 2006. Mr. Roland Ridgeway, Housing Director of Inter-Faith Housing out of Newport, DE is the facilitator. He is one of the most dynamic grant writing facilitators on the Eastern Shore. This is a great opportunity for non-profits, churches, and others to benefit from Mr. Ridgeway's expertise.

Cost: \$125.00 per person – There are a FEW scholarships available.

Location: Mount Calvary United Methodist Church, 28 Church Street, Bridgeville, DE 19933

Time: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. –Lunch will be provided.

Cut off date for reservations will be APRIL 21, 2006.

Contact Person is: Carlton Bowers – 302.249.3230

CEU's are available upon request!

A letter to the churches of the Dover District

"Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." As we look to the future with expectancy, God has His hand upon the Dover District for many wonderful and exciting things. The newly appointed Associate Lay Leaders, Jim Dorton, Luray McClung and JoAnne Sammons wish to encourage each of you in the faith.

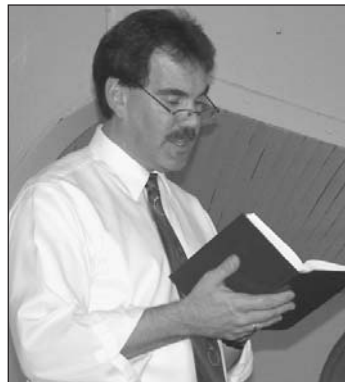
Ephesians 2:10 motivates us. "We are His workmanship created in Jesus Christ to do good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do." (NIV)

Remember that we are one body with many parts. Each of us has a special gift and ministry which God has specifically prepared in advance for us to do. We must be obedient to God's call and step out in faith that we may perform those good works according to His will and purpose for our life. May we continue to encourage each other, build up one another and pray for one another. Continue to pray for spiritual renewal, awakening, and revival in the churches of our district and conference.

Meanwhile, we seek your cooperation in supplying the good news from your church. What is happening that your brothers and sisters in Christ may be informed? Please share your good news as you continue to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We hope to hear from you soon. If possible, also send a picture of your special event. To God be the glory. You remain in our prayers. The information can be submitted by e-mailing it to espkmuc@verizon.net, jsammbird@comcast.net or by regular mail to Ewell's-St. Paul UMC, P.O. Box 266, Clayton, DE 19938. The information will then be written as articles for the Dover Digest page of the Communicator.

In His Service,
Jim, Luray and JoAnne

Shaving of the Head



By Lynn R. Parks

Before taking his seat in the red barber chair set up behind the altar, the Rev. Ed Kuhling had some instructions for his parishioners.

"I want you to put these verses in your minds," he said. "They are so important; I want every one of you to memorize them." And with that, he read from 2 Kings, chapter 2, verses 23 and 24: "From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some youths came out of the town and jeered at him. 'Go on up, you baldhead!' they said. 'Go on up, you baldhead!' He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the Lord. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youth."

Even under dire threat of bear maulings, there were jokes aplenty as Kuhling, pastor at Wesley United Methodist Church northwest of Seaford, had his head shaved at the conclusion of Sunday's service on March 5th. He agreed last March to go under the barber's razor if church members were able to raise \$75,000 toward a \$1.2 million expansion project by this March. Parishioners



raised a little more than \$79,000, said Charlie Good, chairman of the building committee.

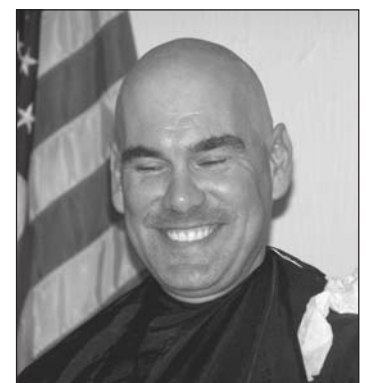
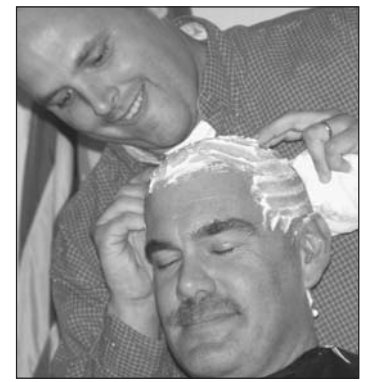
"That should be enough to convince the conference that we can handle a mortgage payment," said Good. The Peninsula-Delaware Conference is willing to lend the church 80 percent of the construction cost.

The church raised the money through a variety of means, including a car show, chicken barbecues, dinners and sales. In addition, members paid \$25 for a chance to be the one to shave Kuhling's head.

District Superintendent Sandra Steiner Ball, who was part of Sunday's standing-room-only congregation, pulled the barber's name from a basket. Winner and long-time church member Ellen Messick, who admitted that she paid \$100 to get four chances, took up the clippers and started cutting Kuhling's black thick hair away in strips. When he was nearly bald, she clipped off his mustache.

"I have had that since I was 17," he said. For comfort, he sucked on an orange Tootsie-Pop that Messick had given him.

Messick's husband, Ronald, told the congregation that when they were first married, he came home from work to find that a young cedar tree he had planted



in the yard had been mowed down. Ellen, who had cut the grass with a push mower, had also cut down the tree.

"I told her that with a push mower, to keep from cutting down something you don't want to cut down, all you have to do is stop walking," Ronald Messick said. "So I say this to you, pastor: Watch your ears!"

After Ellen was finished, church member Randy Covington, who shaves his own head, lathered Kuhling's head with white cream and shaved off the remaining stubble. Finally, a bald Kuhling grinned out at the congregation.

"I've got just one thing to say," he announced, waving his Tootsie-Pop in the air and adopting a Kojak stance. "Who loves ya, baby?"

St Paul UMC of Milford has Ground Breaking



On February 5, 2006, at exactly 1:00 p.m., St. Paul in Milford, along with community leaders and area churches, met to dedicate the ground for their long awaited ground breaking ceremony. Along with the Rev. Dr. Sandra Steiner Ball, District Superintendent, Milford mayor Ronnie Rogers, Richard Johnson (contractor), Douglas Gibson (site manager), Katrina Wilson (worship leader), Oscar Young (trustees chair), Rev. Starling

asked all to turn their shovels high to heaven, as she said, "In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit," now turn the soil. "Amen!!!"

Rev. Starling said that because they believe in their youth and children being involved, they held the shovels next and did the same thing. God is truly our provider and continues to be at work in our lives. We believe that all things are possible with God. Our goal is to remain faithful and obedient to God all the way.

Welcome to the Grace Groups in Millsboro

By Dona Rayne

This is dedicated to our brother in Christ, Roy Brooks. Roy exemplified the work and witness of small group ministry. In September when we were inviting folks to host a small group in their homes for the 40 Days of Purpose, Roy volunteered. He pushed himself, coming to Training Camp to prepare for this new adventure.

This opportunity was a perfect fit for Roy since he was primarily homebound, it gave him a way to stay connected and be involved in the life of the church. He got on the phone and invited a few men to come. So every Tuesday morning throughout the 40 Days, 6 men gathered for wor-

ship, fellowship, growth, ministry and faith sharing at Roy's.

It was during the study that a need for a handicap ramp and some minor repairs at Roy's was discovered. As a result, through a series of "God-happenings" another small group, for their outreach ministry, met those needs. What began as a "project," resulted in relationships that have bound brothers and sisters together in the love of Christ for all eternity.

When the winter/spring session of Grace Groups was to start, Roy again volunteered. This time he and Skip Krantz were going to co-lead the group. Skip and Ernie Leone showed up at Roy's the morning it was to begin. They knocked on the door and John answered. John told them that his dad was in the hospi-

tal. What happened next is love poured out – these two men invited John to go with them to the hospital to visit Roy. They encouraged John all the way there and back. During their visit at the hospital, they hugged Edith and prayed with Roy and his family. The next day, Roy received his eternal reward as he slipped from his mortal body to his immortal one.

At his Memorial Service, old friends and new friends shared experiences with Roy. We have truly witnessed the triumph of a life lived by faith in Christ. We experienced the incarnation of the ordinary that became extraordinary.

Roy Brooks has shown us an extraordinary way. May his testimony challenge us to live life in connection with one another.



District Clergy/Laity Luncheon Recognizes Young People "Today's Youth for Tomorrow's Leadership"

The Luncheon was centered around the Bible verse from PROVERBS 22:6 "Train up a child in the way they should go; and when they are old, they will not depart from it," and was held on February 25th. Music was provided by Mr. Jason Yost and entertainment included a praise dance worship ministry, Total Praise (Jones). The keynote speaker was David Burke, who has just concluded his time as the Conference Director of Young People's Ministry.

During the luncheon the following young people were recommended from information that was submitted for acknowledgement of academic achievements and outstanding participation within the District family.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Tiffany Batson | 17. Paige Hurley |
| 2. Rynell Brooks | 18. Aisha Meekins |
| 3. Jamie Brown | 19. Sarah Moore |
| 4. Bashawn Camper | 20. Wykeshia Pierce |
| 5. Devin Carter | 21. LaSheena Purnell |
| 6. Aukeem Cheers | 22. Mykira Rideout |
| 7. Ashley Chenault | 23. Delma Riley |
| 8. Tenecia Collins | 24. Myrna Riley |
| 9. Wayne Cornish | 25. Brionna Smith |
| 10. Harry Demby IV | 26. Tyra Smith |
| 11. Brittany Farrare | 27. Ahna Stewart |
| 12. Tiffany Frazier | 28. India Thomas |
| 13. Amber Harper | 29. Efrim Wilson |
| 14. Jordan Hines | 30. Jason Wilson |
| 15. Kaleb Hines | 31. Tykerra Wilson |
| 16. Maschell R. Hines | |

Of these persons, seven were given special recognition. Those young people and the churches that they attend are as follows:

1. Miss Tiffany Batson – John Wesley United Methodist Church
2. Master Rynell Brooks – Union Wesley United Methodist Church
3. Master Jamie Brown – John Wesley United Methodist Church
4. Miss Maschell R. Hines – Waters United Methodist Church
5. Miss. Sarah Moore – Calvary-Asbury United Methodist Church
6. Miss India Thomas – Faith Community United Methodist Church
7. Master Efrim Wilson – St. Luke United Methodist Church

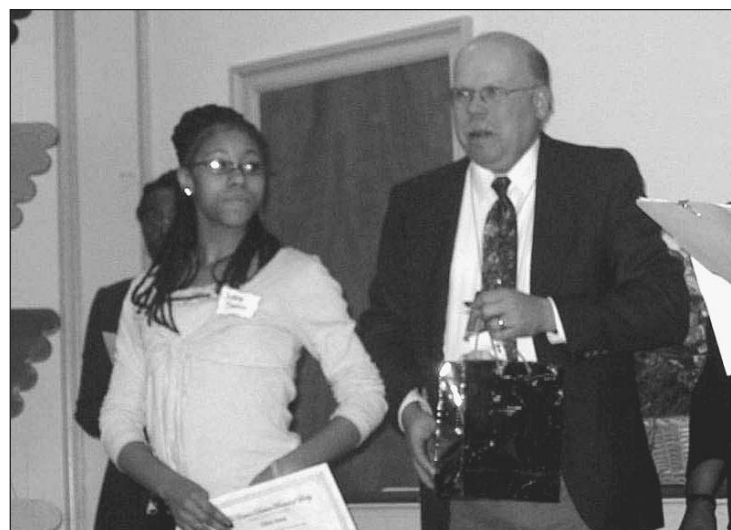
Thank you to all that participated with the luncheon. Because of you, it was a successful afternoon.

District Committee on Superintendency Announces Farewell Plans

Rev. Larry Jameson, chair person for the DCOM, invites all pastors and laity to a farewell celebration for the Easton District Superintendent and his wife, Judy. The event will take place on Saturday, June 3 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Easton from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. More information concerning the program will be sent to the churches in the coming weeks.



First Photo: 'Total Praise' from the Rigley Marydel Charge, Lisa Gaines Pastor.



Left: District Superintendent, Rev. Tom Donnachie recognizes Easton District Youth.



Right: Jamie Brown – Member of the Honor Society



Left: Participants listen to Guest Speaker, David Burke



Rynell

Rev. Donnachie Receives Appointment

Bishop Matthews has appointed Rev. Donnachie to the Asbury-Minquada Charge on the Wilmington District effective July 1, 2006. He will be following the Rev. Norman Poultney who has served the two churches for the

past 12 years.

"I am very pleased to be returning to the local church," says Rev. Donnachie. It truly is my passion and where I believe God wants me to be."

New Castle County is not new to Rev. Donnachie. He served at

Ebenezer UMC, Newark; St. Paul's UMC, Odessa; Peniel UMC, Newport; and New Castle UMC before being appointed as a District Superintendent. The total number of years he previously served the Wilmington District is 22.

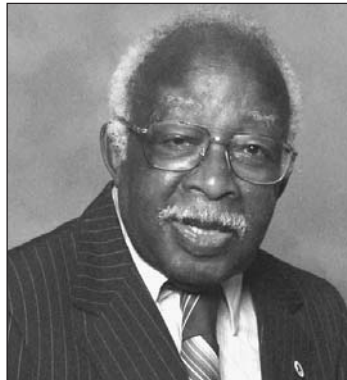
The deadline for the May 12th issue is aApril 28th. This will be the last Easton District Page until September. To submit articles and photos please contact the editor, Tonya Wongus, at tonyawongus2005@aol.com or call 410. 221.0158.

*In Memoriam***Reverend George O. Commodore**
Retired Pastor of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference

By Jessie C. Smith

The late Reverend George O. Commodore was ordained an Elder of the former Delaware Annual conference of the Methodist church in 1952. He pastored churches in Millington, Maryland and in Townsend and Bridgeville, Delaware between 1952 and 1965. He became a member of the Peninsula-Delaware Annual Conference in 1965 when the two Conferences merged.

Reverend Commodore gave his devotion, his energy and talents as a member of the Conference, as he served in several key positions, including the Board of Global Ministries; the Committee on Episcopacy; the Council on Finance and Administration; the Board of Hospitals and homes; the Board of Church Location and Building; the Board of Laity, and several others. As the previous Chair for the Ethnic Minority Local Church Development Task Force, his major responsibility was to identify and employ resources for strengthening minority churches in the Conference. The salary equalization fund for ethnic pastors, improvement of living conditions through the acquisition of fourteen new parsonages, the minority pastors recruitment effort, and other aids for local



Rev. George O. Commodore church programs were some of the accomplishments as a result of his leadership.

A Shepherd and a Missionary, Reverend Commodore was sent to England as part of the Heritage Tour of the United Methodist Church, and West Africa as a part of a short-term missionary team to aid in the construction of churches and parsonages. As a pastor, Reverend Commodore served on all four districts, including after his 1986 retirement – where he continued to serve in short-term pastoral assignments.

The memory of Reverend George O. Commodore is indelibly imprinted on the hearts and minds of many whom had the pleasure of knowing and serving with him. Many have profited immeasurably from his teaching, preaching and caring ministry.

Joseph House Seeks Overnight Ministers

The Little Sisters of Mary and Joseph have a program on Boundry Street for men in transition. Unlike the homeless shelter project, this program serves eight to ten men on a long-term basis for up to two years.

Currently, the Sisters are supervising the men overnight, but this is not seen as an ideal solution. They are contacting

their supporters/volunteers from the shelter projects at participating churches to see if there are any men interested in providing volunteer overnight 'sleep-in' hours on any type of rotating basis from 7:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m. until they come up with a permanent solution.

The men in the program have to be free of substance abuse to even participate, so the supervision is more of a 'presence.'

If you are interested in this program, please contact the Sisters at the Joseph House 410.749.4239.

Upcoming Salisbury District Church Events

Please don't hesitate to e-mail or call the District Office, as well as Rev. Shirlyn Brown, District Editor for this page, with your church events that you would like others to know about and/or attend. This is YOUR place to keep the District informed on what is going on in our sister churches!!!

Good News Corner

Blessings to Helen Matthews of Mt. Zion UMC – Pocomoke City on her 104th birthday on March 23.

Mr. HBCU (Historically Black College and Universities) visits Mt. Zion UMC-Men's Day

Men's Day was a breakthrough in Christ at Mt. Zion UMC in Pocomoke City. The Reverend Lester Justice of Curtis UMC-Bishopville Charge brought a Word that was fire in our bones, along with the Male Chorus of Curtis UMC, a waiting congregation received a fresh anointing. The Men of Zion from the young in age to the young at heart souls were touched and spirits healed. One of the guests for the day was Mr. HBCU, Christian Shane Lymus, Mr. Bowie State University 2005-06, who was crowned Mr. HBCU during The Second Annual Mr. HBCU Kings Leadership Conference and Pageant at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri. He presented a drama ministry at Mt. Zion UMC in Pocomoke City on Sunday March 26th during the annual UM Men's Day. Mr. HBCU's drama ministry was of an African American male living in the 1960s was struggling through life. The character is weary of racism, the character contemplates violence and death and his very existence, he finds grace



Christian Shane Lymus

and in the end, he turns to God. Christian is a member of Ezion Mt. Carmel UMC Church in Wilmington and the grandson of Cornelius and Madelyn Tull (Mt. Zion members).

News of District/Conference Interest

– Deep appreciation to Mr. Deangelo Johnson and Mrs. Phyllis Hardy for their hard work on the Lay Speaking Ministries Academy that culminated in the Celebration Banquet on Monday, March 20. The Holy Spirit was present at the banquet and Rev. Paul Sherwood spoke eloquently to the Lay Speakers about their mission to their local churches and their support for their pastors. Each and every one of the instructors did an excellent job in teaching their respective classes and everyone's enthusiasm was high. There are presently plans being made for classes again in the fall so please look for further information to come during the summer. As the Lay Speakers are in preparation of service to their local churches, pastors please plan to be in support of your Lay Speakers by attending their celebration banquet and utilizing them in your churches!

– As you have read previously, Darlene Webster is stepping down as Conference Lay Leader effective with this coming Annual Conference. Applications for conference Lay Leader are still being taken

through the end of April. The job description is in the District Office along with the application.

– Salisbury Urban Ministries has a Part-Time position available for a Coordinator of the Lazarus Program. This position coordinates a food distribution program and an emergency funds distribution program. The job specification is a B.S. in Social Work and/or experience working with low income clients. For further information, contact Rev. Grant Johnson at 410.749.1562. Resumes can be sent to Rev. Grant Johnson at P. O. Box 1792, Salisbury, MD 21802. A more complete job description is available upon request.

– Rev. Earl Baker, Chair of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference Commission on Archives & History is looking for persons from the Salisbury District who might have gifts and a passion for the ministry of the Commission on Archives and History. If you know of someone who has this interest and would like to serve, please submit their names to Rev. Nichols (after receiving permission from the nominee) AS

SOON AS POSSIBLE.

– Rockawalkin UMC has a Conn 716 Electronic Organ (new in 1976, one owner, 2 manual, 5 presets, full pedal board) available to a good home. They also have an upright piano with a cast iron soundboard. If interested, please contact Rev. Tom Blakelock or Mrs. Grathel Banks at 410.742.6975. (still available at time of printing)

– Please pass on to your Youth Leaders that teens are needed for Saturday, June 10 at Annual Conference to help with a Health Fair. 36 teenagers are needed who are willing to help and can dress up as clowns or something cute but appropriate for the occasion. 18 are needed to work from 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and 18 more to work from 12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.. They will be handing out water and brochures, filling popcorn bags, putting stickers on paper, registering persons coming into the Health Fair, giving out T-shirts, and other jobs as needed. Please submit names of teens willing to work to Elaine Moreland at 1.877.736.3351 or e-mail her at emoreland@pen-del.org.

Mark Your Calendar Now!

Please note the upcoming dates on your calendar to help prevent important conflicts!

Friday, April 28, "What Can We Be?" Gathering of all clergy at Whatcoat UMC, Dover. You have received a brochure in the mail. .5 CEU offered for all day attendance. Registration due by April 21, 2006. The speaker is Rev. Bob Kohler, Assistant General Secretary of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Rev. Kohler is conducting a Study of Ministry through a

survey which can be found at <http://www.gbhem.org>. Click on "The Study of Ministry Survey." You are encouraged to take the survey and the results will be shared at the meeting on April 28.

– A Stress Seminar will be offered at Malmburg Hall on the campus of Wesley College on Thursday, May 11 from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. More information will be forthcoming.

– The Annual Conference Clergy Laity Banquet will be

held at the Modern Maturity Center in Dover on Friday, May 12 beginning at 6:00 p.m.. Tickets are now available in the District Office for \$30 each. The guest speaker is Bishop Violet Fisher of the New York West Episcopal Area and formerly from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Please post this information in your church bulletins and encourage those who are wishing to attend to purchase their tickets early!