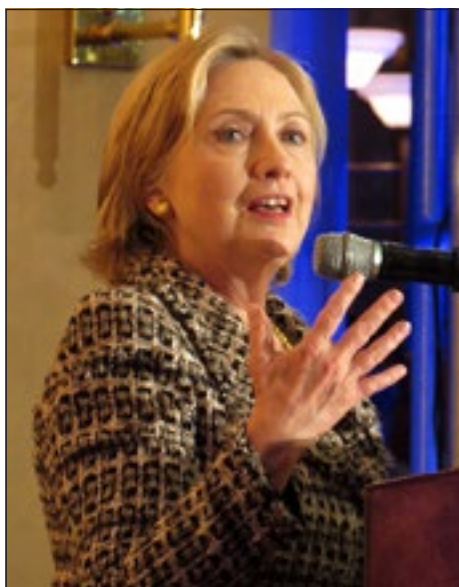


*"Write the vision clearly on the tablets, that one may read it on the run." – Habakkuk*

# THE VISION

The Newspaper  
of the New York  
Annual Conference  
of The United  
Methodist Church

November 15, 2013



**Hillary Rodham Clinton shared her faith journey with the gathering at the UM City Society's 175th anniversary gala.**

## Clinton Salutes Years of UMCS' Mission Work

**BY LINDA BLOOM/UMNS**  
With reporting by Joanne S. Utley

A daring group of 19th century Methodist women who ventured into the most notorious slum in New York to change the lives of children set an example that all United Methodists can follow, says Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The founders of what is now the United Methodist City Society were responding to injustice, but "also motivated by a vision of what could be," she pointed out.

Clinton was the keynote speaker November 3 for the City Society's celebration of "175 Years of Mission in the City" at Terrace in the Park in Queens. The nearly 700 who gathered, just as the sun was setting over the

Continued on page 7

## SUPERSTORM SANDY: ONE YEAR LATER

# Re-Energizing the Recovery Work

**BY JOANNE S. UTLEY**

In the last year, Allen and Roberta, have moved into four different apartments with their two children. But all they really want to do is return home to South Bay Place in Massapequa, N.Y.

Their one-story house was swamped by four feet of floodwaters in the wake of Superstorm Sandy, and they've been wading through the torrents of mixed messages, paperwork and bureaucracy ever since to make their residence safe for their family again. It's been difficult for them to watch other homeowners in the area who've chosen to elevate their homes because they bought this one-level home specifically to accommodate family members with mobility challenges.

After contacting the New York Annual Conference's disaster office in Massapequa, and an assessment by case manager Stephania Petit, the couple's home received its first UMC work

team on November 2.

Now that the first anniversary of Sandy has come and gone, there have been many stories about what has been accomplished, and what remains to be done. Amid criticism of the slow pace of government, banks and insurance companies to help, stands the reality that there is a critical need for more volunteer teams. The number of volunteers reported working through the conference's Long Island disaster recovery office dropped off significantly over the summer months, with just 25 in July and 96 in August.

Turning those numbers around is one of the main goals for Rev. Tom Vencuss, who began work August 12 as the NYAC's coordinator of disaster recovery ministries. While some 2,500 local and out-of-town volunteers have worked through the conference in the first year, the numbers dropped off dramatically during the summer with only 25 volunteers in July and 92

Continued on page 4



PHOTOS BY JOANNE S. UTLEY

**Case Manager Stephania Petit, right, talks with Massapequa homeowners about the renovations needed in their Sandy-flooded home.**



### 11/13 Disaster Work Honors

Disaster relief coordinators and Rev. Joseph Ewoodzie will be honored by the Brooklyn United Methodist Church Home with the William C. Kirkwood Humanitarian Award on November 13.

The award will be presented during a **dinner dance celebrating the BUMCH's 130 years of service to the community**. The event, at Russo's On the Bay in Howard Beach, begins at 6 p.m. with a reception and silent auction; dinner is at 7:30 p.m. Individual ticket cost is \$200. To register, go to: <http://www.bumch.org/pages/dinner-dance.htm>.

### 11/16 Inclusive Church Symposium

The conference committee established in 2012 to study a more inclusive UM church is urging all churches to attend a daylong symposium entitled, "Holy Conferencing: Is There a Future for an Inclusive Church?" The committee will report on the results of their work, share what they see in the future, and offer workshops on how to use this information productively in the local church. Attendance at this event will provide each church with the knowledge of the stress lines within our denomination over issues of inclusiveness and how they may play out as we move through this quadrennium and into the next. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Asbury-Crestwood UMC, 167 Scarsdale Road, Tuckahoe, N.Y. Coffee and light breakfast items will be provided; participants should bring a bag lunch. To register, go to: <http://www.nyac.com/events/detail/4711>.

### 11/16 Vital Congregations Workshop

Rev. DJ del Rosario, from Spark 12, will lead this workshop for pastors and church leadership teams. Spark 12 is a faith-based catalyst that invests in young entrepreneurs to launch innovative ideas that will transform the world. Light breakfast/registration begins at 8 a.m.; workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Edith Macy Conference Center in Briarcliff Manor, N.Y. **Registration:** \$75 per church. Lunch is provided. To register, go to: <http://nyac.com/events/detail/4627>.

### 11/20 Red Stocking Soirée

New York Methodist Hospital's (NYM) annual fundraiser will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Hospital's Carrington Pavilion, 506 Sixth Street in Brooklyn. Red Stocking is the oldest holiday fundraising drive in the country. The tradition dates to 1925 when Brooklyn Sunday school children and church groups generously filled Christmas stocking-shaped cardboard folders with coins to benefit NYM. All are welcome to join

staff, friends and neighbors for a festive evening to raise money to help provide charity medical care for those who are uninsured or underinsured in Brooklyn. Tickets to the Red Stocking Soirée can be purchased online at <http://www.nym.org/Get-Involved/Red-Stocking-Soiree.aspx>, or by calling NYM's Development Department at 718-780-5343. To donate to the Red Stocking campaign, go to: <https://donate.nym.org/DonateOnline.aspx>.

### 11/28–30 Conference Office Closed

Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

### 12/7 MET District Mission Fusion Event

Join this "Mission Celebration in Your Neighborhood" to explore how to empower the local churches in outreach ministries, sustain the Wesleyan spirit of ministry with the poor, and enhance the capacity to reach out through collaboration. 9 a.m.–3 p.m. at New Rochelle UMC, 1200 North Avenue, New Rochelle, N.Y. Go to, <http://nyac.com/events/detail/4702>, to register.

### 12/14 Volunteer in Mission Training

Discover "what you need to know before you go" during this session led by Rev. Joseph Ewoodzie from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the conference Learning Center, 20 Soundview Ave., White Plains, N.Y. Registration is \$5 per person; lunch will be served. For more information or to register, go to: <http://www.nyac.com/events/detail/4765>.

### 12/24–25 Conference Office Closed

Christmas holiday.

### 1/14–16 Bishop's Convocation

"A Glimpse of God: Worship and Fellowship," with guest speaker Dr. Marcia McFee and the Nat Dixon Jazz Band at the Villa Roma Resort and Conference Center, Callicoon, N.Y. Event begins at 2 p.m. Tuesday and concludes at 1 p.m. Thursday. Childcare is available at no additional cost. Register before January 6 for a double at \$575, single at \$355. For details and to register, go to: <http://nyac.com/events/detail/4812>.

### 1/18/2014 Connecticut Mission Fusion Event

See details in event listing above. 9 a.m.–2:30 p.m., UMC of Waterbury, 250 Country Club Road Waterbury, Conn. For more details, or to register, go to: <http://nyac.com/events/detail/4757>.

	
<small>The News of the New York Conference of the United Methodist Church</small>	
<b>Bishop: Martin D. McLee</b>	
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# GCFA Offering Same-Sex Benefits

(UMNS) General agencies of the United Methodist Church will extend employee benefits to same-sex couples, under a decision by the board of directors of the denomination's General Council on Finance and Administration.

On October 21, the board changed the general agencies welfare benefits program's definition of "spouse" to include same-sex spouses, recognized by a state as being legally married to the employee, and civil partners, either through a civil union or a comprehensive domestic partnership, recognized by a state as being the legal partner of an employee.

GCFA announced the decision in a news release Tuesday. The agency's board took the action after hearing from its Committee on Personnel Policy and Practices, made up of representatives of all 11 agencies that get general apportioned funds.

But GCFA will also ask the Judicial Council, the church's supreme court, for a declaratory judgment on whether extending the benefits violates church law.

"The Board's decision was taken in light of actions taken in states where same-sex marriage and domestic partnerships are now the law of the land", said Bishop Michael J. Coyner,



**Bishop  
Michael J.  
Coyner**

president of GCFA. "Our Board has sought with this action to make policy decisions that stay in conformity with both civil and church law. We look forward to the Judicial Council's guidance on this matter."

Paragraph 806.9 of the *2012 Book of Discipline*, the church law book, states that GCFA "shall be responsible for ensuring that no board, agency, committee, commission, or council shall give United Methodist

funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of homosexuality or violate the expressed commitment of The United Methodist Church 'not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends.'"

The GCFA news release said Judicial Council will be asked whether general agency payments for portions of the insurance premiums for same-sex spouses and civil partners of general agency employees violates the *Book of Discipline*.

Denicia Roberts, GCFA's executive human resources director, said agency employees can sign up to take advantage of the change during an open enrollment period, beginning Oct. 28. Coverage will be effective Jan. 1.

## Giving for Malaria

Looking for a gift with special meaning for someone special to you? Please help support the Imagine No Malaria Initiative and the NYAC Season of Hope Alternative Giving for Advent 2013. Purchase a card on our web site for a donation, starting at \$10, to honor someone who has blessed you. You can choose to have the cards sent directly to the recipient by submitting their names and addresses, or have them sent to your home to send out personally. All money collected will go directly to Imagine No Malaria as part of the NYAC pledge.

To purchase cards that will be delivered to you, go to:

<https://ny-reg.brtapp.com/INM-Cards-Bulk>.

To purchase cards that will be mailed to your recipients, go to:

<https://ny-reg.brtapp.com/INM-Cards-Indv>.

## Double Your Donation On UMC Giving Tuesday

What's the perfect antidote to overspending on Black Friday? UMC #GivingTuesday coming on Dec. 3!

United Methodists are invited to participate in Giving Tuesday on December 3, when gifts made online through The Advance will be matched dollar for dollar. There are more than 850 United Methodist-related Advance projects and 300 missionaries from which to choose. And you can especially support a project or missionary that is involved with our annual conference.

As always, 100 percent of each donation made through The Advance (including the match) will be used to support the project designated by

the donor.

Why not ask church members and pastors to request that Christmas gifts be made as a donation in their name to their favorite Advance project or missionary, and encourage them to make the gift on December 3 to double the impact?

Or ask clergy and laity to make Christmas gifts in the form of a donation in honor of their friends and family on December 3.

To find a project or missionary to donate to, go to:

<http://www.umcmmission.org/Give-to-Mission/Search-for-Projects/Projects>.

# Volunteers #1 Need In Sandy Recovery

Continued from page 1

in August.

In an effort to speed up the recovery and boost participation, the NYAC appointed Vencuss to manage the Sandy recovery work, while Rev. Joseph Ewoodzie, conference missions coordinator, continues to lead our Volunteers in Mission efforts and Hurricane Irene recovery. This new position, funded by a \$3 million grant from UMCOR, will continue for at least the next three years, and Vencuss has consolidated the effort to work out of the Community UMC in Massapequa, N.Y.

“We don’t have another outside team coming until January,” Vencuss said. “But the numbers do pick up in March,” so for now he is making a big push for spring.

“It takes four to six months to put a team together if you’re coming from a distance,” Vencuss noted.

To help get the word out, the Massapequa office has created a monthly newsletter and has a Facebook page to connect volunteers from near and far.

“The recovery phase is a bit different from the relief stage,” Vencuss said. “You need an extra layer of supervision . . . to deal with the protocol of permits and inspection. People can be waiting for approval for months.” People with fulltime jobs often don’t have the time to follow up with the paperwork or to deal with inspections.

Vencuss said that while he deeply appreciates the outside help from around the denomination, more teams from within the conference would really make a difference.

“Every annual conference has to own its own disaster,” he said.

The NYAC is working to streamline the online application as a two-step process. At first, teams and individuals will simply “apply” to serve. Once those applications

are reviewed and the arrival date is closer, Volunteer Coordinator Barbara Burnside will contact each organizer with a more detailed registration form.

Vencuss, who just returned from nearly three years in Haiti, has long ministered in partnership with his wife, Pastor Wendy Vencuss, and that will not change in this latest appointment. She will be providing pastoral care to the storm victims and develop a disaster spiritual care ministry for the conference.

Continued on page 5



**From top, a work crew moves sheetrock into a Long Beach home that has been elevated because of Sandy flooding; two renovated homes sit next to a boarded up lot on Neutral Avenue in Staten Island's New Dorp Beach; Rev. Wesley Daniel checks on the work of a United Methodist volunteer team at a home in Brooklyn's the Sheepshead Bay.**



UMNS PHOTO BY MIKE DUBOSE



# Top Court Affirms McLee's Ruling

BALTIMORE (UMNS)—The denomination's top court has decided that a United Methodist bishop in southwest Texas must rule within 60 days "on the merits" of a process-related question regarding the elimination of a lesbian clergy candidate, Mary Ann Kaiser, from the ordination track.

A New York Annual Conference resolution, upheld by Bishop Martin McLee, commended both named and unnamed clergy, laity and congregations "whose bold actions and courageous statements help to provide for the pastoral needs of same-sex couples within The

United Methodist Church."

In Decision 1255, Judicial Council affirms that ruling: "The resolution as adopted is permissible because it is primarily a historical recounting of actions by others, is aspirational, and does not call for action that is contrary to *The Book of Discipline*."

The United Methodist Judicial Council also declared that a petition adopted by the 2012 Western Jurisdictional Conference suggesting a light penalty for bishops convicted of ordaining self-avowed practicing homosexuals is "null, void, and of no effect."

Those were among the decisions reached during the Judicial Council's Oct. 22–26 meeting in Baltimore.

The Rev. Timothy K. Bruster, first clergy alternate, filled in for the Rev. Dennis Blackwell, a Judicial Council member, at the October meeting. First lay alternate Sandra Lutz and second clergy alternate John Harnish also participated in parts of the meeting.

Complete details of the rulings from the October session can be found at: [http://archives.umc.org/interior\\_judicial.asp?A=SRS&MID=263&KW=&DT=&DN=&SD=10/26/13&ED=](http://archives.umc.org/interior_judicial.asp?A=SRS&MID=263&KW=&DT=&DN=&SD=10/26/13&ED=)

# Volunteers Needed in Sandy Recovery

Continued from page 4

"The church has to find its role in the long-term recovery process by providing a ministry of presence . . . other groups cannot do that," Vencuss said. "We can check in one year later with a homeowner . . . follow-up is key. We can't make promises and then forget about people."

The other members of the team include:

- Peggy Racine, disaster site coordinator: A member of Community UMC, Racine has been in charge of the Massapequa office from day one. In addition to meeting with homeowners and volunteer teams, she coordinates a dedicated group of support staff.

- Warren Ferry: As Long Island East District disaster coordinator, Ferry has been active in the Long Island Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (LIVOAD), and works with the "Unmet Needs" roundtables among other duties.

- Gustavo Sagredo, site manager: Responsibility for assessing homes, meeting with homeowners and overseeing the renovation work. Sagredo began work last fall with the disaster office in the Freeport UMC, where he and his wife are members.

- Sam Rosenfeld: Moved from his position as conference controller to assume financial oversight of the Sandy recovery project.

- Stephania Petit, client disaster advocate/case worker: In this new position, she will work directly as a case manager for some homeowners, or as a conduit with homeowners whose cases are being managed by other organizations.

- Gina Grubbs: Will split her time between communications and providing administrative support for Vencuss. Grubbs' husband, Roy, is the new pastor of Centerport UMC in Centerport, N.Y.

- Samantha Christian: Originally a volunteer from Minnesota who made several relief trips to



TO VOLUNTEER:

<http://nyac.com/pages/detail/1786>

UM LI Sandy Recovery Ministry  
[www.facebook.com/UMLISandyRecoveryMinistry](http://www.facebook.com/UMLISandyRecoveryMinistry)

*NYAC responds to news accounts about Sandy work, Page 6.*

Staten Island in the first months after the storm, she has been hired part-time to help with site management and community contact there.

- Rev. Wesley Daniel and Gillian Prince have been facilitating efforts in Brooklyn from St. Mark's UMC and will continue to do so in conjunction with Vencuss.

Finding housing for volunteers has been another critical concern. The NYAC has housed volunteers in four locations: Bethel UMC on Staten Island, St. Mark's in Rockville Centre, Hicksville UMC, and at the Bethany Home in Brooklyn. Housing is being offered in these locations for \$15 a night per person. The churches have committed to covering the increased water and utility costs for this crucial ministry. Volunteer housing is particularly difficult in parts of Brooklyn and Staten Island where the need for temporary housing has depleted the available inventory.

On Staten Island, the anniversary of the

storm was marked by a day of community events including a morning prayer service, and the staging of luminaries along the shoreline at dusk.

Signs of progress are apparent in the waterfront bungalow community off Cedar Beach Avenue. Homes are clad in new siding, concrete has been poured for driveways, new porches are being built, and some of the tiny wooden bungalows have been reborn as stucco two-story homes. But along Milbank Road and Neutral Avenue there are still plenty of boarded up houses and a few empty lots with just a concrete stoop and railing left behind.

Rev. Matt Schaeffer, pastor of Bethel UMC, notes that the local churches have taken a major role in the long-term recovery process.

"We're not operating as separate churches," he said. "We're working well together . . . and we have some big ecumenical social justice groups tied in now."

At Community UMC in Massapequa, Rev. Jeff Wells has been inspired by how readily his congregation has embraced their role in the recovery.

"It's been gratifying to see people give so much," he said. "They know it's not enough to collect money, they have to have hands-on participation."

During their recent Laity Sunday celebration, certificates of recognition were handed out to 10 members of the congregation who had played major roles in everything from hospitality to counseling. The church has also committed to taking an active role in the recovery effort for the next three years and has been renovating the former pastor's study for that use.

Wells says that the church is recognized in the community differently now.

"We were known as the 'pumpkin church' before," Wells said, "but now we're recognized for our disaster recovery work."

# NYAC Responds to Questions on Sandy Work

**BY TOM VENCUSS**

Coordinator of Disaster Recovery Ministries

A recent Superstorm Sandy anniversary press conference by the New York State Attorney General, Eric Schneiderman, and an October 29 article in the *Wall Street Journal's* opinion pages, have raised questions about the use of funds that were donated to a number of charities and non-profit organizations, including the United Methodist Church. The WSJ article accused the Attorney General's Office of a "shakedown" by putting pressure on charities to stop holding back funds and thus delaying the recovery efforts of Sandy survivors.

As the person overseeing the Sandy Recovery Ministries for the New York Annual Conference, I was contacted by the Charities Bureau of the attorney general's office regarding the use of donated funds—including an UMCOR grant to the annual conference.

Here was my response:

"From the very outset, United Methodist churches, pastors, and volunteers from the New York Annual Conference and beyond, have been on the front lines of Sandy relief and recovery efforts. We work with, and through, local Long Term Recovery Organizations and Unmet Needs Tables to identify and vet clients who need assistance. We then, along with other groups, attempt to address these needs through a combination of volunteer work teams, direct assistance, or other support. Priority is given to persons or families of lower income, elderly, single parent families, and persons with disabilities. This is in compliance with the guidelines of the UMCOR grant and our understanding of our overall mission. However, we do respond to each inquiry we receive and assist persons within our guidelines as best we can."

This past spring we moved from the "relief" phase to the "recovery" phase in our Sandy ministry. Since my arrival in August, we have been working to establish a structure within each of the affected areas to best meet the needs of those communities. This is now complete. While the stream of volunteers has dropped off somewhat, as is often the case at this time of the season, we are developing a full schedule of teams for the new year and spring. In the meantime, we continue to work with clients through our case manager, spiritual care coordinator, volunteers, and direct assistance.

It is unfortunate that our long-term recovery plan efforts have been interpreted as "holding back" funds. Once the Attorney General's Charities Bureau understood our plan, it met



**ABOVE: Rev. Tom Vencuss meets with Peggy Racine, left, Gus Sagredo and Stephania Petit. LEFT, LIE District Disaster Coordinator Warren Ferry speaks at press conference about the 1-year Sandy anniversary.**

PHOTOS  
BY JOANNE UTLEY

their approval. Unfortunately, our name was linked with other charities that had no organized plan or procedure in place for the use of the funds for long-term recovery.

Some have misinterpreted the Attorney General's efforts as being politically motivated, that somehow we were being pressured into using our funds for particular projects, or to advance a political agenda. My conversation, and agreement, with the New York Attorney General's Office, was simply a restating of, and in complete compliance with, the UMCOR grant proposal, and the Sandy recovery mission of the New York Annual Conference. There was no conversation directing the funds to particular areas or projects.

I can assure everyone that we, the NYAC Sandy Recovery Ministries, are working to

assist Sandy survivors with their long-term recovery, that all donated funds are used for recovery efforts, and that we practice good stewardship in their use.

*Note: The press release from Schneiderman's office can be found at: <http://www.ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-reaches-agreement-four-charities-provide-nearly-10-million-sandy>*

*The WSJ opinion piece entitled, "Redistributing Charity: The latest trend in law enforcement: Attorney General Eric Schneiderman shakedown after Hurricane Sandy," can be found at: <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304655104579165960016857316>*



# Clinton Draws Crowd for UMCS Gala

Continued from page 1

city, reflected the diverse New York immigrant communities the society has supported throughout its existence. The former U.S. secretary of state was warmly welcomed as a fellow United Methodist who is candid about her faith and about her own concerns for the world's women and children.

She was invited by Rev. William Shillady, executive director of the City Society, who served as a co-officiant at daughter Chelsea Clinton's wedding. The younger Clinton, who was in Norway on Clinton Foundation business, introduced her mother via videotape.

## The Five Points slum

Those women, who organized the New York City Sunday School Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1838, set up "charity schools" in the Five Points neighborhood to evangelize and educate poor children.

By all historical accounts, Five Points—colorfully depicted in "The Gangs of New York," Martin Scorsese's 2002 fictional drama—was a wretched place. "It was said to be an area controlled by gang members and criminals of all types," Susan Kim, a City Society board member and NYAC president of the United Methodist Women, told celebration



**Rev. Kenneth E. White, right, leads the singing of the hymn he wrote especially for the 175th anniversary, "We Raise Our Voice! We Are Alive!"**



**Clockwise from above, Hillary Rodham Clinton listens to the performance of the children's choir from the First UMC in Flushing; honoree Rev. Dr. Carrington, center, is surrounded by Rev. Bill Shillady, Rev. Leo Curry, Bishop McLee and David Taylor. A brightly dressed group enjoys the reception.**



participants.

That notoriety did not dissuade them. "The Methodist women came to the worst slum known internationally and demonstrated the power of their religious faith," she said. "They saw God's love as the primary agent of the reformation of the city."

From those beginnings, the New York City Society of the Methodist Church was born, eventually merging with similar societies in the region dedicated to social support and reform.

Emcee for the event, Rev. Leo Curry, noted how fitting it was to be honoring the long-term work of the City Society on All Saints'

Sunday. "How perfect God's timing is," he said.

Today, the United Methodist City Society runs an early learning center in Brooklyn and a children's initiative that coordinates after-school programs in churches; manages Anchor House, a faith-based addiction recovery residential program in Brooklyn; does Hurricane Sandy relief work through the United Methodist Center of Far Rockaway, Queens, and partners with Five Points Mission and the Olmstead Center, which offers summer camp to city children.

The City Society also provides grants to churches for feeding

programs, soup kitchens and after-school programs and loans for capital projects. The \$120,000 raised from the 175th anniversary celebration will underwrite grants for the 2014 budget, Shillady said.

The celebration also offered an opportunity to honor the past service and dedication of Rev. Dr. John Carrington, former executive director; Rev. Richard Rice, former associate executive director; and Trudy L. Grove, who retired as chief financial officer in 2011.

The Children's Choir of First UMC in Flushing, The Mue Ensemble, mezzo-soprano

**Continued on page 11**

# Laity Learn to Develop “Fishing” Techniques

On Saturday, October 19, an intergenerational group of more than 150 laypersons from across our conference attended the second annual laity convocation. Our team of facilitators from the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD), included Heather Lear, director of evangelism ministries, Sophia Agtarap, minister of online engagement, and Melanie Gordon, director of ministry with children. Our own Neal Bowes, youth ministries consultant, and Cassandra Negri, children’s consultant, were also present for the event at the Renaissance Hotel in White Plains.

Bishop Martin D. McLee started off the day by leading us in a time of worship and singing, joined by Godson Essien of the Ghana UMC. Annastasia Williams, a youth from Crawford UMC, offered the opening prayer.

In her presentation, Lear reminded us that news about Jesus was indeed good news, but that it was sometimes not offered as such. She suggested we need to examine and change our “evangelism game plan” by pointing out some of the wrong assumptions we make when it comes to sharing our faith. One is that most people will come back to what they left when they were younger. She pointed out several realities however, one being, that you can’t come back to something you never had. Sadly, there are many generations who do not have any concept of God or what the church teaches.

She suggested three questions to work through so that believers might better articulate their faith. They are:

- Why Jesus?
- Why church?
- Why our church?

She gave some great tips on ways congregations can practice telling their stories, through both worship and administration.

Agtarap addressed the relationship between the changing communication landscape and



**ABOVE:** Some of the youngest participants get a round of applause from the group.



**LEFT:** Cardboard boxes decoupage with faces and words stacked up to form the altar for the event.



evangelism. We looked at some of the pros and cons of media. As an intergenerational audience, some of us felt advanced technologically while others felt that they were being left behind. The conclusion was that use of media should not be an either/or situation, but rather that we need to have both in order to minister to all. She said that there were many resources available to churches and that she herself was available to visit churches and to give

workshops.

In focusing on children, Gordon reminded us that children have an innate sense of who God is, and that it is the responsibility of the faith community to nurture them in love. She stressed the need for children to be in the worship service, since this is where they learn about worship. Churches need to embrace and accommodate them. We were blessed as the young people from the Ghana UMC sang for us.

With a theme like “GO FISH!” what we do with the “takeaways” is as important as the event itself. We thank all those who attended and those who took the time to leave an evaluation. We take all the evaluations seriously as they help us plan for future events.

Aaliyah, a young person from Wakefield Grace UMC in the Bronx had this to say:

“Overall the experience was great, but some of the sessions did not cater to youth. The highlight of my day was when all the youth came together and got to know each other and got to know the scripture.”

Warren Whitlock’s comments about the convocation seem to sum it all up: “Go Fish! a day of laity preparation. A day to re-think, re-tool, retune. A day of setting evangelism in motion in the age of social technology. Go Fish! a commandment, a commitment and a celebration.”

I encourage you to share your ‘takeaways’ with your pastor and your congregation.



## VIMTrip Report/Mozambique 2013

# Training Center, Hospital & Home Visits

BY ANNETTE GRIFFITH

In the next few paragraphs I will share with you the major accomplishments, joys and surprises of the conference's 2013 Mozambique Connection Volunteer in Mission trip. My hope is that you will be inspired to: join us on our next trip, join the mission by sending a contribution, invite one of us to your church or other organization to share the story, or just enjoy the pictures and feel touched by friends on the other side of the world.

### Gondola Training Center

When we arrived at the Gondola Training Center, we were greeted with song from members of the United Methodist Church there. Our tour included the large dining hall, classrooms, dormitories and bathrooms, the parsonage for the director, the manual pump that provides water for the center and surrounding area, the beginnings of a pig pen, and the surrounding gardens.

The goal of the Gondola Training Center is to equip local pastors and laity to be able to create churches for the growing number of new Christians in Mozambique. It is also a center for community groups to learn helpful skills in many secular areas. Although there are grand plans for additional buildings, the basic structures needed to open the center are in place. Future steps include an additional well to facilitate indoor plumbing, kitchen appliances, electricity, staff, and, of course, the participants to be trained.

Rev. Hilario Torres, director of the center, presented us with a proposal for \$88,842 to



Enid Watson leads the children in singing during Vacation Bible School.

fund the opening. This was more than we could ever hope to raise for the cause. The Missouri conference has more funding available than our New York Conference, but even they could not support the entire project.

As the team sat around the table in the parsonage, Enid Watson suggested a plan to begin with a small workshop to train participants in agricultural best practices. People could use the information to plant gardens to raise funds for local churches, feed the poor and improve their own diets. She said

it would be easier to solicit funds from secular groups in the United States if the workshop was about agriculture or health instead of a religious nature. Because the training center has a dual role of sacred and secular workshops, the agricultural workshop fit well with the Mozambican vision.

We gave Rev. Torres the challenge to lower the budget to \$15,000 or under, after which I would approach Missouri's Mozambique Initiative and/or others to add to the NYAC

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Volunteer in Mission team with Rev. Hilario Torres and the cross John Olszewski made to give to the training center: from left, Enid Watson, Torres, Cynthia Johnson, Annette Griffith, and Olszewski. RIGHT: The classroom building at the Gondola Training Center.

# Sharing Recipes, Bible Stories & Love

Continued from page 9

funding. Since our August trip, Rev. Torres and I have worked many hours to refine the plan so that, although participants will live as many in rural villages live, they would be able to use the center as soon as funds were available.

Even with these limitations, the Gondola Training Center will be able to begin workshops to benefit the local community and the church. As we got closer to the \$15,000 goal, Rev. Torres suggested we aim for a November 2013 start date so that we would not miss this year's growing season. It would be difficult to raise the funds that quickly, but with help from the Mozambique Initiative of Missouri, the dream became reality. Rev. Torres is now enrolling the 12 participants for the first workshop. God is good!!

## Bishop's Parsonage and Conference Center

A previous project of the NYAC is the Beira Bishop's Parsonage and Conference Center. The facility is to provide housing for district superintendents, several of whom needed to travel two days to attend a meeting. It would also provide a place for the Bishop to stay when she was in the Mozambique North Conference. The dormitory rooms will also be available for mission teams of all religious denominations to stay for a small fee.

Although we thought we had left enough funds for its completion two years ago, Pastor Jacob showed us how much still needs to be done. A government inspection revealed that the stucco had been improperly applied and had to be removed. This has now been competed but the cost had drained the account so that the other government requirements will need to wait. To make the center safe for foreign visitors like ourselves, a fence needs to be installed and guards hired. A helping hand is needed for this facility to open. Once it does, it will be a source of income for the church.

## Habitat for Humanity Orphanage

This was one of the surprises on our trip. I asked to see this site in Chimoio, but did not realize that we would be visiting a sort of orphanage. Habitat for Humanity International supported a project that built several three-room brick houses for women, who are in their fifties and sixties and caring for three or four children. These women were without families and were grateful for the opportunity to live in the homes, raise their own food and share it with the orphans. There is a well for water, but no electricity. Brick outhouses bring a measure



**ABOVE: A blue bed net in use in one of the homes. RIGHT: It is common to see young children caring for even younger ones.**



of sanitation to the community.

We learned more about this program when we met with Rev. Macilau, a United Methodist pastor, who is now the administrator of this and several other projects. He and his staff designed a program that utilizes foster care instead of isolating orphans in orphanages. In a family setting, these children have role models they can some day emulate in their own families. In the future this program will be used as a model for orphans throughout Mozambique.

Another program helped young women learn skills so that they did not need to rely on prostitution for a living.

## Recipe exchange

Cynthia Johnson brought along several recipes to share with the ladies in the church. They in turn showed us how to make matapa, a spinach-like dish made with coconut milk. We got to try the large mortar and pestle tool to grind the cassava leaves that are used in the matapa. We also found out how hard it is to bend over a charcoal stove for hours to cook. It was a real bonding experience.

## Vacation Bible School

Enid Watson led a morning Bible study for the children of the Gondola Church.

When we passed out pictures of the Bible story and crayons, the children just sat there. We soon realized that they had never had crayons or colored before. After a short demonstration, they enjoyed this first time experience.

## Visiting Village Homes

We asked our hosts to show us some of the

homes in the village. It was a life-changing experience. Homes were tidy but very sparse. Suitcases that we would discard were used as dressers to store clothes or other household items. Chairs were brought out for us as the families sat on mats on the ground.

A woman with cancer was thrilled to have a visit from her pastor. She sang and danced for us. She had been to the clinic for the large open sore on her face that she covered with a white cloth, but they could not do any more for her.

It was good to see that families were using the mosquito nets from Imagine No Malaria. They were proud of their homes and glad to show them to us.

## Chimoio Hospital

Few medicines are available so there were long lines to receive them. Patients could go to a doctor in town and receive faster treatment, but that requires a fee. Often, one saw the same doctors who worked at the public hospital where he/she could receive treatment for free. Medicines, if they had them, were also low cost or free at the hospital. Often patients wait all day only to be told to come back tomorrow and wait again. The hospital staff was very grateful for the latex gloves Enid Watson brought to donate.

Rev. Julio Vilanculos, our doctoral scholarship recipient, will graduate in April. He will be one of three doctors needed for the future University in Cambine to become accredited. By having a university in Mozambique, pastors will no longer need to go to expensive Africa University in Zimbabwe to receive a degree allowing them to become

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# Clinton Applauds Work to Help Women, Children

Continued from page 7

Jeanette Blakeney of Fordham UMC, and baritone Frank Colon of Co-op City UMC offered special gifts of music for the evening.

## Clinton's Methodist roots

Clinton's own Methodist roots go back several generations. When John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, sent his followers out, "they were talking to people like my great-great grandparents . . . people who had been marginalized and left out," she said.

Growing up in Park Ridge, Ill., her family's active involvement with First UMC there "was such an important part of our lives," she told the crowd. She feels blessed, Clinton said, to have had the church's influence on her life.

As the nation's first lady, Hillary Clinton

spoke before the 1996 United Methodist General Conference, the denomination's top legislative body. At that time, she urged the church to continue its social witness for the world's children and cultivate "a new sense of caring" about its responsibilities to the larger society.

Just as the Methodist women had the confidence, conviction and faith to reach out in Five Points long ago, Clinton suggested to celebration participants that it may be time to increase denominational efforts to bring faith "to those who may not yet have had the chance to believe" and follow in the footsteps of these pioneers.

At a time of seeming disconnectedness and insecurity in society, "we have a great gift to offer," she added. With discipline and a set of

beliefs, "we have an understanding of how to get things done."

After the event, Shillady pointed out that recapturing Methodism's "early spirit of social holiness and concern and compassion for our communities" could help with church growth. "Maybe our churches need to look outside their walls, as did those early Methodist women," he said.

"We Raise Our Voice! We Are Alive!, a hymn especially commissioned for the evening and written by Rev. Kenneth E. White, provided marching orders as the City Society moves forward:

*"To sing a song of every race;  
to be disciples in this place,  
to be a living human face  
is sign and symbol of God's grace!"*

# Sharing Recipes, Bible Stories & Love

Continued from page 10

elders in the church. Vilanculos now heads the Bible School in Cambine.

## Building a Church

The week we were there the church met in classes as they prepared for Thanksgiving, the church's largest fundraiser that was to be held in two weeks. On Thanksgiving members bring produce they grew, live chickens and goats, and other items. After church all is sold with the proceeds going to the church.

After the service the pastor of the Central Church brought us to see the progress on the building. We saw it about 10 years ago when there were no walls or a roof—just the outline of what was to come. This church is being built with almost no help from outside funding. The parishioners are proud that they could support the construction themselves, even though it has taken 10 years so far and they have a ways to go until the building is completed.

## In Conclusion

I have often been asked why I go so far to be in mission. My answer is: "The Great Commission calls us to make disciples of all nations, not just the ones most convenient, close by or least expensive."

Our mission in Mozambique is one with the vision to empower the United Methodists there to bring the word of Christ to their part of Africa, which is thirsting to hear that word.

Our ministry of presence gives our brothers and sisters the hope that we are together in this vision. The Gondola Training Center will equip Mozambican United Methodists with the knowledge to do God's work.

*The New York Times* wrote several years ago that Mozambique is the "rising star in Africa."

The democratic government, although not perfect—our

government is not perfect either—is trying to bring the country out of poverty. The work we do there is not giving fish, but teaching people to fish. We extend a hand and rejoice with them when they reach their goals.

It is my dream that you will join us by extending your hand in Christian love and help our brothers and sisters in Christ to reach their goals of feeding the hungry, bringing clean water to those who are thirsty, welcoming strangers to know Christ, giving clothes and hope to those afflicted with AIDS, and helping those who see prostitution as their only source of income to learn the skills needed to support



Village women graciously opened their homes for a tour.

themselves.

If you feel moved to contribute to the NYAC's Mozambique Connection, you can do so by going to this shortened link, <http://bit.ly/1admZfR>, and use either a credit card or your PayPal account. If you would like to send a check, please make it out to the "United Methodist Frontier Foundation," and send it to me at: Annette Griffith, Mozambique Connection co-chair, 35 Mountainside Dr., Monroe, CT 06468.

Thank you for your generosity to one of the poorest countries in the world, and many thanks to those who have already contributed.

# Revamping Stewardship Campaigns for Success

BY PAUL NIXON

It's the season of two or three hundred thousand stewardship campaigns in churches across the United States. We do very expensive church in the USA, and fall is the usual season where we rally the saints to foot the bills for another year. Here are seven key thoughts for those of us who lead judicatories and long to see financially sustainable ministries within our denominational tribe:

**1. Never run a stewardship campaign in a crisis situation.** I live in Washington DC, and (as of this writing) the government was still closed and a lot of people were very anxious about mounting VISA bills and mortgage balances. It would be ridiculous to run a stewardship campaign anywhere near Washington, D.C., or Estes Park, Colo., or in any community that is suffering economically during a government shut down. And if they were to go over the cliff next year, most stewardship campaigns are OFF. We can cut our costs and hunker down for a recession, but we simply cannot conduct stewardship campaigns with today's people during an economic crisis without losing credibility.

**2. Spring is often a better time anyway.** If any of your churches were worried about a fall campaign, ask them to imagine how much easier it will be after Obamacare is implemented, the government has made its compromises, 2014 salaries are known and Christmas bills are nearly paid off. Spring 2014 could make a lot more sense than Fall 2013 for a good stewardship campaign. When I served Gulf Breeze UMC, we switched to spring campaigns and our best estimate is that we did 7 percent better the first year than

had we just stayed with fall. (Church budgets can begin in April or in June. Many pastors do not know that this is an option. They simply set the pastor salary at last year's level in a UMC charge conference and raise it in the late winter or spring after the campaign.)

**3. Online giving is the way to get money out of Millennial pockets.**

There is no excuse for any church of any size not promoting online giving, including monthly pledging that debits them "X" amount each month.

**4. Many of our new churches will meet their people benchmarks and lag behind on their financial benchmarks!** This is the emerging story in church planting! You get to 200 average worship attendance in 1985 and the church is ready to pay its bills and buy a piece of land. You get there in 2013 and land is out of the question, and even the bills are dicey. So, I encourage all church planters and all pastors working with people under the age of 35 to get training and coaching in fund-raising. It is more than just stewardship. It is about fundraising, thinking broadly how to cultivate the funding streams to support ministry. Or plan to change the financial paradigm so that the per capita costs are much lower. (I am part of a new church start with no payroll costs, just \$500 a week for facilities. This is very 21st century.)

**5. Tithing, percentage giving and sacrifice have not gone out of vogue!** Invite people to an amazing vision of community and world impact and expect amazing faith response! Don't sell your people short, regardless of generation! (I still love Cokesbury UMC Pensacola's invitation to *Tithe*

*SIDE NOTE—Epicenter Group is checking what kind of interest there is for fund-raising training that teaches congregational leaders to think multiple income streams in order to sustain a ministry financially. Let me know if you or folks you know would be interested. We are talking to a highly skilled trainer about doing several weeks of web-based training. Contact Nixon through his web site, <http://www.epicentergroup.org/>.*

or *Your Money Back* for Three Months. It helped them double their income a few years ago, and no one asked for money back.)

**6. It's better to teach stewardship commitment and focus on the joy of one's faith relationship with God than to simply pledge a church budget!** Herb Miller taught us this a generation ago and it's even more true now than it was in 1980! This generation has no interest in sponsoring the church as institution (beyond the price point of monthly Rotary Club dues), but they do want to change the world and bless people in tangible ways!

**7. Personal testimony is powerful.** Whether the testimony be related to adventures in letting go of money and trusting it to God or anything else related to the journey of faith, it is good to put ordinary people up front on a regular basis. However, if you plan to do this for stewardship campaign season, then plan to do it year round. Otherwise, the testimony becomes just a fund-raising scheme in the eyes of many.

## GC2016 Worship Director Named

The Rev. Laura Jaquith Bartlett of Eagle Creek, Ore., has been named worship and music director for the 2016 United Methodist General Conference by the Commission on the General Conference.

The United Methodist Church's top legislative body will meet at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, tentatively scheduled from May 10–20, 2016. Bartlett is president-elect of The Fellowship of United Methodists in Music & Worship Arts and program director at the Alton L. Collins Retreat Center, as well as worship coach for several United Methodist churches. Her experience in leading music and worship spans more than

two decades. She is an ordained deacon in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference and a three-time delegate to General Conference, serving as head of delegation in 2012.

The Commission on the General Conference has chosen "Therefore, go" as the theme of the event. As worship and music director, Bartlett will be responsible for designing and coordinating the worship experience and music in conjunction with the theme. Bartlett will also be responsible for music leadership in the plenary sessions, work with the Council of Bishops' Worship Committee and the General Board of Discipleship in planning worship services, and audition and choose choirs to

perform during the 11-day event.

"My hope, as well as my challenge, is to create experiences of worship that are both grand and intimate encounters with God," said Bartlett. "The amazing experience of having thousands of people from around the world gathered in one place should reflect the grandeur and majesty of God. Yet, I personally believe for General Conference to be truly effective, we need to celebrate the relationships we share with one another and with God, so worship will also lift up the intimacy of the divine-human relationship and the blessings of our connection with each other as members of the Body of Christ."



# Depression Often Overlooked in Aging

BY JIM STINSON

Consultant on Older Adult Ministries

In her mid-eighties, not given to morose thoughts and always life affirming, my mother startled me one day with a comment. She said, very matter of factly, "I know more people up there than I do down here." She gestured toward the sky as she said "up there" and toward the ground as she said "down here" making sure I got the point she wanted to make.

Now while I could argue with her cosmology about the location of heaven, I could not argue with her observation. The fact was, she had outlived most of her family of origin; and she had outlived most of her friends. Indeed her life had changed dramatically over the previous decade. Her friends were dying with increasing frequency, as were her children and their spouses. She was speaking to a reality of aging.



If we live long enough, we inevitably watch many of our loved ones and friends die.

This fact can, and often does lead to depression—an often overlooked and under diagnosed illness among the aging. When it is overlooked and under diagnosed we are often confronted with older adults who exhibit behaviors we would recognize more readily in younger people. We meet angry old ladies, cranky old men, older adults who just sit home and do nothing, mothers and fathers who do nothing to help themselves, and so on. When we deal with these people we discover how difficult it is to care for them. In fact we often tell ourselves, 'there is no talking to them, they just don't want to be different,' and other self-protecting reasons not to try.

Is there a better way to respond? Are there some hints for those of us not trained to make such a diagnosis? When suspecting

depression, we need to seek professional guidance for the one for whom we care. If a diagnosis of depression is made there are interventions possible. A professional can guide us in this area.

One method I have used frequently is the most obvious—inviting the person to elaborate on the feeling. ("Mom, I'm sure that's right. I don't know how that feels. Would you be willing to tell me more about it?") Rather than avoiding the difficult person, or talking around the issue, try listening. It is often the beginning of healing. It happens when someone knows his or her feelings are being validated and that someone else understands.

Ministry to and with older adults is challenging at times. But a sense of wanting to know and love the person can lead to a willingness to grow and learn as much as possible in order to be an increasingly healing presence in their lives.



## Howls of Halloween Fun

"Cat Lady" Frances McGrath, left, gets a hug from a masked Mary Ruffino, Bethel's community liaison, during the annual Halloween party and open house at Bethel's Springvale Inn. Live entertainment, pumpkin painting, candy and ghoulish decorations provided the perfect backdrop for the residents and children from the Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y., community

## All Creatures, Great & Small

October 19 was a day set aside by several NYAC churches to offer a blessing of the animals.

### Brewster, N.Y.

Drew UMC in Carmel, N.Y., sponsored their event at the Tilly Foster Farm in Brewster in conjunction with Lake Mahopac, Purdys and Mount Hope UMCs along with Holmes and Brewster UMCs. Pastors Ed Dayton and Wongee Joh spent the afternoon offering God's blessing to all the beloved pets and farm animals.

Drew has offered an animal blessing annually but this year moved the event to a county- owned farm and asked the other local UMCs to participate in order to bless even more people and pets. Drew is part of a four-church cooperative with Lake Mahopac, Purdys and Mount Hope.

The event included a free rabies clinic for cats and dogs needing an update. Dr. Mary Wallace-Hedman, a Drew UMC member, and a co-worker from Cortlandt Animal Hospital, Jamal Cambridge, gave their time in order to administer the vaccines that were donated by Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals. Any remaining vaccines will be used in another blessing and free rabies clinic in the spring.

Putnam Humane Society was also present with cats and dogs for adoption. Two dogs, Snoopy and Ellie, who had been fostered by a member of the Holmes UMC, were adopted.

### Sugar Loaf UMC

Amid a cacophony of barking, Rev. Vicky Fleming, blessed more than 35 animals at the annual Blessing of the Animals. Dogs, cats, rabbits, and even a 26-year-old Chinese box turtle, waited with their owners to receive a personal blessing from Fleming. The Warwick Valley Humane Society also brought several adoptable animals to the event and received donations for their work.

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Pastor Ed Dayton blesses one of the dogs brought to the Tilly Foster Farm in Brewster, N.Y. Rev. Vicky Fleming, cradles a pug during the pet blessing at Sugar Loaf UMC. Rev. Wongee, at right, Joh greets a canine visitor.**



## Lead the Way as a Cheerful Giver

At this time of year, our thoughts turn toward giving. Is your family looking for something or some way to "give" to others this season? This is the perfect time of year for random acts of kindness. Consider teaching your children how to give of their time, talent or treasure to those less fortunate than themselves.

Here are some tips:

- **Role model.** Set an example so that your children will be excited about helping others. Discuss and demonstrate sharing financial and material gifts, both inside and outside the family.
- **Be a cheerful giver.** Be enthusiastic about giving. Don't make it seem like a challenge. Seek out opportunities that families can engage in together.



- **Make giving a habit.** Create a plan for yearlong giving so the act of giving and thinking of others becomes a habit for children. If something becomes a habit when one is young, it is more likely to be practiced throughout life.
- **Praise children.** Make sure to notice and effectively praise children for giving. In time, they will give, not because they receive notice, but because they are internally motivated to do the right thing.
- **Donate goods.** Giving does not always mean opening your checkbook. Giving often

comes in the form of time and talent, not always treasure. Kids can donate books, toys, or clothes. Host a party where you ask guests to contribute food or a gift for those in need.

- **Consider volunteering.** Volunteering has a financial impact on an organization, and can have a big effect on kids. Once they see the smiles on the faces of those they have helped, they will also smile. Develop an attitude of gratitude by helping others.

*For more information on the Children's Home, call 607-772-6904 (or toll free 800-772-6904), ext. 131, or visit the web site at [www.chowc.org](http://www.chowc.org). Please feel free to send donations directly, or use the home's New York Conference advance number, 60-0588.*



# Dealing With Stress Lines In Our Denomination

**BY GEORGE C. ENGELHARDT**  
Study Committee for a More Inclusive Church

How much do you know about the tensions in our denomination over matters of inclusiveness? The issue is, of course, about our policy and practice regarding recognition of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transvestite persons. It concerns the continuing practices of the United Methodist Church in prohibiting marriage between same sex couples that desire to make the same lifelong, sacred vows of love that we celebrate in the marriages of heterosexual couples. It involves the refusal of our denomination to recognize and nurture the call into ordained ministry of persons with clear gifts and graces for that high office, solely on the basis of their sexual orientation. But the issue of inclusiveness is about more than sexual orientation, as some of the actions and decisions of our last General Conference attest.

For many, the continuing refusal of our General Conference to even acknowledge that United Methodists are not of one mind on how to faithfully respond to difference in sexual orientation has become a matter of increasing urgency. But whatever your position on our denomination's policies, or if you are simply not informed about those policies, it is important to understand that they have become matters of such divisiveness that they overshadow our more important unity in basic Christian doctrine and ministry.

Growing out of actions at our last General



Conference, our inability to engage in respectful dialogue with one another across this divide makes our future as a united denomination unclear. Yes, the issue has grown to be that serious! It isn't simply a controversy that plays out in other areas of our church. It affects the health and well being of our own conference, as some of our own clergy face charges of violating the restrictive portions of the Discipline. These clergy's status as ordained members of our conference are at risk. Further, a growing number of our clergy and laity have become so discouraged about the hope of any constructive conversation that might open the door to a re-examination of our position, that they question their own ability to remain at home as United Methodists.

A small, representative study committee of committed leaders in our conference who love our church and cherish our Wesleyan heritage have, by our conference's action, been engaged in a study of our polity and structure in order to discern how we might foster holy conferencing and identify options within our present structure that would offer a more inclusive option for United Methodists who seek it. We

are ready to share our findings with as many local churches and interested individuals as possible, both to inform and to assist congregations to understand what is happening within the larger church, lest future directions our denominational stress lines produce catch us unawares.

On Saturday, Nov. 16, at Memorial UMC in White Plains, N.Y., we will sponsor a symposium on a more inclusive United Methodist Church. (Please note this is a change in location.) We begin shortly after 10 a.m. and conclude around 3:30. Light refreshments will be offered in the morning. We ask you to bring your own lunch.

There we will share our findings as a study committee, and offer insights into what lies ahead, based on what transpired at our last General Conference. A panel of General Conference delegates and informed lay and clergy will engage in discussion about it. There will also be resourcing sessions in the afternoon, specifically designed to promote more understanding of the urgency of what divides us, how to discuss it constructively within our congregations, and what actions persons and congregations can now take to assist the United Methodist Church to no longer put off acknowledging how pressing these concerns are.

It would be well for as many of our congregations as possible to attend the symposium. We urge your immediate consideration. To register, go to: <http://nyac.com/events/detail/4711>.

## Fund Aims at Saving Newborns from HIV

The United Methodist Global AIDS Fund (UMGAF) Committee has announced they will initiate a one-year focus on preventing transmission of HIV/AIDS from mothers to babies during pregnancy, labor, delivery or breastfeeding as part of their new *Just Save One* initiative. *Just Save One* emphasizes how even a small gift can make a big difference to one person living with HIV or AIDS.

According to the World Health Organization, mother to child transmission rates range from 15 percent to 45 percent in the absence of any interventions. This rate can be reduced to levels below five percent with effective interventions. Offering pregnant women testing and treatment is an important step towards reducing

the incidence of HIV/AIDS by preventing transmission to their babies—at a very low cost.

"Every child has the right to be born free of HIV and AIDS," said Dr. Donald Messer, co-chair of the United Methodist Global AIDS Fund Committee. "United Methodists have an opportunity to be at the forefront of efforts to eliminate mother to child transmission of HIV by 2015. Babies in the United States are rarely born with AIDS. We can help stop the transmission globally."

UNICEF reports that 1,000 babies are born each day with HIV. For World AIDS Day, on December 1, UMGAF has produced an Advent study on HIV/AIDS, as well as resources that bring attention to the issue. The resources are

available at [www.umglobalaidsfund.com](http://www.umglobalaidsfund.com).

Additionally, the Committee passed a motion to encourage annual conferences to honor their financial commitments to Imagine No Malaria, which has raised \$53 million in donations and pledges to date.

To *Just Save One*, drop a check in the offering plate. Make it payable to your local church with UMCOR Advance #982345 in the memo line, or send it to PO Box 9068, New York, NY 10087. Additionally, consider maximizing your gift by donating to UMGAF on December 3 as part of the national movement #GivingTuesday. On this day, online donations made through The Advance at [www.umcmission.org/give](http://www.umcmission.org/give) will be matched up to \$500,000.

# JOB OPENINGS

## Part-time Children's Director

Suffern UMC, Suffern, N.Y., is looking for an enthusiastic person who loves children to work with our education committee to help lead our children's program. In addition to leading children's message and Sunday school, the person will help facilitate five to six activities (such as VBS, Christmas, Easter, and recreational outings) during the year. Experience preferred, but not necessary. Salary: \$20 per hour. If interested, email your resume and a 200-word essay on why you are a good candidate to Fred Eliason at [eliason819@verizon.net](mailto:eliason819@verizon.net).

## Coordinator of Church Plants, Revitalization

The New York Annual Conference is seeking a **Coordinator of Congregational Development and Revitalization (CCDR)** to provide visionary leadership in implementing strategies for planting new faith communities and revitalizing existing congregations. As a member of the Extended Cabinet, the CCDR will work with congregations in the Annual Conference as well as Parish Development, the Bishop and the Cabinet. Base salary is \$65–75,000, depending upon experience. The compensation package includes a housing allowance, full benefits and a reimbursement account. Start date is negotiable, but preference is early in 2014.

The ideal candidate will have a master's degree and 3–5 years of experience in congregational development (or equivalent experience). **To apply, email a cover letter and resume to "CCDR Search Committee" at [jobs@nyac-umc.com](mailto:jobs@nyac-umc.com)**. Please do not call the Conference office about this position. Candidates without relevant congregational development

experience or who do not submit both a cover letter and resume will not be considered. **The deadline for applications is November 30, 2013.** A detailed job description can be found at <http://nyac.com/classifieds/detail/198>.

## UMW Seeking Program Assistant

The national organization of the United Methodist Women is seeking a program assistant for the Section on Ministry Opportunities at its 475 Riverside Drive, New York location.

The Program Assistant I position shall assist International Ministries staff in implementing the program and financial work of the office in connection with international partners and national staff of UMW. This position maintains current knowledge of National Mission Institutions' (NMI) programs, services, and policies, and provides a range of specialized administrative and program support related tasks. The duties include but are not limited to project management, office automation, desktop publishing, use of spreadsheets, and databases.

A bachelor's degree with at least five years experience in a similar capacity is required. General knowledge of polity of the United Methodist church is helpful. Position calls for good customer service skills and the ability to communicate effectively. Occasional overtime, travel and weekend work required. All UMW full-time positions are complemented with generous time-off benefits, health, dental, life, LTD, EAP, FSA and employer-contribution 401(k). To apply, go to: [www.umcmission.org/Learn-About-Us/About-Global-Ministries/Careers](http://www.umcmission.org/Learn-About-Us/About-Global-Ministries/Careers).

## Offerings Provide NYAC Scholarships

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry recently awarded more than \$25,000 to students in the New York Annual Conference. These awards are the result of offering donations to the United Methodist Student Day and World Communion Sunday.

Students from 15 conference churches were selected and reflect the wide diversity of the NYAC.

The students and their home churches are:

- Grace Bang, Astoria Korean UMC
- Hansung Choi, Korean Methodist Church Institute, Manhattan
- Sejin Cha, Korean UMC, Staten Island
- Matthew Volpe, Cheshire UMC, Conn.
- Woong Ji Kim, Hillside UMC, New Hyde Park
- Daekwon Kim, First UMC, Flushing
- Marisa Orozco, Highland Mills UMC
- Grace Akinbode, Bloomfield UMC, Conn.

- Andrew Ray, Cheshire UMC, Conn.
- Young Dong Kim, First UMC, Flushing
- Grace Moon, Broken Builders Ministries UMC, Manhattan
- Sunjoo Lee, Brooks Memorial UMC, Jamaica
- Koeun Chung, Community UMC, Jackson Heights
- Andrew Montelongo, First UMC, Flushing
- Daehyun Park, New York-Plainview UMC
- Shalom Chung, Community UMC, Jackson Heights
- Gordon Edwards, Westchester UMC, Bronx
- Eun Han, Central Korean UMC, White Plains

Thank you to all the churches in the Annual Conference who faithfully participate in the Six Special Sundays of the UMC. Those gifts come back to us and go directly to our students. Congratulations to all the award recipients!



# OBITUARIES

## Rev. George Czar

The Reverend George Czar, a former superintendent of the Hudson East District, died on October 9, at age 85.

After serving in the Army Air Corps from 1945 to 1948, he attended Oberlin College, graduating in 1951. While at Oberlin, he married Marion Shonk. In 1955, Czar graduated from Yale University's Divinity School.

Czar's journey to ordained ministry began in 1951 when he was granted a license to preach through the Wyoming Conference. He was ordained an elder and became a full member in the New York East Conference in 1955.

Rev. Czar's appointment history includes ministry at Southington, Newington, and Springdale in Connecticut; Shrub Oak and Hempstead in New York. He served as Hudson East superintendent from 1971 to 1977.

After he retired in 1994, the Czars spent two winters working with Educational Opportunities along the Sea of Galilee in Tiberius, Israel.

In addition to his wife, Marion, he is survived by sons, George, Stephen, and David, daughter Susan Terwillegar, and seven grandchildren.

A memorial service was held on October 10, at the First Presbyterian Church, Wilkes-Barre, Penn., with Rev Dr. Robert M. Zanicky officiating.

The family requests that memorial contributions be made to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), 475 Riverside Drive, Room 1520, New York, NY 10115, or online at [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org).

## Rev. Betty R. McKinney

Rev. Betty R. McKinney, 72, joined the "great cloud of witnesses" on All Saint's Day, November 1. McKinney, who was born September 24, 1941, in Iowa, spent her life serving others.

She received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Mount Saint Mary, Newburgh, N.Y., and was a nurse at Vassar Brother's Medical Center in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. She earned a master's degree in theology from Drew University and was ordained an elder in the New York Conference. Her last appointment before retiring in 2007 was as a chaplain at Hospice Inc. in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. One of her many projects was "The Kids Place," a highly successful afterschool program.

McKinney is survived by husband John McKinney; sister, Joan Smith of Iowa; son, Dr. Steven (Mary) Toepfer of Ohio; daughter, Susan Callamari (Sandie Mancuso) of New York; stepdaughters, Heather (William) Rodiger of Massachusetts, and Dr. Kathy (Brian Gery) McKinney of Pennsylvania. She is also survived by nine grandchildren: Angela Callamari, Jack and Luke Toepfer; Jonathan, Jamie and Christopher Rodiger; and Matthew, Sarah and Andrew Gery.

A memorial service was held November 6, at the Poughkeepsie UMC, with Rev. Timothy Riss officiating.

## Rev. Dr. Barent Johnson, Geraldine Johnson

Rev. Dr. Barent Johnson died on September 25, at age 92, at his

retirement community in Basking Ridge, N.J. His wife, Geraldine, preceded him in death on November 4, 2012. News of her passing arrived at the conference secretary's office at the same time as the announcement of her husband's death.

Rev. Johnson was born in Aberdeen, Wash. and attended the College of Puget Sound where he met his future wife. After college, the couple moved to Illinois where he enrolled in Garrett Biblical Institute (now Garrett Evangelical Seminary) in Evanston.

He entered the ministry of the Methodist Church in 1942 serving as a local pastor in what is now the Pacific Northwest Conference. In 1945, Rev. Johnson moved to the former Rock River Conference (now Northern Illinois) and became a full member in 1952. His appointment history in the New York Conference includes the Connecticut churches: former Meriden in New Haven; Trinity and South in Meriden, Conn.; and Jesse Lee in Easton. He retired in 1991.

Geraldine Johnson was born in Wisconsin in 1923; she moved to Washington State to live with an aunt after the death of both parents.

According to the couple's daughter, Kathleen Caccavale, "They were married for 69½ years and were a couple admired by all who knew them for their deep, enduring obvious love for each other." After college, Mrs. Johnson taught in a one-room schoolhouse in Illinois, then worked as a secretary in Connecticut, and at Drew University in New Jersey.

She was a creative person who enjoyed doing crafts with Sunday School students, and "providing sustenance and warmth in the form of visits, letters, casseroles and conversation to folks in need, and participating in the Meals on Wheels program after her retirement from Drew University."

In 1960, Rev. Johnson attended Yale University, earning a doctorate in religion. In 1962, he became a fellow in the philosophy department at Drew University, then was appointed university registrar in 1963. He also received an honorary degree from Drew in 1984.

Drew University recently issued a tribute to Johnson entitled, "Beloved Registrar Passes Away Having Fulfilled a Multitude of Roles over Three Decades. Colleagues say he personified all that was Drew." In that announcement Drew President Vivian A. Bull said, "It was most unusual for a registrar to be given an honorary degree, but that was in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Drew's academic community." Rev. Johnson retired from Drew University in 1986 but later returned and served as their archivist from 1988 until 1993.

In addition to their daughter, Kathi, the couple is survived by several nieces and nephews, and Mrs. Johnson, by a brother in Florida. A joint memorial service for the couple was held October 26 at Fellowship Village, and another is planned for spring 2014 (date to be determined) at the United Methodist Church of Madison, New Jersey.

Donations honoring the Johnsons may be sent to: Memorial Fund in memory of Barent and Geri Johnson, UMC Madison, 24 Madison Ave., Madison, N.J. 07940; or Barent and Geri Johnson Memorial Scholarship for Caregiver Training, payable to the Fellowship Village Legacy Endowment Fund—Johnson Memorial, 8000 Fellowship Rd., Basking Ridge, NJ 07920 or online at, [www.fellowshipseniorliving.org](http://www.fellowshipseniorliving.org).