

# Remembering, Dealing With Our Grief

By JOANNE UTLEY

“Our faith is not an insurance policy against adversity,” Rev. Ken Kieffer told the audience gathered for the Memorial Service Thursday. “But God is on our side, beside us . . . even when we get our butts kicked all over the place.”

The morning service was a time to remember the clergy and clergy family members who have died since last annual conference. Conference Secretary Bob Miller, read out the names:

## Clergy

Constance Jackson, John Seongmo Park, William C. Carroll, Fredrick Craig Clark, Harold Monroe Jenkins, Claude R. Welch, Harold Lee Beaumont, Francis R. Lewis, F. Allan Kirton, Robert Standish Hamilton, Duncan T. Trueman, Evelyn Newman, Helen Ayer Lombard, and Charlotte Ann Jaroscsak

## Spouses of clergy

Patricia King Martin, Frances Perry Newton, Yolanda Horbert, Beatrice Hewitt, Roberta M. Marsland, Laura Mae Siktberg, and Bettie Lee Carothers Clarke

## Widows and widowers of clergy

Evelyn Brown, Dorothy S. Nutt, Dorothy Osborn, and Eleanor Thompson

## Children of clergy

Paul Todd Bradley, and Chay Stinson Poulork

In his message based on Romans 8:38-39, Kieffer told the story of two young brothers who were inseparable until a drunk driver killed the younger one. The older brother’s grief sent him to his brother’s favorite hiding place –



The Senior Choir from New Life Community Church UMC in Fairfield, Conn., performed two numbers during the service.



Connecticut District Superintendent Ken Kieffer offered a message of love and healing.

deep under his bed. Despite repeated attempts, nothing could coax the brother from the space, until a baseball coach crawls down under the bed with him.

We may often feel isolated from God after a death like this, Kieffer said. “Our friends don’t know what to say. Should we act like they never died, or never lived?” We may often feel that much of the world is against us – “Al-Qaeda, Bernie Madoff, human traffickers, gun runners, gang bangers.” But for Paul it doesn’t

matter who is against us, because “God is on our side.”

Christ didn’t crawl under a wooden bed, but he did commit himself to die on a wooden cross. “He didn’t do it for loss, to go away,” said Kieffer, “he did it to be with us.”

Following the sermon, Bishop Jeremiah Park and Bishop Alfred Johnson presided over Holy Communion. The sacrament was served by laity, and members of the 2010 commissioning, ordination and retirement classes.



The audience, led by Bishop Park, lifts their hands in a blessing for the retirees and spouses.

# Retirees Sent Off With Deep Gratitude

The body gathered Thursday evening to honor 21 people who are retiring from active service in the church. Rev. Eumin Kim, Conference Relations retiree coordinator, welcomed the “highly honored and decorated class of retirees,” who have more than 400 years of combined service.

Those who are retiring are: Victoria Affram-Boyd, Joseph Agne, Anne (Vicky) Annin, Warren Beaven, Carol Robinson Beaven, John Brown III, Nancy Carter, Mark Chatterton, Mary Helen Crump, Peggy Fabrizio, Dorothy Ann Grant, John Horesco III, Frederic O. Jackson, Merrill Kanouse, Joan Krawchick-Johnson, David Lull, Charles Naugle, John Nelson, William Resling, Thomas Smoot, and Joyce Wilkerson

Bishop Park asked the body to stand and show their appreciation for the retirees, before leading the singing of “Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore.”

A number of the retirees



Bishop Park congratulates Rev. Mark Chatterton.

offered their thoughts about ministry and retirement via video messages. A final video featured Mark Chatterton and Fred Jackson in a comic send-up of the Muppet Show’s Statler & Waldorf. The pair

kibitzed about their fondness of annual conference, with Chatterton lamenting, “Don’t you wish annual conference lasted more than a week?”

# Agne, Jones Given White Award by MFSA

BY TOM CODDINGTON

The Methodist Foundation for Social Action off the New York Annual Conference had a busy agenda at its dinner meeting on Thursday.

Among the earlier speakers was Chairman Kevin Nelson who, after praising all who have worked for the advocacy of social action, pointed out that all of the petitions the MFSA had supported in Legislative Section 3 were approved.

The main focus of the dinner, however, was on the couple being honored with the organization's C. Dale and Gwen White award, Rev. Joseph Agne and his wife, Dana Jones. Both of the honorees addressed the gathering.

In her introduction of Jones, Darlene DiDominick spoke of the honoree's "fight against injustice in the global community, across many lines. She has shown radical hospitality. She has been a mentor and a picture of solidarity for children, helping them get to know Christian justice.



**Rev. Joe Agne and his wife, Dana Jones (center) receive the White Award.**

Jones, a journalist, spoke of her experience on an international level, where she has listened to many stories from people who have been victims of social injustice. "I have heard many amazing stories, not from people who are famous, but people we've never

heard of," she said. "God is not objective. God takes sides when it comes to social injustice."

Rev. John Collins, in his introduction of Agne, said, "He has touched the lives of many people. He has shown an interest in those that no one else will pay attention to."

Agne reflected on his meeting, more than 40 years ago, with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., noting that religious leaders in Alabama told King he was "working too fast to uphold the rights of those suffering racial injustice. He said he felt it was his responsibility to take the risk."

A battler for change in the United Methodist Discipline, where it comes to inclusiveness of all, the honoree said, in

closing, "How many gifted and called people have to be turned away from the ministry they want, because of the language in the Discipline? It's time to get that language out of there!"

## Churches Can Offer Much for Youth

BY TOM CODDINGTON

"Young people need a place to belong and to fit in!" said Neal Bowes, youth consultant at Thursday's annual Town and Country Association breakfast. "The church can offer that!"

"They need a place where it's safe to ask questions. The church can offer that. They need a place where things are real, things that have substance and value. The church can offer that," he added.

Bowes, who also is director of youth ministries at Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church in Ridgefield, Conn., noted that teenagers often "don't stick around after their confirmation. They don't know what there is to do in the church if they don't have an organized fellowship group. A group of five can be great," he commented.

In these groups, he said, "There



**Neal Bowes uses a trash can podium at Town and Country lunch.**

needs to be meaningful conversation, sharing of the Gospel, and helping them understand. It's really fun to watch kids respond to the gospel. They can pose some tough questions," he remarked of his own experience as a youth leader.

In his conference position, Bowes

has gone out to many churches to assist them with increasing their youth involvement. "I am willing to go anywhere!" he exclaimed.

"We need to get busy; now. A long-term consistency is the key to successful youth ministry," he concluded.

# Health Kits Piling Up – High

With more than 6,000 health kits collected by mid-afternoon Thursday, we're well on our way to sending more than 10,000 off to UMCOR.

The Walgreens Drug Store in Hempstead has partnered with the conference to provide some of the kit materials at a discount.

Stop by the tent on Saturday to help assemble more kits during the Momentum of Ministries festival.

Get there early because more than 5,000 new members and their families are registered to attend!

## Amendment to Rule 81 Rejected

An amendment to Conference Rule 81 concerning the election of clergy delegates to general and jurisdictional conferences was voted down Thursday afternoon.

The amendment, offered by Home Missioner Kevin Nelson, would have allowed clergy to "declare" their candidacy by submitting a biographical statement before annual conference. The amendment was put to a standing vote by the bishop.

### Corrections

My apologies for two name errors yesterday. It is correctly Bishop Alfred Johnson, and Rev. Seungho Shin.

Also, to clarify an appointment listing: Pastor Michael Barry will be appointed as an associate pastor to Grace UMC, Newburgh, NY on a less than full-time basis.



Ross Williams at the podium with Bishop Park after his election.

## Williams is New Treasurer

Ross Williams, a life-long United Methodist, was nominated and approved to be the next treasurer/director of administrative services by the conference Council of Finance and Administration.

Williams has been vice president and chief risk and compliance officer at Cognizant Technology Solutions since 2004. Cognizant is a \$4 billion global provider of information technology services with over 85,000 employees. From 1998 to 2004, he was Cognizant's vice president and corporate controller.

He became a certified public accountant in 1992, the year after earning an M.B.A. from Fordham University. Williams graduated cum laude from the State University of New York at Brockport, with a bachelor's degree in finance/economics.

Williams grew up in Yonkers, attending the Asbury-Crestwood

UMC. As a young adult, he belonged to the New Canaan UMC, and for the past 12 years he's been a member of Darien UMC. He helped bring Natural Church Development to Darien and currently serves as the chairperson of the finance and stewardship committees.

In an email to CCFA, he wrote, "I was not active in the job market when learning of this position. I applied for the job because I felt it would be a unique opportunity to apply my accounting and finance background to the service of my Christian faith."

CCFA thanks the search committee for lavishing such time and care on this task: Rev. Noel Chin (Chairperson), Sabrina Chandler, Myung Rae Kim, Jorge Lockward, Rev. Ann Pearson, Rev. Stephen Phillips, Gillian Prince, and Rev. William Shillady. They also thank Bishop Jeremiah Park for his leadership in forming the committee.

**Thanks!** Heartfelt gratitude to the team helping get the word and photos out this year. Mark Gafney and Rev. Peg Laemmel are taking photos. Tom Coddington is wielding a pen and camera, and Rev. Darlene Kelley and Rev. Darlene Resling are doing some writing. Melissa Hinnen and Jennifer Harmer are tweeting at #nyac2010. Thanks also to webmaster Barbara Eastman and to Steve A. from Pragmatix. I couldn't do this without you. God bless!