

"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

April 23, 2010

Far Rockaway Mission Gets New Home

We invite you to come and celebrate 28 years of United Methodist ministry caring for the least, the last and the lost in Far Rockaway, Queens, on Sunday, April 25. Please join the board of directors; Long Island West District Superintendent, Rev. Kenny Yi; and Bishop Jeremiah Park as we consecrate the new United Methodist Center of Far Rockaway at 1032 Beach 19th Street, Far Rockaway. The dedication will begin at 3 p.m.

In November 1982—with the dream of Rev. Judy Bennett, and the support of then District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Wilson Boots, and the spiritual and financial support of the conference United Methodist Women and many local UMW units—the United Methodist Center of Far Rockaway was born. A women's crisis center in Far Rockaway was desperately needed as Rev. Bennett saw an increasing number of abused women in crisis coming to her church for help. The center operated one day a week from a storefront on Central Avenue.

The mission began in January 1983 when Janet Porcher became its first fulltime volunteer. Within a few months, she was appointed director. Porcher saw the needs of the neighborhood as a large number of residents were poor, or suffered from alcohol and substance abuse problems. She began expanding the work from a women's center to a community of faith, open to all who were in need.

In August 1983, volunteer pastors began UM worship services in three languages: Spanish, Creole and English. Not only did the center become a mission church, it continued



The UM Center in Far Rockaway provides a much-needed feeding program for the community.

to meet the critical community needs by providing several kinds of care including a soup kitchen, clothing bank, youth ministry, homeless drop-in center and social service referrals. Porcher received her call to ministry while serving this community, and in 1985 she became a licensed local pastor, appointed to the center as pastor and director.

Throughout it all, the UMW, local UM churches, the United Methodist City Society, and the annual conference have provided the mission with much needed funding.

Continued on page 4



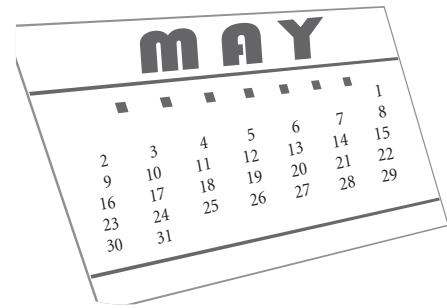
Gifts that were distributed at Christmas delighted the clients and their children.



April 24-25: How did your church help change the world?

Please let us know how you reached out to your community. Send your words and photos to thevision@nyac.com by May 1 for inclusion in the next issue and on the NYAC web site.

SAVE THE DATE



VBS Teacher Training Workshops

Teachers, get ready for Vacation Bible School at these workshops that run from 10 a.m. to noon. To register, call Lynda Gomi at 914-615-2219 or email: learningcenter@nyac.com.

April 24: Danbury UMC, 5 Clapboard Ridge Rd., Danbury, Conn.

May 1: Asbury UMC, 90 Church Ave., Bristol, Conn.

May 1: Grace UMC, 21 S. Franklin Ave., Valley Stream, N.Y.

May 8: Salem UMC, 211 W. 129th St., New York, N.Y.

Celebrate New Far Rockaway Mission

April 25: The United Methodist Center of Far Rockaway has a new home and it will be dedicated on Sunday at 3 p.m. All are welcome to join with the bishop for the open house and consecration of the mission at 1032 Beach 19th Street, Far Rockaway, NY 11691.

Methodists & Episcopalians: Can We Talk?

April 27: Join in the Methodist-Episcopal dialogue with Rev. Dr. Tom Ferguson, chief ecumenical officer of the Episcopal Church, at 1 p.m., at the Episcopal Church Center, 815 2nd Ave. (between 43rd & 44th Streets) in Manhattan. Ferguson is the lead Episcopalian in the dialogue with the UMC about eventual, full communion. Please RSVP to Dennis R. Winkleblack, assistant to the bishop, by email at dwinkleblack@nyac.com.

Confirmation Rally With the Bishop

May 8: All confirmation classes are invited to spend the day with Bishop Jeremiah Park at Jesse Lee Memorial UMC in Ridgefield, Conn. The event will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and feature fun games, cool workshops, exciting worship and photos with the bishop. The free event is sponsored by the Council on Youth Ministry. To register, go to: <http://nyac.com/events/detail/2706>.

Mozambique Mission Luncheon

May 8: Lisa Katzenstein of the General Board of Global Ministries will be the speaker at the celebration luncheon for the Mozambique/New York Sister Conferences Connection. The luncheon, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., is free at the Conference Center, 20 Soundview Ave., White Plains, N.Y. All mission friends are welcome to attend! To reserve your seat, please contact Annette Griffith at annettegriffith@earthlink.net.

UM City Society Annual Dinner

May 13: New GBGM General Secretary Thomas Kemper is the featured speaker at this year's dinner meeting at the Interchurch Center. See story on Page 6.

Catskill Hudson Rethinking Worship

May 15: The Catskill Hudson District Council on Ministries will host a "Rethink Worship" workshop from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at Catskill UMC. Jorge Lockward, director of the Global Praise program of the GBGM and music director for the NYAC, will help participants develop transformative

and theologically sound worship. Pastors, musicians, singers, and worship/song leaders should come ready to sing, play, think and strategize. Fee of \$15 per person includes resource materials and refreshments. Deadline is May 1; send contact information and registration fee to: Rev. Joyce Wilkerson, Catskill UMC, 40 Woodland Ave., Catskill NY 12414. Checks should be made payable to the Catskill UMC.

Ethnic Clergywomen Prayer Conference

May 21–22: "Fresh Fire," a prayer conference for women in the NYAC is planned at Stony Point Conference Center, Stony Point, N.Y. Space is limited to 50. The fee is \$150. Register by April 30, by sending a check payable to Fenimore Street UMC with Ethnic Clergywomen's Conference in the memo line. Send a check and your contact information to: Andrea Smith, Fenimore Street UMC, 266 Fenimore St., Brooklyn, NY 11225-5311. For questions, contact Smith at 718-469-8816. Rev. Dr. Maxine Nixon is the convener.

Creating Safe Sanctuaries



May 22: Safe Sanctuary Workshop, NYAC Learning Center, White Plains, NY. Registration is at 12:30 pm; the workshop runs from 1–4 p.m. To sign up, please contact Lynda Gomi at lgomi@nyac.com or LearningCenter@nyac.com; toll free: 1-800-696-6922, ext. 219.

"Building Up a Healthy Body of Christ"

June 9–12: The packets containing the call to annual conference have been mailed out with information about registering online, at <http://www.nyac.com/events/detail/2714>. Register by May 1 for the lowest fees. See the related story on Page 3.

Photography Workshop at Kingswood

June 28–July 2: Learn to produce commercial-quality images in a natural setting with instruction in landscape and plant photography. Shoot in the fields and woods, or on the trails and pond at Kingswood Campsite in Hancock, N.Y. Enjoy fellowship, camp cooking, and the superb natural, diverse environment of this camp in the Catskills. Cost is \$375; leader is Christie R. House, editor of New World Outlook magazine. Call the Kingswood camp registrar at 845-679-5692 to sign up.

The News of the New York Conference of the United Methodist Church

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An Invitation From Bishop Park

April .2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the New York Annual Conference:

I greet you in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, Healer of our brokenness and Hope of the world!

Once a year the 475 churches of the New York Annual Conference gather to celebrate who we are as God's people. This time together is the most significant event in the life of our annual conference. This year, it will be the greatest event ever. On Saturday, June 12, five thousand of us will gather together at Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York, to give witness that we are a church united, that we are a church growing in mission, that collectively we make a difference in the world, and that we are a vital church, alive in the Spirit of God.

Imagine 5,000 brothers and sisters in Christ (children, youth, young people, seniors, people of all colors and backgrounds) coming together as one family, praising God, sharing testimonies of how we are building up a healthy Body of Christ, and lifting up our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world! We will witness that we are part of an awesome movement of God.

For many of us, it will be a life-changing "God-Moment" in our journey as God's people. We will be blessed, encouraged, inspired, and become even more committed to the mission and ministry of our church, locally and globally.

I am issuing a special invitation to those who have joined a church in the New York Conference since 2004 to be present on this Saturday. We want to celebrate you, honor you and support you for your on-going journey as disciples of Jesus Christ. I also would like to invite your family and friends, your church sponsors, your godmothers and godfathers as well as your entire church family so that all of us can surround you with

our prayers, love, and care.

I also want to invite everyone who attends one of our churches regularly but hasn't yet made a decision about becoming a member. I pray this event may be helpful in your discernment.

If you have little or no connection to a church but are interested in knowing our church, I would like to invite you. This may be a connecting moment for you to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Please tell your pastor that you want to be included in this historic gathering of the New York Annual Conference. All are welcome. Please take a look at the exciting events for the day. You will have a great time and return home recharged and renewed for the journey.

God's people of New York Annual Conference, this is a great opportunity for us to connect with the vision and mission of our church. This is indeed the time and we are indeed the people for God's new movement among us.

The word that comes to my mind for the significance of this gathering of 5,000 is MOMENTUM. One of our pastors defined it this way: Magnificent Opportunities for Mission Employing Newly Transformed United Methodists. I like it. Thank you Rev. Carle! I believe that God is creating a huge wave and sending it our way. Are we willing to catch it and ride it for such a time as this?

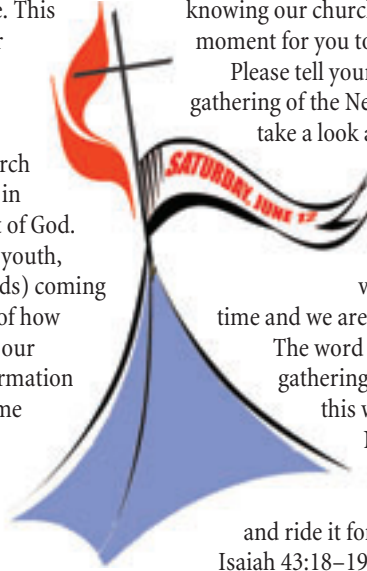
Isaiah 43:18-19 says, "Forget the former things. Do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up. Do you not perceive it?"

I am looking forward to seeing you on Saturday, June 12, at Hofstra University.

May God richly bless and honor you, your loved ones and your church!

In Christ,

Jeremiah Park



"Momentum" Is Rolling

Bishop Jeremiah Park has extended a special invitation to new and prospective members to come to the "Parking Lot Festival," which will go on under three big tents outside the arena from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Two outdoor stages will offer live music throughout the festival. Here's what will be happening under the tents:

Tent 1: Experience Global Mission

Visitors will taste cultural tidbits from our global villages, enjoy dancing from Ecuador, stretch out on the cot in the Haiti clinic, shop for handmade items from Ghana, Mozambique and Cambodia, and travel the obstacle course on a Personal Energy Transportation (PET) vehicle.

Tent 2: Engage in Advocacy Ministries

Ever taken a privilege walk? How is your personal income ranked globally? Try the photo ops with John Wesley or be a circuit rider on a horse!! What is Permaculture and why is the world so interested? Experience the shower of stoles or pray in a prison cell.

Tent 3: Youth & Children in Action

Build a handicapped ramp with UM ARMY to be installed at a local residence. Learn why more than 200 of our youth give their time and energy to the Appalachian Service Project each summer.

Children's activities will also be scattered throughout the festival including

the Noah's Ark inflatable, a climbing wall and the Learning Center Putt-Putt Golf Course.

After a free boxed lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., the activities will move into the arena at 1 p.m., beginning with a parade of church banners, accompanied by the bishop's hymn sing. Each church should bring an existing banner or create one just for this special event.

During the afternoon the party continues, and we'll:

- Recognize all our new members
- Catch the momentum in ministry and get it rolling in our local churches
- Be inspired and challenged by the preaching of the dynamic Bishop James Swanson
- Honor the work of our Volunteers in Mission in global service, especially the more than 100 teams involved in the work in Biloxi over the last five years. We'll even meet the owners of some of the homes we have renovated.



Children can try out a Personal Energy Transportation (PET) vehicle on the obstacle course during the outdoor festival on June 12.

Far Rockaway Mission Gets New Home

Continued from page 1

In 1986, the center moved to larger quarters on Smith Place and developed additional programs for alcohol addiction, substance abuse, and homelessness. The homeless drop-in center provided people with an address where they could receive mail. Lives were transformed by the grace of God and through the work of the mission. Many found new hope by getting benefits, jobs, and housing thanks to social workers from the Volunteers in Service to America program.

Making Transitions

Today at the UM Center in Far Rockaway (Far Rockaway Mission), our mission is founded on Matthew 25:31–46: “To serve our brothers and sisters in need by carrying out the Gospel mandates to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and provide hospitality and the spiritual, social, and physical services which will foster self-confidence and pride in every human being.”

To this end, the Far Rockaway Mission works with persons to help transition them from homelessness to being self-sufficient.

The mission became a subsidiary of the United Methodist City Society, but was truly the focus and passion of the Long Island West District of the conference. Many of the district churches support the mission with donations of funds, food, and clothing. Whenever there is appeal for personal health kits, clothing, or Christmas gifts for children, the clergy and laity of the LIW district respond to the need. Many United Methodists and others support our mission in a significant way.

United Way, Island Harvest, Rock n’ Wrap, Temple Sinai, NYC Food Bank, and other organizations also support the work at the center. In addition to a hot meal served to 60 to 80 persons every day, pantry bags are given out twice a week.

In December 2009, the

mission procured a new site that is much more accessible and an improvement over the previous one. A longtime lease has been secured and this brand new space has been transformed into a licensed feeding program site. While the mission functions primarily as a feeding program and food pantry, the board hopes to prayerfully expand the ministry to include wellness and pastoral counseling, screenings and referrals, re-entry counseling for former inmates, clerical and computer skills training, GED test preparation, English as a second language, and many other opportunities.

Plan for Worship

Since 2006—after a move from the Smith Place site—it has not been possible to be the church that had been so important during the early years. In this new facility, we hope to again offer worship services and Bible study led by lay speakers in the LIW District. With God’s help and

your support, we may once again become the mission church that offered worship, fellowship, and Bible study and Sunday School for children and adults.

Denis Stuart, president of the board of directors, said, “The people we serve are people who are homeless, living below the poverty level or living in adult homes. Many feel that they are not welcome in established churches. Therefore, these brothers and sisters themselves requested a Sunday service of their own.” Our current director, Mearl Grant, is excited about the possibilities, as he has spearheaded the renovation and coordination of our new site with Stuart.

The vision that God gave Rev. Judy Bennett and Rev. Janet Porcher for the mission in 1983 does not differ from the vision God has given us today. Please join us as a partner in sharing God’s good news in Jesus Christ through the work of the Far Rockaway Mission.



Three generations—Eleanor Sammartano, Mia Perez and Lisa Perez—shared the breakfast of pancakes and sausages.

Pancakes Stack Up Haiti Donation

The Highland Mills United Methodist Church recently opened its doors to the Woodbury, N.Y., community for a free pancake breakfast. Although there was no charge, donations of \$485 were received and will go to UMCOR to aid victims of the earthquake in Haiti.



Amiel Tutolo, chair of the Men’s Ministry, found an ice cream scoop provided the right amount of batter for the griddle.

Pastor Offers Update on Haiti Relief

Rev. Tom Vencuss returned from a recent four-day visit to Haiti. Here is an excerpt of his update:

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The country itself is slowly getting back together, but it is a mess. There are many collapsed buildings, homes, and businesses that remain untouched, with, I imagine, many persons still unaccounted for.

The large Methodist Church in Port-au-Prince experienced some cracks but is essentially okay. The large elementary school next to it is gone, and the large secondary school (College Bird) right next to it, is severely compromised. This, in particular, has been a significant source of income for the Methodist Church of Haiti.

Feres School is okay; the school, church, and guesthouse are stable. School was expected to officially start early this month. Some church related schools are holding classes outside under tents to avoid losing more students.

There are tent cities all over; the basketball court at the guesthouse is filled with tents as is just about every open space. It will be a nightmare when the rains pick up. Food and water are scarce and sanitation is a real problem. The United Nations, the U.S. Agency for International Development and other international organizations are providing emergency rations, but food and water lines often stretch a quarter mile. Other supplies are available from international stores but prices are beyond the ability of most to afford.

The airport is still compromised but they have set up entry and departure terminals at either end—it just takes a lot longer to enter and exit.

I met a U.S. medical team with a traveling clinic and they are not seeing earthquake-related physical trauma but rather chronic routine issues. They had several pastors who were helping with

psychological trauma and grief. There is, as you would imagine, a deep sense of grief over the country, and yet in the midst of it all, life has gone on. You see parents braiding the hair of children, people cooking, children playing, buying, selling, all amazing, all things considered.

FURCY

I traveled to Furcy with a group of pastors and friends. It was a fun day. The clinic is fine—a few spider cracks, but nothing significant. Our nurse, Marie Marte, had the clinic up and running with about 30 people waiting for care. The administrator asked for more medications to handle the influx of people following the quake. The doctor does offer a traveling clinic to those who cannot walk to the facility.

The church has a few dislodged blocks and a few cracks, but again, nothing terribly significant. The school is fine, but the cookhouse at the school will require significant repair. The principal's house—which wasn't solid to begin with—needs to be demolished. He is living in the clinic and has asked for wood to build a room in the village cookhouse for his lodging. One class with about 40 students and two teachers was already meeting at the school.

The Farmer's Association has seed and fertilizer for the next planting season.

GUEST HOUSE

The guesthouse is up and running. Again, food and water are available but more expensive. Everyone there is okay and asked to be remembered. Some people are living in the vans on the property including drivers and interpreters who lost their homes. I spoke with two of our interpreters, Jean Claude and Joseph, who were caught in a building collapse. They survived and are well, although Jean Claude continues to



UMNS PHOTO

Sharlene Jean offers treated drinking water to a child living in a makeshift camp in Gresier, Haiti. The United Methodist Committee on Relief and partner agencies provided water treatment supplies to the camp.

experience neck problems. There were two teams there, a Baptist medical team, and a Methodist group from Illinois checking on a project near Carrefour.

FUTURE PLANS

Travel: There is no problem getting in and out of the country, nor getting around, provided that vehicles are available. The guesthouse has four vehicles.

Food and water: again, no problem except for increased costs.

Future Plans: An UMCOR/NGO consultant at the guesthouse is to work with other NGOs, and government agencies to develop a plan for UMCOR and VIM. There are plans to hire several persons to coordinate the relief/recovery efforts, work with teams, and generally organize the UM response.

From my perspective, at this point, there is little that the average VIM team can do directly in regard to the disaster. We will need to wait for updated information and plans from our jurisdictional VIM coordinator and UMCOR. In Haiti, there are more than enough people to do much of the removal work. The safe dismantling of

buildings and homes, and the skills necessary to repair and rebuild are, in many cases, beyond the skills of the average VIM team.

In the meantime, we will train and orient people through our emergency response team training and Haiti orientation sessions. The situation in Haiti will be with us for a long time. When the time comes, we'll begin to assemble teams; early teams will be selected from those with particular skills, physical abilities, and prior Haiti/international mission experience.

It is our hope to continue our work in Furcy. Mountains of Hope for Haiti, our conference mission program, is continuing to monitor the situation. It goes without saying that we should continue to pray for the people of Haiti, educate ourselves about the crisis and ways to help, and support our UMCOR and conference initiatives.

“O Lespri Sen, desann sou nou; nou gen yon misyon pou Ayiti.”

O Holy Spirit, descend on us; we have a mission for Haiti. Amen.

In faith,
Rev. Thomas Vencuss
 Wethersfield UMC,
 Wethersfield, Conn.

New GBGM Executive at City Society Dinner

Thomas Kemper, the new general secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries, will be the featured speaker at the annual dinner meeting of the United Methodist City Society at 6 p.m., May 13. Kemper, a layperson, was recently selected to lead the agency. He is the first top executive of a UM general agency from outside the United States; he assumed his new duties March 15.

The annual meeting of the City Society brings together the member churches from the Long Island East, Long Island West, Metropolitan and New York-Connecticut districts. Members from these districts are entitled to vote on the business of the society and in the election of the board of directors.

Kemper, a former missionary with strong United Methodist roots in his native Germany, has broad ecumenical and international experience. Kemper will share his vision of urban ministry and the seeds of partnership when he is introduced for the first time to the New York United Methodist community at this dinner. He is in his second four-year term as a director of the Board of Global Ministries, and also was a missionary in Brazil.

"Thomas Kemper is uniquely qualified and gifted for this position," said Bishop Bruce

R. Ough of West Ohio, board president. "His global perspective, missionary experience, sound Wesleyan theology, broad ecumenical involvement, and passion for Christ's mission will benefit the General Board of Global Ministries and the entire United Methodist Church as we advance our commitment to be a truly global movement."

"Thomas Kemper lives the true Wesleyan values of personal and social holiness and is an inspiring person," said Bishop Rosemarie Wenner of Germany. "He reminds us of our Methodist identity: We are a mission movement, combining evangelism and social work."

The dinner will be held at the Interchurch Center, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10115. A team from the Broken Builders UMC, a new church start Korean congregation, will provide the music. The dinner will be served buffet style and reservations are required. Seating will be by churches.

Tickets are \$75 per person and must be ordered by April 30; payment in advance is required to ensure your reservation. You may reserve seats by contacting Leticia Johnson at 212-870-3084, ext 4490, or by email at ljohnson@umcitysociety.org. A reservation form is also available on the NYAC website



Thomas Kemper

at: <http://www.nyac.com/events/detail/2835>. Tickets will be mailed if ordered and paid for by May 3. Otherwise, tickets can be picked up at the door.

She's "Lucky" to Start Over at Age 99

BY JIM STINSON

Consultant on Older Adult Ministry

She will be 99 in July. If she told you she was 75, you would have no reason to doubt her word. She is impeccably dressed at all times; her hair is perfectly coiffed and her nails are manicured and polished. She is striking in her appearance. What is most striking, however, is what accounts for her appearance. In one word, it is attitude.

She has many of the frailties of a person her age. Dependent on a walker and occasionally forgetful and confused, she is, nonetheless, positively inquisitive, still questioning, still willing to try new things, reveling in her painting classes and engaging with everyone she meets. I look forward to visits with her because she exudes a zest for living.

In the past few years she has given up her condo, moved to assisted living and very recently been hospitalized and subsequently spent a couple of months at the Bishop Wicke Health Center in Shelton, Conn. While she was there, her family—with her knowledge and permission—moved her to Wesley Heights.



Even though these moves were all on the same campus of the United Methodist Homes, they required upset and change to her routine.

Today, just before sitting down to write this article, her family brought her to see the new apartment for the first time. She'll be leaving the health center in a few days. True to the attitude we've come to expect from her, she said: "I can't wait to see my new apartment. I'm so lucky! Who else, at my age, has the chance to start over?"

The attitude is one of optimism, of hopefulness, of anticipation. Sound familiar? Aren't these at the very core of Christian faith? Aren't these a large part of what Jesus taught would be prevalent in the Kingdom

of God? Should these not be part and parcel of our ministry to/with older adults? Should we not be challenging them and inviting them to engage their lives armed with these faithful traits? What better way to face the uncertainties, the upheavals and the frailties that often accompany us on our journey into aging?

Jesus does not promise the kingdom of God, and the peace that passes all understanding, only to those below a certain age. He offers it to all who will accept its possibility and live accordingly—that is optimistically, hopefully and filled with anticipation of God's continuing presence in the twists and turns of our lives even to our dying moments. Our ministry to/with older adults—to be authentic—must be one of challenging them to faithfully live each day believing God still has something for them to do and to become. Anything less is not the Gospel! Anything less easily lapses into a ministry of pity and low expectations. Anything less dismisses the possibility of new life, of the chance to start over.

Connections Prove Strong in Prison Ministry

BY REV. STEVE PHILLIPS
Pleasantville UMC

“The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.”

Isaiah 50:4

What do seven Protestants, five Roman Catholics, two Muslims, two atheists, a Buddhist, a Baptist, a Rastafarian, a Pentecostal, a Seventh-day Adventist and a “seeker” have in common? Well, they are all prisoners at the Fishkill Correctional Facility in Beacon, N.Y., and they are all students in a World Religions course that I teach at the prison on Monday evenings. This course and four other weeknight classes are part of a program offered by Rising Hope. Rising Hope is an organization that gives prisoners in several New York State correctional facilities the opportunity to earn credit towards a certificate in ministry and human services.

Several other clergy from the New York Annual Conference are currently teaching in the program also, including Tilda Norberg, Gestalt pastoral care therapist; George McClain, retired elder; Lucy Jones, Reservoir UMC; Amanda Iahn, LaGrangeville UMC; Robert Walker, extension ministries; and John Collins, retired elder. This is not simply a random assortment of pastors—we are linked as part of a connectional system. Tilda, George, Mandy, John and I are connected through

the Compass Program, in which many of us are on the planning team. Bob, John and I are connected through our regular participation in a lectionary study group that gathers 18 pastors from throughout Westchester and Putnam counties in New York, and southern and west-central Connecticut. The study group, which meets every Tuesday morning in Pleasantville, has been meeting since September 2004; just after my appointment to the church. But many of you will recognize that the big common denominator here is John Collins, who can be extremely persuasive when it comes to recruiting folks to his social-action concerns.

However, involvement by our conference in Rising Hope is not limited to clergy. Laity working in the program include Bob Lukey and Deborah Moore (Katonah UMC) who are the executive director of the program, and program coordinator at the Green Haven Correctional Facility, respectively. Orlando Rodriguez (Memorial UMC in White Plains, N.Y.), who is a professor at Fordham University, also teaches at Green Haven. And I am sure that there are probably many others involved in this and other programs that serve those incarcerated in prisons.

Rising Hope is an all-volunteer organization that provides one year of college-level education to men in prison. It operates in six New York State prisons; Sing Sing, Green Haven, Arthurkill, Fishkill, Mid-Orange, and Woodbourne. Since 1995, more than 700 men have graduated with a certificate in ministry and human services. Rising Hope is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation sustained entirely

by private donations. It does not receive any government funding.

Rising Hope is free to the students with the professors volunteering their time. The students are loaned any the textbooks they need. At the end of the program, participants are told that they can discharge their debt to us by “paying it forward.” That is, they are expected to give of themselves in service to others, both while they’re in prison and after their release. The students are asked to use their newly developed academic skills and spiritual maturity to build up whatever community they find themselves in.

While the program is based upon a curriculum similar to that taught during the first year at many Christian seminaries, it is open to inmates of any faith, or those of no religious affiliation. The material is studied from an academic perspective without proselytizing. Our goal is not to tell the students what to believe, but to help them grow in their own personal faith journeys.

When asked why teaching in a correctional facility so rewarding, Bob Walker, who has taught on the undergraduate level, cited the intense interest and enthusiasm of the students. John Collins added that he loves the opportunity to show the prisoners that they have not been forgotten by those on the outside. He said it is important that Christians show a desire for restorative, not only, retributive justice.

For more information on how you and your congregation can get involved in or support Rising Hope, please check out the website at <http://www.risinghopeinc.org/>.



The House Has Landed

The new Welcome Center under construction at Camp Quinipet took a giant leap forward when a donated ranch-style house, at left in photo, was moved atop the foundation on March 10. A covered walkway links the dining hall, at right in photo, with the new structure. Volunteer work crews have been busy putting on new roofing and siding materials. Camp Director Greg Nissen plans to dedicate the new facility in June.

Certified Lay Ministers: Called to Serve

In February this column talked about the role of Certified Lay Ministers in the United Methodist Church. This month, the two Certified Lay Ministers in our conference, Lisa Bosworth and Ximena Varas, both from the Connecticut district, tell their stories.

Renata: When did you become a certified lay minister?

Lisa: I was certified in the spring of 2009.

Ximena: I was certified at the same time as Lisa at the Connecticut District conference on April 26, 2009.

Renata: What prompted your call to this ministry?

Lisa: Pastor Joan Johnson was first aware of this opportunity for service in 2005, after its appearance in the Book of Discipline 2004. She encouraged me to investigate the training and the certification process. I had already deeply sensed a call to ministry from God—a call to serve in support of church leadership (pastors) and a spiritual encouragement to congregation members.

Ximena: Certified Lay Ministry was the answer to a long time of meditation and prayer. As I talked to Rev. Heather Sinclair and my district superintendent at the time, Rev. George Englehardt, I realized that this was a path God wanted for me.

Renata: Briefly describe



the course of study. (Responses for both Lisa and Ximena were similar)

There are four CLM study modules. Module One emphasizes teamwork and tailoring that teamwork to the specific needs of the congregation served. Module Two outlines the congregational approach to worship services, including varied acts of praise and worship, and training and resources toward preaching. Using the teamwork approach, it focuses on faith, evangelism, membership, and discipleship. Module Three explains leadership and administration, outlining different kinds of churches and related ministry planning training. Module Four, utilizing many recommended outside resources, summarizes the history of the United Methodist Church, John Wesley's basic teachings (such as the "Ordinances of God"), the United Methodist sacraments as initiated by Jesus Christ, and closes with recommendations toward the CLM candidate's actual certification ceremony.

Renata: What is your current role as a certified lay minister?

Lisa: Currently I'm doing

many things—I've taken over our church's responsibility regarding worship services at a local nursing home, and I am most grateful for the opportunity to preach and conduct the worship service at my church once a month (on the other Sundays I am in music ministry). I research toward and conduct the weekly adult Sunday school class and have spearheaded community outreach events. The position is still relatively new, and I find it exciting to be a bit of a trailblazer in finding ways to fill in gaps, being as supportive as I can of the Pastor as well as our congregation and community.

Ximena: As Lay Minister, I am the "pastor's assistant". My role changes depending on the needs of the congregation. This includes visitation, helping with worship, teaching age level classes, and serving as Methodist Youth Fellowship coordinator. I sometimes lead the Sunday service at the church, as well as in nursing homes nearby.

Renata: What would be your advice to a certified lay speaker who is considering becoming a certified lay minister?

Lisa: Pray, pray, pray. Take this commissioning very seriously; God has used lay people in mighty ways throughout the history of our denomination. Take advantage of the excellent reading materials recommended by the training modules. Be flexible. Know that



**Lisa
Bosworth**



**Ximena
Varas**

What's a Certified Lay Minister do?

They preach, engage in vital caring ministries to the congregation, and assist with leadership. They sometimes assist with multi-point charges, or in larger churches, can serve as a pastoral associate or as part of a pastoral team. They provide a witness in the community to the missional call of the UMC.

a fluid sense of resourcefulness and creativity are gifts from God, an encouragement to the church, a help to the Pastor, and an opportunity to experience a wonderful sense of fulfillment.

Ximena: Certified lay ministry is more than a title. It is a lifestyle! If you are a certified lay speaker and you feel that God is moving you in this direction, talk with your pastor and your district superintendent. Ask others to pray with, and for you, but most of all, listen to God!

Could God be calling you?

Grants Available For Immigration Advocacy

The General Commission on Religion and Race of the United Methodist Church is making available more than \$250,000 in grant dollars from the CORR Action Fund, funded by the Minority Group Self-Determination Fund. Between eight and 15 new grants will be awarded—up to \$40,000 each—to programs and projects that provide action and advocacy efforts to assure the rights of racial ethnic

immigrants and refugees. The length of the project period is one year, beginning January 1, 2011. The deadline for applications is June 15, 2010.

"These grants will assist church congregations and non-profit organizations in reaching out to assist those in our community who have suffered the double indignity of being mistreated because they are immigrants, and

being mistreated because they are racial ethnic immigrants," said Bishop Minerva Carcaño, vice president of G CORR and chair of the UMC Task Force on Immigration.

To learn more about the CORR Action Fund, grant application, or its requirements, please visit: <http://www.gcorr.org/getinvolved/correctionfund>.

Teens Playing With A Loaded Gun

Let's face facts, your parents had it easier. Back then, good parenting advice just needed to include "always wear clean underwear" and "never talk to strangers." Wouldn't they be astonished to be thrust into childrearing in 2010? You probably don't get too much of an argument about clean underwear, but talking to strangers has become a sought-after activity and it's startlingly easy.

A new web site called Chat Roulette has become very popular among teens and young adults. The concept of the site is simple: turn on your web cam, press a button, and be instantly connected to another random user. The site says that you need to be at least 16 to use it, but there is no way to confirm a user's age. In fact, you don't even have to create an account or enter any information at all. Just click, and you're face to face with . . . who knows who?

On one hand, our youth should be applauded for always working to break down social barriers. In fact, a 17-year-old Russian high school student created the site. While the desire to connect with people beyond one's own social class is admirable, not everybody comes to Chat Roulette with the best of intentions, or even a wardrobe. The site says it doesn't

NOTES from the Youth Guy

Neal Bowes

tolerate the broadcasting of pornographic images, but it has no policing. There is a report button that users can click, but by that point they have already seen and heard offensive material, which abounds on the site. It only took me four clicks to come across something I wouldn't want our kids to be exposed to.

It is not possible for us to completely insulate our teenagers from all the unsavory content on the internet, but we can certainly discourage them from seeking it out. The day might come when Chat Roulette becomes better monitored and filtered, but until then, it is not a teen-friendly web site.

Regardless of the venue for online interaction, teens need to be reminded to never share personal information online. Have an ongoing open dialog with your teenager about his or her online activity, and keep the computer in a common area of the house.

Opening for Young Adult Minister

Community United Methodist Church on Long Island is looking for an entrepreneurial pioneer to build a program for young adults, ages 20 to 40. Initially, the minister will help develop and lead a new Sunday evening worship service, and organize social and spiritual growth opportunities among the young adults in the congregation. The position is available immediately, and will require 8 to 10 hours per week.

CUMC is located in Massapequa, N.Y., and has a growing number of young adults, many families with young children. Membership is roughly 400 persons with average Sunday attendance at 120. The church is seeking to develop a solid foundation for a vibrant young adult ministry.

The ideal candidate will have experience leading worship, working in a church with young adults and experience with Christian education or spiritual formation/covenant groups. Candidates who can play piano and/or guitar well enough to lead singing are preferred. Please email a resume and cover letter to massapcumc@aol.com, or fax to (516) 541-1694.

3 New Doctorates Offered at Drew

Drew Theological School is offering three Doctor of Ministry programs that will begin in Fall 2010. The new programs are in Congregational Growth and Community Development; Mind-Body-Spirit-Healing for Congregations and Clergy; and Global Online. Applications may be submitted online by July 1 at www.drew.edu/theo/apply, or learn more at www.drew.edu/theo/newyork.

The Madison, N.J., school also awards 100 percent tuition scholarships for United Methodists who are admitted to the Master of Divinity program with undergraduate GPAs of 3.5 or above. For information, go to www.drew.edu/theo/umscholarship.

Students may also earn a Certification in Spiritual Formation at Drew. The certification program will develop the skills to provide spiritual leadership to individuals and in within the local church. Classes are available online and in an intensive format. Learn more at www.drew.edu/theo/certification.

Scouts to Gather In Times Square

A call to gather in Times Square on July 31 has gone out for all scouts—past, present and future—as the entire NYC scouting family celebrates 100 years of scouting. Scouts and their families will be able to take part in a special New York City-style show and the nationwide broadcast of "A Shining Light Across America" from the National Scout Jamboree.

Scouting units are being invited to visit New York City and its numerous attractions the weekend of July 30–August 1 and enjoy special access and discounts at museums, ballparks, restaurants, and city parks. Sign up for email updates at <http://www.bsa-gnyc.org/TimesSquare>.

For questions please contact: Julio Garcia, program director, Greater New York Councils, at 212-651-2877, or jgarcia@bsa-gnyc.org. For more information on the yearlong celebration, go to: <http://www.scouting.org/100years>.

So No Bunny Goes Hungry

Youth from the United Methodist Church of Port Washington, N.Y., assembled lunch, breakfast and snack bunny bags to donate to the food outreach project at one of the other churches in town. The bags were decorated by the youth, and the congregation made donations for enough food items to fill 12 lunch bags, 10 breakfast bags and 10 snack bags. The teens then shopped and assembled the bags.





The second United Methodist house built by the LIE District was dedicated March 27. Les Scheinfeld, above right, of the Suffolk County chapter of Habitat, introduces homeowner Jessica Saenz, Gene Maney, and their children.

Reality Sinks In Slowly for Habitat Family

March 27 was a “surreal” day for Jessica Saenz and her husband Gene Maney. That’s the day the couple, and their two children, Angelique and Adrian, received the keys to their new home in Bellport, N.Y. The home was the second United Methodist house built by the Long Island East District through Habitat for Humanity of Suffolk County.

“It’s an amazing day,” said Maney. “It hasn’t sunken in.” Saenz said the experience was life changing, “I can’t wait to get settled in and do some gardening.”

About 60 people crowded into the five-room home just south of Montauk Highway for the dedication. Les Scheinfeld, associate executive director for Suffolk Habitat, introduced the family and various other speakers. Rev. Chuck Van Houten, Centerport UMC, offered the prayers.

The LIE churches and their corporate partner, Citi Group, each donated \$42,500 to build the home. Frito-Lay also gave \$2,500 in addition to providing the dishwasher, washer and dryer. Any extra funds raised by the district will be applied to building yet another Habitat home.

Ethel Abbott, Centerport UMC, once again organized the volunteer efforts for the district. About a dozen churches sent work crews to construct the two-story home. In addition, several churches also helped furnish the various rooms in the home; First UMC in Amityville provided items for the bathrooms; Centerport donated kitchen equipment and children’s bedding, and Hempstead UMC gave cleaning supplies.

After the ceremony, the

gathering moved into the family’s new kitchen to enjoy brunch. But Angelique, 10, and Adrian, 7, were busy trying out new beanbag chairs they had just received. “I just love my new room. It’s blue. I can’t wait to get a bed for my new room,” Angelique exclaimed.

Individuals and churches may still contribute to this district-wide project by sending a check made out to the LIE District, and writing “Habitat House” on the memo line.



Angelique and Adrian get comfortable in their new Bellport home.

Recent New Appointments

Rev. Johnny Ceasar
Associate,
Vanderveer Park
(Brooklyn, NY)/LIW

Rev. Ronald Cox
Catskill/Catskill-Hudson

Rev. Leslie Duroseau
Southampton/LIE

Rev. Gia Hall
Trinity (Coram, NY)/LIE

Rev. Tisha Jermin
Norwalk/NY-Connecticut

Rev. Kwang-Il Kim
Lakeville & Sharon/
Connecticut

Rev. Koonae Lee
Stratford/Connecticut

Rev. Austin Park
Long Hill (Trumbull, CT)/
Connecticut

Rev. Larry Pickens
Memorial (White Plains, NY)
/Metropolitan
*Moving from Northern
Illinois Conference*

Rev. Ernesto Sanchez
Patchogue/LIE

Rev. Elizabeth Schrader
Woodbury/Connecticut

Rev. Bette Sohm
New Paltz/Catskill-Hudson

Pastor Jody Spiak
Milton-Marlboro/
Catskill-Hudson

Rev. Thomas Theilmann
Trinity-Boscobel
(Buchanan, NY)
NY-Connecticut



PHOTO BY TOM WILSON

Bishop Jeremiah Park, standing far right, preaches during the joint 200th anniversary celebration for the Islip and Bay Shore churches. The panoramic photo was created by a computer software program from about 10 regular images.

Together Again—Celebrating 200 Years

It seems only fitting that two Long Island churches that began as one in 1810 should come together to celebrate their 200th anniversary. And that's exactly what Islip UMC and Bay Shore UMC did on March 20. Bishop Jeremiah Park offered the message at the joint celebration that was held in a Bay Shore restaurant in order to accommodate all those who wanted to attend.

The event began with lunch and a presentation of the history of the churches that included a slide show created by Beth DeCarbo, Bay Shore UMC historian.

Pastors Doug Madlon of Islip and Sungmu Lee of Bay Shore led worship along with Long Island East District Superintendent Adrienne

Brewington, and the bishop. Six previous pastors—Tom Goodhue, Juanita Middlebrook, Betty Lines, Richard Parker, Noel Koestline, and Joel Warner—were recognized for their service. Daniel Cafiero and Paoulina Rubinson, music directors at Bay Shore and Islip, respectively, provided the music for the service.

The day concluded with cake and coffee, but both congregations will hold additional events through the year. The celebration was organized by Tom Wilson, Jan Corwin, Eileen DiGiovanna, Pat Dymek, Fred Dymek, Lois Fallon, Ken Gessek, Joanne Gorman Christine Hoff, Sungmu Lee, Doug Madlon, Diane Timmonney, and Melody Thomas.

According to the history presented at the celebration, Rev. Henry Redstone, a circuit rider, preached to the Methodist Society from Bay Shore and Islip on April 12, 1810. The first Methodist Church was built in 1828, and by 1849 the congregation had outgrown the building. It was sold as a private residence and moved off the property. A new larger church building was erected on the lot.

In 1850, Bay Shore members decided to form a separate class within the church. But in September 1856, it was decided to organize two Methodist churches, and by early 1860, the church formally divided with 104 members in Bay Shore and 87 in Islip.

OBITUARIES

Bettie Lee Carothers Clarke

Bettie Lee Carothers Clarke, wife of Rev. Philip A. C. Clarke, died March 12, in Portland, Maine, at the age of 78. Rev. Clarke served in the New York Annual Conference at the Park Avenue UMC in Manhattan for 40 years before retiring in 1999.

In addition to her husband, Mrs. Clarke is survived by two daughters: Terrie Lee Purdy, San Marcos, Calif., and Karen Lee Sharpless, Marietta, Ga.; a sister, Joan Carothers Murphine, Orange, Calif., and three grandchildren.

A memorial service is planned for August 5 at the First UMC, Schenectady, N.Y., where her late father, Dr. J. Edward Carothers served for many years. Burial will be on the same day at the Clarke family plot in Cobleskill.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to: Rev. Philip A.C. Clarke, 45 Easter Promenade, # 9J, Portland, ME 04101. Memorial donations may be made to: Portland Public Library Reach for the Stars Campaign, 5 Monument Sq., Portland, ME 04101.

Rev. Dr. Duncan Trueman

Rev. Dr. Duncan Trueman, whose ministry spanned 55 years, died March 9, at age 85. He lived in Warwick, N.Y., and had served N.Y. churches in Livingston Manor, Parksville, Beaverkill and Lew Beach in Sullivan County, and Goshen and New Milford in Orange County.

A graduate of Hofstra University and Drew University School of Theology, Trueman taught at the Warwick School for Boys, and then at mid-Orange Correctional Facility.

He served with the 106th Infantry Division in World War II, landing on Utah Beach on D-Day and fighting in the Battle of the Bulge. Trueman received the combat infantry badge. In retirement, he spent time counseling veterans.

Survivors include his wife of 62 years, Grace; son Steven Trueman; daughter Anna Trueman; and sister Harriette Hart; brother-in-law, Rev. Robert Reiners and his wife, Elizabeth; sister-in-law Margaret Reiners; and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of his life was held March 13 at the Warwick UMC. Memorial gifts may be sent to the New Milford UMC Building Fund; the church address is: P.O. Box 137, New Milford, N.Y. 10959.

Rev. Evelyn S. Newman

Rev. Evelyn S. Newman, a retired member of the New York Annual Conference, died March 9, in Marietta, Ga., at the age of 83.

Rev. Newman, who was a longtime resident of Setauket, N.Y., served Long Island congregations in Smithtown, Hicksville and at First UMC in Amityville; and in extension ministry at New York City's Riverside Church as minister of pastoral care and social services. She was also a chaplain at Stony Brook University in Stony Brook, N.Y.

Rev. Newman is survived by daughter, Elizabeth Lunde of Long Island; and two sons, Peter Newman, Marshall's Creek, Penn.; and David Newman of Marietta, Ga.; six grandchildren and a sister, Dr. Arline Peace, Grove, Okla.

A memorial service was held March 20 at the Stony Brook Community Church, Stony Brook, N.Y. Memorial donations may be made to: Concern for Independent Living, Inc., PO Box 358, Medford, NY 11763; or to the Bushkill Outreach Program, PO Box 103, Bushkill, PA 18324.