



Confirmation students balance a light weight dowl on their fingers and attempt to lower it to the floor. The exercise encourages cooperation and communication skills. The exercise was part of the third overnight retreat of the Albany District Confirmation Class. See story page 7.

Bishop announces shifts in Albany area district supervision

Bishop Susan W. Hassinger, interim bishop of the Albany Episcopal Area issued the following announcement for both Wyoming and Troy Annual Conferences.

Some time ago, the Rev. Jan Marsi, Superintendent of the Oneonta District for the past seven years, had indicated her desire to be appointed as a pastor to a local church. (A district superintendent's appointment is year-to-year, as is the appointment of every elder. A superintendents' term, as per the *United Methodist Book of Discipline* is six years, and may be extended for up to two additional years.)

After prayerful consideration, the Albany Area Cabinet and I have honored that request, and Rev. Marsi's new appointment was announced on Sunday, Feb. 21. That decision required further prayerful discernment regarding superintending responsibility for the Oneonta District of the Wyoming Conference.

At the same time the cabinet and I were engaged in these discussions, it became apparent that the new conference in Upper New York was facing potential financial concerns. Those working on recommending budgets for the second half of 2010 and all of 2011 had made a commitment that a balanced budget would be prepared that would not increase local church ministry shares/apportionments for the second half of 2010.

In a time of deep change any shift in the system becomes an opportunity to ask how we might become more missional. Hence, Rev. Marsi's decision became an opportunity to reconsider how superintendents will lead and supervise in ways that are both more missional and less costly. To that end two things are happening: 1) a task force to explore superintendency; 2) reduction of the number of districts.

In light of that reality, Bishop Matthews and I agreed that we would consider the reduction of one district each within the current Albany Episcopal Area and the New York West Episcopal Area. Such a reduction would not be the last word on district configurations in the new conference, but would be a response to some of the current needs.

A task force for the new Upper New York Conference, convened by Jan Marsi, has been exploring what districts might look like in the new conference, based on how superintendency might best be carried out in order to move towards the vision and mission and

Upper New York Information Sessions

Informational Sessions on the new conference in Upper New York and what it means for Troy Conference clergy and laity in New York will be held in mid-March. There will be three sessions for clergy, and three for laity.

All persons are invited; pastors, lay leaders, lay members, staff/p parish relations chairs, chairs of finance, trustees, church council chairs and church treasurers are particularly encouraged to attend.

Laity sessions:

- Thursday, March 11, 7 to 9 p.m. at McKownville United Methodist Church, 1565 Western Ave., Albany.
- Saturday, March 13, 1 to 3 p.m. at Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church, 175 Fifth Ave.
- Monday, March 15, 7 to 9 p.m., at Plattsburgh United Methodist Church, 127 Beekman St.

Clergy sessions:

- Thursday, March 11, 1:30 to 4 p.m., at McKownville United Methodist Church, 175 Fifth Ave., Albany.
- Saturday, March 13, 8:30 to noon, at Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church, 175 Fifth Ave.
- Monday, March 15, 1:30 to 4 p.m., at Plattsburgh United Methodist Church, 127 Beekman St.

The clergy session will include a question and answer period for retired clergy, and Pension Officer Bill Lasher will be on hand to answer pension-related questions.

For more information about these sessions, contact your district superintendent's office.

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I wonder as I wander ...

Lighting the way to Christ



Bishop Hassinger

In early January, the extended area cabinet, including district superintendents, conference minister and director of connectional ministries, communications staff persons, and the lay leader from one of the conferences, gathered to consider where and how God is leading us in these next months before the current conferences move into the new conferences. We were moving towards Epiphany, the time when we celebrate the Christ child's recognition by the visitors from the East, a time when we give thanks for those Wise Ones who moved out by a different way, carrying with them the hope they had received from the visit with that infant in whom they had recognized God's very presence.

We considered, as we worshiped together and sought God's guidance, where were the bright stars among us that were lighting the way to the Christ, and to the future. We reflected on those pastors and congregations and communities where new moving outward of the gospel message was happening, or where we were seeing the potential for that to happen. As part of that prayerful consideration, we identified characteristics of those "star-bright" situations. Those included:

- Ability (or potential) to think missionally instead of just institutionally
- Ability (or potential) to act adaptively as well as technically
- Have gifts for looking outside of self to the broader mission field
- Have a sense of deep calling to be in mission
- Have energy to pursue that sense of mission
- Strongly supportive of the United Methodist Church
- Have a relationship with God that forms you and helps you see God in others
- Ability to live in uncertainty about the future with flexibility

As you look at those characteristics, how do you, how does your congregation, exemplify them, live them out? Are you Wise Ones carrying the light of Christ into the community in new ways? Are you passionate about how your worship is inviting of others, and overflows with the joy and love of Christ? Is there an eagerness to share that light not only in the community surrounding you, with all sorts and conditions of people?

There are a number of settings that give us hope and joy. For them we give thanks to God, and express appreciation and encouragement for the future. Unfortunately we also heard of those places where congregations are struggling, or have focused more on survival for the sake of those within the current body of believers rather than adapting and reaching out to new people, or have faced challenges with buildings that no longer meet 21st Century needs or communities that have been declining in population.

That time leading to Epiphany also included seeing an interview from "theoosze.tv." Spencer Burke talked with Phyllis Tickle, scholar and author of *The Great Emergence: How the Church Is Changing and Why*. Tickle suggested that mainline denominations have approximately 18-months of "open window" in which to shift the ways in which they function. Part of that shift means welcoming and encouraging "emergent Christianity" alongside the traditional forms. If we cannot encourage the new, even fund the new, while keeping traditional forms for those who desire it, the future is dim. Tickle does not see these shifts as "terrible," but exciting, as part of God's ongoing transforming of the church, a transformation that has been happening across the centuries of Christian history.

I initially wrote this column in the waning days of Epiphany—a season of focusing on mission and outreach. By time you read this in *The Connection*, we are in Lent—a season of focusing on what it means to follow Jesus on the way of discipleship. As part of your Lenten consideration, I ask each congregation to consider:

In what ways does your congregation/your leadership exemplify these characteristics?

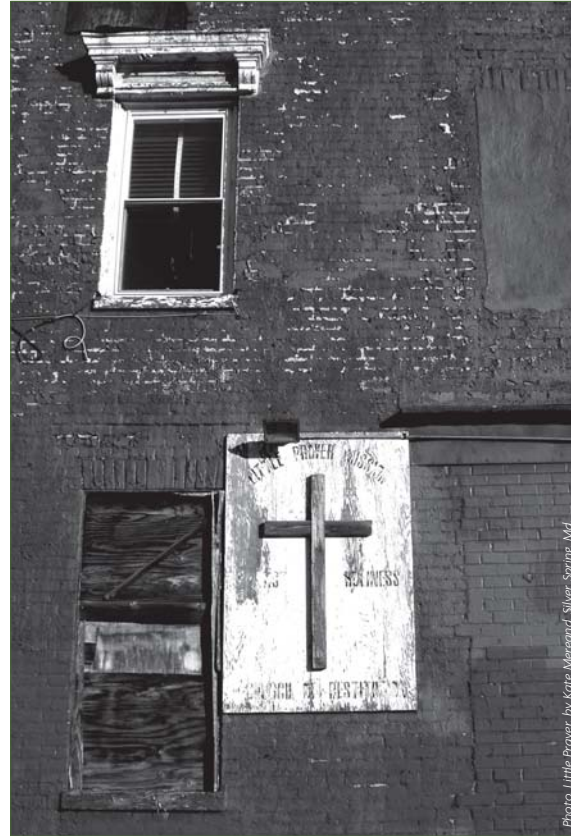
What is God's desire for you in relation to these characteristics, as you look to the future?

What is your desire in response to that?

Take time in your council meetings, or in a forum, to prayerfully consider these questions.

I invite you to respond to this article. You may e-mail your response to me or to your district superintendent. Share your feedback with us. Share your stories of how God is working within and among you.

It is the commitment of the cabinet to encourage and support pastors and congregations that are stepping out, re-imagining their roles and life together, in ways that communicate the gospel of Christ to this generation.



Growing in faith together

By Holly Nye

This Lent, I invite you to reflect on two simple statements.

The first is the vision of the New England Annual Conference:

Transformed by the Holy Spirit,

united in trust,
we will proclaim Christ
boldly to the world.

The second comes from the new conference formation in Upper York:

Our vision (intended outcome): to live in the way of Jesus Christ and to be God's love with our neighbors in all places.

Wherever your church is located, both of these guiding visions have something to offer.

Both remind us of our connection to God in Christ, and our connection to one another—our shared life, which leads us to reach beyond ourselves in ministry.

In your congregation, how are you "united in trust" and growing in faith together? How are you learning to live in Jesus' way? In what ways is your faith community being transformed by the Spirit?

Are you taking time together this Lent, prayerfully seeking God's vision for your congregation? Are you reflecting together on how you are called to proclaim Christ and to embody God's love for your neighbors?

I have appreciated hearing some of the stories of church conferences where neighbors have been invited to share. They remind us of the many ways God yearns to touch the world through our presence with others.

This spring is in some ways a bittersweet time. Even as many of us experience the loss of the connection that has bound us together as Troy Conference, we are called to ministry in this moment and toward a future in which God will speak in new and wondrous ways.

As we gather in districts on May 8, and in conference on May 22—and as we gather in new configurations, such as the New England Mission Fair in April and the Upper New York information sessions in March—may we take time to testify to the ways that God is calling us to a future of hope and promise. We share that promise, wherever the future leads us.

As Paul reminds us in a reading for the second Sunday in Lent:

I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back. (Philippians 3:14, *The Message*)

Nye is the Troy Conference Minister.



Holly Nye



Spiritual Formation

By Evie Doyon



An Elephant in the Room?

Countdown to conference changes... Teams have been meeting and planning; making some decisions and holding off on others; asking who or what have we forgotten, where does this piece fit, can we resolve this now or will it happen later; being careful to be inclusive and welcoming.

Here's a question: Is there an elephant in the room? Or two or three? Are there some things no one has brought up because they might be controversial or emotionally charged and it seems safer to ignore or avoid them?

Well, I see an elephant. In the conferences that are about to be formed, there are folks all over the spiritual spectrum. Some of the differences may seem "as far as the east is from the west" or, to put it another way, not likely to come together. Is it safer not to talk about this than to bring it up?

I say, let's talk about it. Let's explore the possibility that this is exactly a place where God would like us to do some transition work.

We like to use stereotypes—oh those Troy Conference folks, they walk to the beat of a different drum, rabble-rousers and activists, right? Isn't this an image that we have heard used to describe us? And haven't we used it ourselves? Is it accurate? Well, yes and no. It might describe some of us but certainly not all of us. And certainly, we have stereotyped images for folks in the other conferences, too.

A lot of conflict in the church is due to differences in the ways we express our spirituality or faith. Richard Foster has written a book that was very helpful for me in gaining a better understanding of this. In *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith*, (Harper San Francisco 1998), Foster describes 6 traditions of Christianity or faith streams.

Even though each of us will tend to identify predominantly with one or two of the streams, each stream is to be honored or celebrated because all of them flow from the source of Jesus Christ. Foster describes Jesus as the fulfillment or embodiment of all 6 streams. Very briefly, these are the streams:

- Contemplative: the prayer-filled life
- Holiness: the virtuous life
- Charismatic: the Spirit-empowered life
- Evangelical: the Word-centered life
- Social Justice: the compassionate life
- Incarnational: the sacramental life

Just as streams in nature flow into greater bodies of water, the streams of Christian faith must flow together into one Body. Damming up or trying to block off any of the streams would be detrimental to the larger body. For example, persons in the contemplative stream in the extreme might be enticed to withdraw from this world and live only in a place of mystery and mysticism. They might try to block off the social justice stream but they need some of its water to keep them engaged in the needs of others.

These streams are in us individually but are also in our congregations and annual conferences. A congregation might have a dominant stream of social justice but it must also provide ways to engage folks in prayer and spiritual disciplines. A conference might have streams that are trying to dam up each other rather than finding ways for the streams to flow together. If you've ever witnessed hotly contested debate at annual conference, you'll recognize this.

If your curiosity has been peaked, please get the book and explore it so that you can find your predominant stream and explore the ones that seem less like you. You might consider doing this in a small group or in your congregation. Your group may gain insight into stress areas or past conflicts. Being able to name these may be an aid in bringing about reconciliation—an important part of our calling as the Body of Christ.

Understanding the streams will also help us to name the elephant in the room and show it the door. As we move into new conferences, it will be important to recognize our faith stream differences and not perceive them as threats to be blocked, but to see them as places where we can learn to flow together as one body as we work toward Christian unity.

Outreach Transformed

Does your church have a Food Shelf or offer a Community Meal? Are you involved in other outreach activities that engage folks with members of the community? Have you discovered that there are some individuals who will readily say, 'sure, I'll help,' and there are others who know they should but hesitate or find an excuse not to?

For some of us, this sort of work comes easily and naturally; for others of us, it takes a strong effort. I would suggest that these differences are not good or bad. We are created differently and respond differently. One person may serve at the food shelf and leave the experience fully energized about having made a difference, another person having worked at the same food shelf may leave discouraged and distraught about what she saw. Two people in the very same place may have very different experiences.



Evie Doyon

When volunteers come to the food shelf, help out, and leave, they have fulfilled a task, done a good deed, and helped another person. They may feel uplifted or discouraged. They may or may not be aware of God in this activity. How can we transform these good deeds from social action or humanitarian efforts to Christian practice?

Do the food shelves in our churches look and operate like community food shelves? Whether serving in a community food shelf or a church's, when a volunteer is recruited to serve, the hands-on task and expectations of the worker are probably reviewed. They'll learn guidelines about how often a person can visit the food shelf and how much food a person or family can have. They'll know to arrive at 2:30 to make sure the pantry is stocked, open the door at 3, close it at 5, clean up, and lock the door when leaving. Often the guidelines are posted visibly in case the worker should forget any of them. What could make a church food shelf different from a community food shelf?

Can the food shelf or outreach team be transformed into a small group?

Here are some suggestions:

Rather than recruit folks to work at the food shelf, invite them to be part of a small group whose service role is to operate the food shelf but whose purpose is to grow in relationship with God and community.

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New England to continue camping covenant with UCC

By Sandra Brands

Twenty years ago, Troy Conference United Methodists and Vermont United Church of Christ members enter into a covenant to provide Christian camping experiences to the people of Northeastern New York and Vermont, eventually establishing Covenant Hills Christian Camp near Cabot, Vt.

As Vermont United Methodists prepare to become part of the New England Conference, a new covenant between United Methodists and United Church of Christ members is being drafted.

"With the dissolution of Troy Annual Conference and the re-alignment of Vermont to the New England Annual Conference, we need to revisit the covenant so it reflects these new realities," said the Rev. David Murphy, former Director of Camping for Troy Conference.

The new covenant between the New England Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church (UMC) and the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC) and will be submitted to both conference sessions for approval.

"This is a successor document [to the original covenant]," said the Rev. Jim McPhee, Director of Connectional Ministries for The New England Annual Conference. "It outlines our mutual understandings of the [covenant]—who is responsible for what and our understanding of how the UCC and UMC folks share in the ministry; the property and the committees."

McPhee said that the shared UMC-UCC camping ministry is a new experience for the New England Conference, one that he has appreciated. "I've gotten more familiar with the Covenant Hills ministry—it's great. For instance, the UCC conference contributes approximately half the summer campers and the staff. It's really a very dynamic ministry with people coming together around the ministry itself. There isn't a lot of reference to the denominational structure beyond what makes sense."

The camp will be owned by the New England Conference as part of the distribution of conference assets when Troy Conference is dissolved. In 1989, when the original covenant came into being, the Vermont Conference of the UCC contributed \$25,000 to the creation of Covenant Hills, and under the terms of the original covenant and its successor, that money would be returned without interest to the Vermont UCC should the camp be dissolved.

But the camp will continue its ministry, a ministry McPhee says is unique outreach primarily to children and youth.

"On a lot of levels, we have people throughout our church who have had their formative faith experiences in camp," he said. "In fact, our bishop, Bishop [Peter] Weaver, testifies to the power of camping experience in his early life in what's now the Western Pennsylvania Conference.

"Being in a residential setting, being in an outdoors setting, coming together with a variety of people in churches—



forging new friendships, having a practical experience of one's faith with other people in a natural environment—is a very rich ministry—often camping ministries are the most significant faith formation ministries," he said.

Murphy said that the covenant came about originally when he determined, as director of camping, that if camping in Vermont was to survive, "we needed a stronger church population base to make it viable. At that time, the UCC had sold their camp and they were struggling to run a camping program without a site."

After talking with the Vermont UCC director of camping, Murphy said they started offering some joint programs at Camp Mississquoi, the UMC camp in Vermont at the time.

The alternative, he said, was to lose

Camp Mississquoi. And Covenant Hills would not have been built without the support and cooperation of the United Church of Christ.

"It's been a great marriage," Murphy said. "Together we are able to provide Christian Education in the out-of-doors that has stunning effects on the young people and adults of both conferences. A week of camp for a camper is equivalent to a full year of Sunday school. We model Christian family and love. We demonstrate how to live a Christian life in the real world. We separate kids from their usual environment of TV, cell phones, video games, peer influences and show them an alternative way to live with the love, forgiveness and guidance of Jesus.

"It is one of the best things that Troy Conference and the UCC have done,"

Camping news

Help plan Senior High Camp at Skye Farm, July 4 to 10

Skye Farm is assembling a group of clergy and laity to plan a Senior High Leadership Development Camp for the week of July 4 through 10. The camp will feature exciting adventure programming, mixed with in depth Bible Study. The model for this camp has been used successfully in both the New England and Western New York Conferences. If you are interested in helping with the planning of this camp, contact Executive Director, David Johnston, at skyeformed@logical.net.

Summer camping brochures available on-line

The Skye Farm summer brochure is now available on-line at www.skyefarmcamp.org. Printed brochures will be available soon. Skye Farm Director, David Johnston, is now visiting churches to talk about the ministry offered at Skye Farm. This could be done during the sermon portion of the Sunday service or at a special event. To invite David to your church please call (518) 494-7170 or e-mail him at skyeformed@logical.net.

The Covenant Hills Christian Camp brochure is also available on-line at <http://www.covenanthillsvt.com>.

Campers Donate to Worthy Causes

Skye Farm campers in 2009 donated funds to two non-profit organizations. As a result, a check for \$400 was recently sent to Project Chacocente USA, which helps those in poverty in Latin America and a check for \$1,018.75 to Heifer International, which helps empower the poor to fight poverty and hunger.

2010 staff applications now being accepted

Staff applications for paid and volunteer positions at Skye Farm Camp are being accepted for the 2010 summer season. All staff and volunteers will have reference checks, background checks and training. Applications can be downloaded at www.skyefarmcamp.org.

Shhhh! It's Silent Auction time ...

It is time to get ready for the Youth Service Fund (YSF) Silent Auction hosted by the Conference Council on Youth Ministries at the Troy Annual Conference Session, May 22 at Christ United Methodist Church, 54 Bay St., Glens Falls, N.Y. Youth are seeking donations for the auction, especially handmade items such as baby quilts and afghans; humorous items such as "Wash

Away Your Sins" hand soap; useful items such as books and devotional baskets; artistic items such as photographs or paintings; and novelty items such as collectible Happy Meal toy sets. Help youth raise money for YSF! Donate an item to the Silent Auction by bringing an item to the youth table on May 22.

Questions? Contact Sue Petrosino at suzieym@aol.com.

Classified

Interim Pastor

Seeking Interim Pastor for two small rural churches in central Vermont while pastor is on Spiritual Growth leave. We are seeking a candidate who is excited about doing ministry in creative ways that go beyond the traditional ideas of "church." Responsibilities include pastoral care, worship, visitation, small group leadership, mission projects and fund raising. Terms of employment—approximately May 9, 2010 through September 3, 2010. Honorarium for Preaching & Pastoral Care \$3,000. Housing Allowance \$3,000. Inquiries should be directed to Lucinda Clark at lucindac@myfairpoint.net.

Deputy General Secretary, GBGM

The General Board of Global Ministries has retained the services of The Novak Consulting Group to recruit for the position of Deputy General Secretary. Information regarding the position can be found at <http://thenovakconsulting-group.com/global-ministries>.

Communications Corner

For over seven years, Troy Conference has provided free web sites and a console management system to its churches, but as the conference transforms into its new entities, those web sites will no longer be available. Churches hosting their sites at troyconference.org will need to move to a new web provider before July 1.

There are two parts to consider when creating a web site: the web design service and the web page host provider.

Web design software can range from Open Source Console Management Systems (CMS), which are available as free downloads, to sophisticated CMS templates, available for a fee. CMS programs offer users the ability to add text, photographs, graphics and other multimedia components to build a dynamic web site.

United Methodist Communications offers the following suggestions for Open Source CMS systems:

- Drupal (<http://drupal.org/>)
- Joomla (<http://joomla.org/>)
- Plone (<http://plone.org/>)
- Web-Empowered Church (TYPO3) (<http://www.webempoweredchurch.org/>)
- Wordpress (<http://wordpress.org/>)

Each of these programs varies in its degree of difficulty to master and its flexibility with dynamic content. Some provide online support and how-to manuals or tutorials. All (with the exception of Wordpress) will require a hosting service to publish your web pages to the Internet. Generally, you will need to register your domain name and set up email accounts, but these may be included with the hosting service you choose (see below).

Web or template-based CMS programs for website design and development that are very easy to use and require little or no technical experience. Generally these also include hosting, domain name registration and email accounts in the monthly fee for the services. Options here include:

- ACS Technologies Extend Platform (<http://www.extendplatform.com>)
- E-zekiel (<http://umc.e-zekiel.com>)
- Connecting Members (<http://connectingmembers.com>)
- Clover Sites (<http://cloversites.com>)

Pricing ranges from as little as \$12 per month (E-zekiel) to more than \$100 per month depending upon the services and options you select. Most allow you to upgrade as your Web ministry needs expand. To explore a more comprehensive list of CMS solutions for churches, visit the Great Church Websites page at <http://www.greatchurchwebsites.org> and select the "Choose a CMS" tab.

Hosting Options:

If the website design option you choose does not include hosting, then you'll need to secure this from a reputable service. Most hosting services will also provide domain name registration and email accounts. Key things to look for when selecting a hosting service for your church's website are:

- Reliability or "up" time at 99.9 percent
- Provides redundant connectivity
- High security protocols
- Server space of 1 GB or more
- Data transfer rates of 300 Mbps or better
- Allows virtual hosting of your domain
- FTP access
- 24/7 customer support
- Monthly site traffic reports
- Some hosting services that churches are using include:
 - Christian Web Host (<http://www.christianwebhost.com>)
 - General Board of Global Ministries (<http://gbgm-umc.org/churches>). The latter provides free server space up to 5 MB, but offers no support
 - Go Daddy (<http://www.godaddy.com>)
 - Ministry Web (<http://ministryweb.org>)
 - Network Solutions (<http://networksolutions.com>)
 - Our Church (<http://www.ourchurch.com>)
 - Ready Hosting (<http://readinghosting.com>)

Read more about United Methodist Communications web ministry suggestions and consider signing up for a Web Ministry course on-line by visiting www.umcom.org.

For support or assistance, contact Sandra Brands at (518) 584-8214, ext. 15 or sbrands@troyac.org.

Excerpted from United Methodist Communications web ministry article.



For the fifth year, a Troy Conference Volunteer-in-Mission team led by Mike and Pat Thomas will travel to Belfast, Northern Ireland, to work with the Forthspring Community Center and Springfield Road Methodist Church, May 4 through 13.

Volunteers-in-Mission News

by Jay and Cathie Dunkleberger

Volunteers-in-Mission (VIM) are one way United Methodists offer their skills and talents for Christian Service at home or abroad on short-term assignments in areas affected by disasters and hardships. A missionary movement of the United Methodist Church, VIM sends short term volunteer teams into areas of need to work on construction and spiritual formation projects. For more information on any of these projects, contact Jay Dunkleberger at (518) 371-7071 or jdunkleb@nycap.rr.com.

Leadership Training: A Team Leader Training will be held March 12, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., location to be announced. The cost is \$15, and includes lunch and a manual.

Belfast Peace Project Team, May 4 through 13: Mike and Pat Thomas are leading a VIM Team to travel to Northern Ireland. This will be the fifth year Troy Conference has sponsored this team. The cost is estimated at \$2,300, which includes all travel from the Capital Region. Forthspring, Belfast Central Mission, Cornerstone and Springfield Road Methodist have been at the fore front of the peace-making efforts in Northern Ireland. For more information, contact Pat or Mike Thomas at (518) 885-5889 ormthomas6@mac.com.

Cedar Rapids Flood Recovery Team, Sept. 25 through Oct. 3: Jack Hill will be leading a VIM team to assist in the block-by-block rebuilding of homes in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. There is a \$60 registration fee to cover, insurance, printing, and postage for all members. The estimated cost of the trip will be near \$400 including transportation, hotels, and meals. For further information, contact Jack Hill at vhill@yahoo.com.

Hinton Rural Life Center, Oct. 10 through 16: Jay and Cathie Dunkleberger will be leading a team to the Hinton Center in Hayesville, N.C. It will be a mixed team for economic recovery and small church support. Activities will include construction and maintenance support at the Hinton Center as well as projects in the community. The estimated cost of insurance, lodging, and food is \$250, not including transportation to Hayesville, N.C.). For further information, contact Jay or Cathie Dunkleberger at jdunkleb@nycap.rr.com.

Short-term VIM opportunities: There are local projects that need teams for one to several day periods. Emmaus Church in Albany, N.Y., is one of these that has had extensive help, and more is being scheduled. Contact Pete Huston at hustonjp@sprynet.com or (518) 399-0919 for more information.

Several other projects are in the pipeline for which work is being defined and priorities set. Teams are needed. If you have some time and are interested in a short term effort, contact Jay Dunkleberger at jdunkleb@nycap.rr.com or (518) 371-7071, and a leader will be identified and a team formed.

Leadership Opportunities:

Contact the Dunklebergers jdunkleb@nycap.rr.com or (518) 371-7071, if you can consider leading a team. We'll provide leadership training and help you find team members and a place to serve. There are needs that swamp our ability to field teams to address them. Teams are going many places from the other 3 Upper New York conferences with which we are merging. Now is a good time to start making connections. Contact us if you would like to form a combined team or be a part of one.

Upstate food banks find increase in need

By Nelson Price

Upstate New York food banks are experiencing increased requests for help from families struggling to place food on their tables in this time of economic stress and holiday pressures.

A survey of 21 food banks operated by or related to United Methodist churches revealed increased requests of up to 50 percent; the average increase is about 20 percent.

The 21 banks are providing 534,000 meals per year to about 225 families comprising 2,177 children, 2873 adults, and 508 seniors—a total of 6,359 individuals served monthly. Dollar costs per family range from zero, where all food is donated, to \$22 with the average at \$12.46 in cash costs.

Budgets for the pantries vary widely.

Some operate with no budget and rely totally on donated food. Others purchase food, receive supplies from a Food Bank and super markets, and also accept food donated by church members and community organizations.

The combined cash budgets amount to \$222,902 annually, but that is only a portion of what the churches and communities contribute, according to the survey. Space, heat and lights are provided without charge by the churches.

In addition, thousands of hours are contributed by volunteers to manage, stock and service the pantries. Seventeen pantries reported a total of 343 volunteers who contributed 2,672 hours per month. On an annual basis, that is 32,064 hours and at \$8 per hour,

is worth \$256,512.

"But that is only half the story," according to Bishop Susan W. Hassinger of the Albany Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church. "Children who are well nourished and are not hungry learn more easily. Parents who aren't as stressed are better care-givers. It is about changing lives and increasing potential. It's not stop-gap; it is a long range ministry that helps children and adults change their lives for the better both now and in the future."

A pastor observed that The Pantry "opens the doors of the church for those who wish to enter. There they will find a loving and caring community. That's what pantries are really about: building community both within and outside the church."

The Rev. Holly Nye, Conference Minister for Troy Annual Conference of United Methodist Church, observed that the U.S. Department of Agriculture just reported prior to Thanksgiving that 49 million Americans face "food insecurity" and struggle to provide healthy food for their families. There are 17 million children—22.5 percent—in these families.

"Every pantry in Upstate New York needs donations of canned food and cash," Nye said. "A gift to a food pantry in honor of someone 'who needs nothing more' would make gift giving dollars serve the true spirit of this holiday season."

Price is a member of the Upper New York Communications Task Force.

Outreach can be transformed in small group settings *from page 3*

The small group will have a weekly meeting when folks are encouraged to reflect on the week in general and the service time in particular. They will seek to discover the times and ways when God seemed present in their experiences, when it was more difficult to see God, and they will share how they responded. Some questions to use are suggested below.

The group can write a covenant prayer. It will include their expectations of themselves and of each other, as well as how they will work with the folks they are serving and how they will strive to keep God in the center of their work. Each person can have a copy of the covenant and it could be displayed in the work area during work hours.

The group will find something to symbolize the way Christ is present to them in their work. The symbol might arise out of a conversation held during the initial meeting when group members would share why they agreed to be in the group. The symbol will be placed where the workers can see it in their work area. Examples of this could be a framed quote, such as "I am the Bread of Life" or "come to me and never hunger," or a symbol of the light of Christ (perhaps not a lit candle for safety reasons). Looking at the symbol will serve as a reminder of why the volunteers are serving.

Before the food shelf (or other activity) opens, the workers can spend time together in prayer and getting centered. During this time, the Christ symbol can be placed visibly in the workspace as a reminder of Christ's presence. The group can pray collectively their covenant prayer before setting to work. These practices help to center the group into being an expression of Christ's love and not just folks who are giving out food.

The weekly meeting will be scheduled at a time that best fits the group—it might meet right after the service activity or it could be at a different time when folks have had time to reflect on the experience. The meeting starts with brief worship—a song or two, scripture and/or a spiritual reading, and brief reflection. Then there is time for the group members to individually offer their responses to the reflection questions. During the first meeting, the group will decide the time for each activity and how long each person can have to respond, probably no more than 10 minutes per person. Paying attention to the time allowed will be part of the group covenant. The group meeting closes with time for prayer and blessing.

Group members are encouraged to start a journal to record their thoughts and feelings after each work experience. Some may find it easier to draw a picture or

symbol of what they saw or felt.

Each person who comes for outreach assistance has a story. As Christians we are called into relationship with God and with neighbor. How will we respond to the stories that come in our doors? Here's an example of a situation and differing individual responses that might be shared in a small group:

A nicotine-drenched man with several days' growth of beard and dirt under his fingernails comes to the food shelf. To one person he may simply be someone down on his luck and in need of food, but to another, he will present as someone whose life story is full of heartache or bad decisions.

In the small group, the conversation is not speculation about the lives of the people who were served. It will be about the workers' experiences with the people they are serving and God's invitation to respond.

One member of the small group might say, "When I saw one man today, I felt a sudden surge of compassion and tears came to my eyes. I wanted to talk to him but I didn't know how to start the conversation or what I'd do once I heard it. I feel as though I let Jesus down."

Another would say, "I saw a man today who looked down and out, but when I gave him the food and smiled at him, his face lit up like I'd given him a thousand bucks. It made me feel great. I told him we had a community dinner on Friday and I'd see him there if he'd like to come. Maybe God is inviting me to have a conversation with him."

Another member of the group might say, "When I saw one man today, I felt myself pull back and I couldn't look at him. I think it reminded me too much of a life I left behind. I'm not sure what God wanted me to do at that moment."

Folks who are reticent to working in outreach projects may have a sense of compassion (recognized or unrecognized) that draws out emotional responses they may not know how to handle. We are gifted in different ways and will respond to our experiences in our own unique ways. Having a small group setting to share these reactions and to keep focused on God's work in us, in our activities, and in those we serve will help to keep outreach work Christ-centered.

Here are some questions the small group can use for reflection on the outreach activity. Members should keep a journal of responses and review them before the small group meeting.

- How did you experience (see, feel, sense) God* at work?
- When did God seem close?
- When did God seem distant?
- Where did you hear the gospel proclaimed?
- What kinds of poverty did you see?
- What gifts did you see in those you served?
- When did you have a sense of failure or discouragement?
- What signs of hope did you see?
- Where did you see hospitality offered or received?
- What visual image stays with you?
- How are you feeling called to respond to this experience?
- What is God inviting you to do?
- Do you have a special prayer request for yourself or others?

(*Note: God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit could be used where "God" is written.)

For a workshop or help getting a small group started, contact Evie Doyon, Faith Development Coordinator, Troy Annual Conference, at eviedo@gmail.com or (802) 485-7144.

Creating a new family album...

Send us a "family photo" of the life of your congregation—be creative! Include as many people as possible, in an activity or setting that expresses something about your shared life and ministry!

E-mail photos to Sandy Brands, Communicator in Troy Conference: sbrands@troyac.org.

Photos should be of at least "me-

dium" resolution. Include contact information including e-mail and phone, and the name of the church. Photos will be used on the web and at conference gatherings — share the life of your congregation with your sisters and brothers of Upper New York.

District class makes confirmation richer for youth

It's time to start confirmation classes, only there's just one or two youth in the church ready to start. Such a small number doesn't auger well for a successful program.

"For the youth and the teachers [of the class], that tends not to be much fun at all," said the Rev. Michelle Bogue-Trost, pastor of the Newtonville United Methodist Church in New York. "If one or two youth from a three-person confirmation class has to be absent, conversation fails."

Recognizing that this scenario was common in a number of churches, Bogue-Trost and Albany District Superintendent the Rev. Jim Fenimore explored the idea of starting a district-wide confirmation class. The first Albany District Confirmation Class took place two years ago, and the program was such a success, they decided to do it, again.

"We found it was a great way for youth to connect with youth outside their own church," Bogue-Trost said. "We also found that the [class] discussion was much richer."

Both Bogue-Trost and Fenimore believe that the district-wide class not only enriches the classroom experience for youth, it helps build bonds between youth across the connection and reinforces the understanding that "all United Methodists are not exactly like the ones they find in their home churches," she said.

For Fenimore, the district-wide class is part of the larger emphasis he's placed on building connections between churches and people on a district level. It strengthens the understanding that the local United Methodist church is part of a bigger network of a global faith community.

The first confirmation class had about 12 students two years ago, Fenimore said. "Then we developed the program for this year and were quite surprised to have 40 kids—we had hoped for 20."

"Forty youth provide a rich ground for experience, opinion, sharing, and cooperative learning," Bogue-Trost said. "And they have much more fun!"

It's also more interesting for most of the youth, Fenimore said. "Even if the material they are studying is not that exciting, the idea of gathering together in this large group builds excitement and energy."

Instead of a weekly class held over 10-weeks, the Albany District Confirmation Class meets for four overnight retreats.

Eighth-grade or older youth are invited to take confirmation classes to learn about the church and decide whether or not they want to become part of a community of faith.

"The purpose of [the class] is to prepare [them] to make an informed decision concerning whether or not they will choose to confirm the vows made on their behalf at their baptism, claim their discipleship as their own, and join

their home church as members," said Bogue-Trost.

Using the Living the Questions video curriculum designed for young adults, "Dream, Think, Be, Do," and some United Methodist Communications resources on United Methodism, the class explores what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and how United Methodists live out that commitment.

"We have incorporated a visit to a synagogue, a visit from our bishop [Susan W. Hassinger of the Albany Episcopal Area], and a hands-on mission experience, along with team-building exercises and small group-processing to supplement our plenary learning," Bogue-Trost said. "Pastors serve as small group leaders, and have the freedom to lead extra sessions with the youth from their own church."

"Youth who choose to become church members are confirmed in their home congregations."

The district-wide class has made it possible for youth to participate in learning experiences they might not otherwise experience. For example, at the second confirmation retreat, held in December, the group visited a local synagogue on the first night of Hanukkah.

"The youth of that congregation led in worship, and our youth were fascinated," said Bogue-Trost. "When the rabbi spent some time following worship with our youth, their questions were wonderful and engaging. It was a treat to observe."

The third retreat in February offered several of those moments, she said. "Once the youth started responding, they participated wonderfully—even the most reluctant of the students contributed to the conversation in creative ways."

Bishop Susan W. Hassinger of the Albany Episcopal Area visited during the third retreat.

"[The students] were genuinely interested in hearing her story and asking questions of her, interacting in some wonderful and surprising ways," Bogue-Trost said.

It's not always easy to keep a group of tweens and teens interested and engaged.

"We know these youth are, for the most part, compelled to attend by their parents," she said. "It's a given that most would not attend on their own. We do begin with high expectations—we expect the youth to participate and to contribute to the experience. Some rise to the expectation, others do not, but the dynamics of the interchange tend to be fruitful."

As the youth learn about discipleship and church membership, the retreat leaders are learning how to make the experience better for all involved.

"We have been adjusting and improving this model since the first retreat," Fenimore said. "Each time it gets better and the last retreat was a very good one. [The youth] are starting to get it and we



Bishop Susan W. Hassinger, holding the symbolic shepherd's crook, shared her faith story with the youth of the Albany District Confirmation Class in February.

are beginning to better understand how to engage 40-8th graders."

"If we want to avoid those Ben Stein [who played the monotoned-voiced economics teacher in *Ferris Bueller's*

Day Off] moments we need incentives for answering questions," Fenimore agreed.

"Candy," Bogue-Trost said. "Lots of candy."

Be There. Be Hope.

In Haiti.

Give now to support relief efforts in Haiti. www.umcorhaiti.org

UMCOR
United Methodist Committee on Relief
Be There. Be Hope.

Residents in Port-au-Prince, Haiti search for survivors among the debris on January 13, 2010, one day after a 7.0 earthquake rocked the country. Haiti's president said he feared thousands were dead after the presidential palace, schools, hospitals, and hillside shanties collapsed, leaving the Caribbean nation appealing for international help.
REUTERS/Eduardo Munoz/Courtesy of www.Alemt.org

Give through The Advance to Haiti relief at www.umcorhaiti.org

Revitalized congregation balances tradition

By Sandra Brands

From the outside, the Adirondack Community Church in Lake Placid, N.Y., is a quaint stone church set in a mountain village that hosts a steady stream of visitors, and Olympic hopefuls.

Inside, despite the Gothic architecture, dark pews and stained glass windows, the space is surprisingly contemporary. The altar is gone, rows of pews at the back of the worship area have been removed and walls have been blown away, creating a multipurpose gathering space.

Visitors walking in through the heavy wooden doors and the small, bright outer room might be surprised to find themselves standing in an area set up like a reception area. Coffee, tea and juice are spread out on one table to the left of the center aisle near stacks of ceramic mugs. To the right, food is offered—not just cookies, but crudité on skewers, dips, fruit and coffee cake.

This hybrid of the traditional and the modern reflects the philosophy of the congregation. The early morning service is as much a nod to tradition as the Gothic architecture and stained glass windows; the mid-morning contemporary service and the fellowship area in the back of the sanctuary are a nod to the understanding that the church must embrace the future.

The members of Adirondack Community Church seem to be handling that balancing act quite well.

That's not to say the changes happened over night, came without a cost.

"Even among those who thought [change] was good, it was painful," said the Rev. Mark Demers, pastor.

Demers, who has served the church for almost 15 years, said it was very important that he was able to stay with the church through the transition. The congregation recognized that, even when the work was hard and sometimes heartbreaking, he would stay with them.

That commitment was necessary, said former Lay Leader Daniel Lundin. "One of the things we've attempted to do over the years is establish the mission and vision of the church," he said, "and then working together on strategic planning. That requires a commitment on the part of the pastor, and that's what the laity and leadership of the church need to feel."

Member Jennifer Newhart agrees. "Mark's longevity [as pastor] did a lot to convince people that it wasn't just about coming in, changing things and running away."



Jason Leon is one of the younger members taking a leadership role in the church, which has begun attracting more 20- and 30-year-old worshippers.



The Rev. Mark Demers engages in conversation with a parishioner following the mid-morning Sunday worship. Demers, who does not wear clerical robes for the non-traditional service, plays the piano before and after his sermon.

The group that gathered around a table in the small chapel in the basement of the church all agreed that, though painful, change was necessary if the church was to survive.

Schmidt said that the changes began when Demers invited a group of people to attend the Willow Creek conference. "That showed how the church would be if it changed; and we were shown how it would be if it didn't change," she said. "We were seeing over and over in the conference that churches were closing."

While the early morning worship service, known in the church as the "skiers' service," remained a traditional service, it was moved upstairs to the sanctuary from the small chapel in the basement—a move that some long-time members did not appreciate at first.

It has since begun to grow, Demers said. "The 9 a.m. service is a blessing. It is not a throwaway service—they hear the same message, but they sing hymns instead of songs."

Gradually, recognizing that their needs and interests were being heard, though, many of the traditionalists recognized that they were not being thrown away.

"We consciously made sure that no one thought they were being cast aside," said Newhart. "We weren't going to leave them behind unless it was their choice."

Including people who got angry or offended in the conversions was one of the best things the congregation did, said Penny Schmidt. "We as a church family have attempted to keep in touch with people to keep them in the loop to the extent they want to be kept in the loop. Although we've lost some people, we've

gained people. The shift I'm seeing is that we're seeing a lot of younger people."

"It's been prayerful change," agrees member Judith Clausing-Lundin. "It takes a lot of prayer and guidance and direction from the Lord to make these changes. Not everyone is happy all the time, but we older people have to recognize that the church belongs to younger folks."

In addition to making some basic design changes in the sanctuary, the congregation at Lake Placid invested in audio-visual equipment and began using images and audio, something those raised in the electronic and digital ages expect. A core team of leaders also attended training in "the life-transformation effectiveness of local churches" offered by Willow Creek Association, a not-for-profit organization specializing in church leadership development.

A less traditional mid-morning service was introduced as a more relaxed and more attractive alternative for younger people. That meant not worrying so much when people took refreshments with them to the pews once worship started. Even Demers sheds his clerical robes and, when worship begins, takes his seat behind the piano to play with a three-piece group while lay members open the service.

"The congregation made a concerted effort to make sure young people coming are put in places where their voices can be heard," said Demers. "Their voices need to be heard, and their opinions honored."

"We have gotten a lot of awareness about having 20- and 30-years-olds amongst us and have heard from them about wanting to be more involved," said Schmidt. "We have had conversations about turning

while making embracing the future



Phil Thayer, a member of Adirondack Community Church who greets visitors warmly, enjoys a laugh during the fellowship hour at the back of the sanctuary.

the keys over to them ...”

“Those of us who wrestled the keys away from the [generation] before us want to be more open ...” said Newhart.

“But we respect that we need each other,” said Lundin.

One of the younger members taking a leadership role in the church is Jason Leon. He is part of a small group of 20- and 30-year-olds, a group that ranges in size from 10 to 50 people that meets to study and discuss their faith and their lives.

“It started off as a way for folks to get together and

have conversations,” Leon said. “It’s open to everyone, but most who come are people from our church and who worship with us. There have been others from other churches who attend, and we’ve had exciting conversations. No one ever walked away feeling unwelcomed.”

In addition to the young adult study group, which meets on Tuesday evenings, there is a study group that meets once a week in different people’s home.

“It’s a chance to get together, to study together, to be in relationship with each other,” said Newhart.

There is also a knitting group that meets on Tuesday evenings. “People have started to come to church because of this group,” Clausen-Lundin said. “We don’t push, we don’t proselytize. They just feel welcome.”

There are other study groups and a Saturday night worship service as well, offering many opportunities for people to get involved.

“My original goal to get everyone involved in a small group was foiled,” Demers laughs, “but [eventually], they did it their own way. These groups function as small group classes—and that’s the difference between managing something and letting it happen. The 20- and 30-year-olds have taught me that. I don’t need to manage it. It’s happening. It’s a movement of the spirit, and if it isn’t, it will stop.”

“We’re not doing church,” said Linda Preston. “We’re letting it happen.”

That spirit fills the church.

“There’s joy in this place,” said Newhart, “and I don’t see that in a lot of places. Where do I want to spend my time and energy? With joyful people.”

Leon, who admits he had done a “fair amount” of church shopping before coming to Adirondack Community Church. “The minute I walked in, I felt this was where I belonged. The service seemed more dynamic, there was an air of authenticity, of exploring, of going beyond traditional ritual. I wanted to share

the journey, to find out the answers together, to ask the question.

“There was a connectedness,” he said.

Lundin agrees. “It is very much sharing God’s love, and having said that, we need to open the doors,” he said.

Demers will be leaving Adirondack Community Church at the end of June to become the pastor of First United Methodist Church in Burlington, Vt. When he first came to the Lake Placid, he said, he came with different expectations, but soon began to recognize that he needed to change his own way of think.

“As I started looking at what I was doing as a pastor, I began asking, ‘is this helping people experience the power of Jesus?’ The first transformation was realizing that I did not come to Lake Placid to [simply maintain a church].”

He expressed his hope during worship that after his 14-and-a-half years as their pastor, the members of the congregation were “more in touch, more in love with God then you were when I came?”

Demers will leave behind a revitalized congregation with strong lay leadership committed to its vision and mission.

“It has been critical for many people that we talk about church and what is working and what isn’t working seven days a week,” said Steve Preston, the current Lay Leader of the church. “It is constantly put before God.”

“Conversations about the church happen everywhere, even the grocery store” said Clausen-Lundin. “In this church you make the decision for Christ, not a denomination.”

“We are a Methodist church, but we strive to be a community,” said Newhart. “When we come to the table, you don’t have to be a member, it doesn’t matter where you come for—you are welcome.”



Surrounded by traditional Gothic architecture and stained glass windows, Sunday morning worshippers prepare for a relaxed, vibrant and non-traditional service at Adirondack Community Church in Lake Placid.

Mission of Peace to India

Trip offers glimpses into lives of poverty and joy

By Lillian Coletta and Kenny John

The Mission of Peace (MOP) is an annual journey of Shalom to developing countries. From Dec. 27 to Jan. 13, 27 youth from the Northeastern Jurisdiction, Kari Balogh of Calvary-Latham United Methodist Church in New York, Kenny John from Emmaus United Methodist Church in Albany, N.Y., and Lillian Coletta from Williston Federated Church in Vermont, embarked on MOP to India.

As we travelled through five cities meeting a countless number of Indians, and as we now reflect on the experience a quote continuously resonates through our minds: Even though we all have a different story to tell of our experience, we all have something in common—we are now a family. As family, created while in another country, we travelled to places that tourists would not.

We travelled through Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mysore and Mangalore and visited numerous churches, orphanages, hostels, hospitals, and markets. The people of India brought the culture to life—everywhere we went there were smiling faces to greet us and huge brown eyes full of energy.

The Dharavi slums in Mumbai, India, were memorable. Many of the exact alleys we walked through were in the film *Slumdog Millionaire*, but didn't capture the joy, contentment, excitement and happiness that filled the slums. Our main purpose in visiting the slums was to spend time in three Community Outreach Program schools located in the heart of various parts of the slums. Travelling from one school to another was just as rewarding as visiting those in the schools themselves. The boys' faces while playing soccer in the only open space of the slums, the three children sitting in an empty room smiling with nothing but their hands to play with, the mothers washing their clothes inches away from the rotting pile of trash, and each pair of huge brown eyes smiling at us with happiness taught us something we wouldn't have learned without seeing it for ourselves. The people living in the slums were not unhappy, lazy or desperate, but rather they were glowing. They have never



Lillian Coletta of Williston, Vt., sits with a young girl in one of the CORP schools in the Dharavi Slums. Coletta was one of 27 youth who traveled to India in late December, early January as part of the Northeastern Jurisdiction's Mission of Peace.

India is a land of contrast, of some very rich and many very poor people. Of modernism and medievalism...India is not a poor country, she is abundantly supplied with everything that makes a country rich, yet her people are very poor.

— Nehru, India's first Prime Minister

known anything but the life they are living, and therefore have no desire for the "more." God has blessed these people of the slums with the ability to live so simply and so contentedly.

In the slums we interacted with the children mostly. In each school we entered the children were gathered together—sometimes singing, sometimes

simply silent, and sometimes laughing. There were so many questions running through our heads as we travelled from school to school, but the biggest question throughout the trip was "what could we do for these children?" This is one of those questions that there is no simple answer to, but thinking over it changes your perception of the world.

Visiting another country alone is eye-opening and memorable. As we travelled with a large group we called our family to parts of India that most tourists would never pass through, we learned lessons in life that forever changed our outlook on the world and specifically the lives each of us live every day.

United Methodist students invited to apply for TAC scholarships

Undergraduate and graduate students of Troy Annual Conference may be eligible for one of three scholarships available to active United Methodist students.

The three Troy Conference funded scholarships are:

- Merit Scholarship: Available to students attending a United Methodist Related School with career goals related to a Christian commitment of service to God and others. The student's church must in the annual Student Day special offering from which these funds are

made available.

- Lottie Brown Grants: Preference for these grants is given to students entering some form of Christian service.

- Ethnic Minority Scholarship: Available to a person from an ethnic minority background attending school, United Methodist-related institution or otherwise. Preference is given to a member of a United Methodist congregation within the boundaries of the Troy Conference.

Most scholarships are between \$500 and \$2,000, and between seven and 10

scholarships will be awarded. Priority goes to United Methodist students. Each scholarship requires an official transcript of grades (sent by the school) and a letter of recommendation from a United Methodist pastor or leader in his or her local United Methodist (or affiliated United) Church.

More information, the scholarship application and letter of recommendation form are available for download at www.troyac.org, or contact Rev. Megan Stowe at Shenendehowa United Methodist Church, 971 Route 146,

Clifton Park, N.Y. 12065-3645; (518) 371-7964.

For more information on other United Methodist loans or scholarships, check out *The Handbook of United Methodist Related Schools, Colleges, Universities and Theological Schools with a Guide to United Methodist Loans and Scholarships* from the Division of Higher Education, General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. Information, addresses, deadline dates, and phone numbers are contained in this resource.

From the Archives

by Karen Staulters

TAC to host NEJ archivists, historians in Vermont

By Karen Staulters

The Northeastern Jurisdiction of the Commission on Archives and History (NEJCAH) will meet at the Hilltop Inn in Barre, Vt., May 11 through 13. The event will be sponsored by the Troy Annual Conference, which will divide along state lines in July, with the New York churches becoming part of a new conference in Upper New York and the Vermont churches joining New England Annual Conference.

According to the NEJCAH newsletter, from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s, Vermont east of the Green Mountains was its own annual conference, which has inspired the theme: "Beyond the Green Mountains—A Journey Through the Old Vermont Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The program will review the history of the old Vermont Conference and participants will be able to visit a number of churches which played a significant part in the history of the conference including Trinity United Methodist Church in Montpelier, Grace United Methodist Church in St. Johnsbury, the Newbury Community Church, Bradford United Methodist Church and Hedding United Methodist Church in Barre. During the meeting, trips will be taken to Wolcott United Methodist Church, gathered and built by the Rev. George S. Brown, the first African American pastor in both the Troy and Vermont Conferences. Brown re-enactor Clifford Oliver will be on hand to share the story of Brown's ministry along the Green Mountains and Adirondacks.

Participants will also visit Mother Peckett's grave in Bradford.

The meeting will also spotlight the stories of a number of Vermont women who played a significant role in the development of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society in Boston, Mass., in 1869, and "listen" to some individuals who were involved in the North Barre Italian Mission, which ministered to the Italian granite cutters who emigrated to Vermont to work in the Rock of Ages Quarry in Barre.

Enduring Flame looks at history of Troy Conference

The Troy Conference Commission on Archives and History, looking ahead to the June 30 dissolution of Troy Conference, has arranged for the publication of book, *The Enduring Flame*, to record the last decades of conference history. The book also includes a history of the camping program of the conference, from the camp meeting days to the present. The book looks at denominational life in upper Northeastern New York and Vermont.

Written by the Rev. Ralph Marino, a retired Troy Conference pastor, has focused on the major decisions that had been made by the conference and explores the ways the conference has responded to major forces in society during the last few decades. The book emphasizes not only what happened but also, using reflections from people involved, what the actions meant on a personal level.

The editorial team includes Jacqueline Marino, copy editor and Rev. William Pattison, editor of photography. Like the author, Pattison was present for conference actions and activity through the years. Additional materials have been prepared by Karen Staulters, Conference Archivist.

Topics covered include highlights of conference history from 1760 through 1982, efforts to combat racism, the reconciling conference movement, worship at annual conference, the Walk to Emmaus, urban ministries, the impact of technology and final transitions. The camping materials focus on transitions from camp meeting days to summer camps for youth and the modern camps and include an extensive chapter of personal reminiscences.

Publication is scheduled for early May, so the book will be available for the Annual Meeting of the Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History in Barre, Vt., May 11 through 13, at the clergy and closing sessions of Troy Conference in Saratoga and Glens Falls, May 21 and 22 and at the Uniting Session of Upper New York Conference, Syracuse, June 19. The special pre-publication price is \$15 plus shipping of \$3.

To order a copy, send a check made payable to Troy Annual Conference, and send to Karen Staulters, Archivist, Troy Annual Conference, 396 Loudon Rd., Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866.



Vermont churches organize for mission

By George Klohck

The Vermont churches of the Troy Annual Conference are organizing for mission. As the United Methodist churches in Vermont prepare to become part of the Vermont District in the New England Annual Conference in July, a Vermont District Global Ministries Committee has formed and is planning an April 10 mission fair.

The idea began with a push from Jay and Cathie Dunkleberger, Troy Conference Volunteer-in-Mission (VIM) Coordinators, who hope the conference's strong VIM program will continue in the new conference configurations. After conversations with David Stackpole, the New England Conference VIM Coordinator, about the new opportunities that will open when the Vermont churches join the New England Conference, Jay Dunkleberger asked George Klohck, chair of the Troy Conference Committee, to gather Vermont VIM team leaders together to meet with David Stackpole.

The first meeting was held at the Williston Federated Church on July 30. Fifteen VIM leaders were there, 11 from Vermont and four from the New England Conference.

As George Klohck tells it now, he expected to preside at a friendly gathering that gave Vermont and New England VIM members a chance to get to know one another. The meeting soon evolved into something more.

A second meeting was set for Sept. 17 at Rutland United Methodist Church, and with the support and encouragement of the VIM leaders in New England, including Director of Connectional Ministries Jim McPhee and Stackpole and his wife Shirley, a Vermont District Global Ministries Committee is already forming. Klohck will serve as the acting District Secretary of Global Ministries. The committee's vision is to inspire, enlist, and support more Christian action by people moving out from all of our churches.

A Mission Fair for all Vermont churches will be held at the Rutland United Methodist Church on Saturday, April 10. Greg Forrester, Northeastern Jurisdiction VIM Coordinator, will be the keynote speaker. Forrester will bring an update on the United Methodist Committee on Relief's (UMCOR) work in Haiti and what outreach ministries are available there. Leaders from the New England Conference will also be present and share information about partnering with them in mission.

Vermont churches are being encouraged to share stories of mission outreach and bring displays to the fair. Prizes will be awarded for a church's chosen ministry based on the winning church's participation.

Vermont United Methodist Mission Fair

Rutland UMC

Saturday, April 10, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Can you see yourself enlisting now for a VIM trip to the Gulf area or the Mid-West, or other urgent work around New England and the world? Learn about opportunities to help support work in Haiti and around the world at the

Key note speaker

Greg Forrester

Northeast Jurisdiction Volunteer-in-Mission Coordinator

- Share stories and displays about your congregation's mission outreach
- Hear about VIM opportunities across the street and around the world
- Meet VIM leaders from the New England Conference
- Bring a loaf of bread and an item to add to a soup pot for lunch and a nonperishable food item for the Rutland Community Cupboard
- UMCOR Health Kits are welcomed
- Prizes will be awarded based on church participation

Registration is requested. The cost is \$10. Send registration to Rutland United Methodist Church, 71 Williams St., Rutland, Vt. 05701-3491.

For more information, contact George Klohck, 1536 East St, Bridgeport, Vt. 05734; mgklohck@gmavt.net; (802) 758-2062

News Notes

News about Troy Conference churches and people



Members of Grace United Methodist Church in Bradford, Vt., joined people in the community in a prayer vigil, calling for progress in the Copenhagen climate talks held in mid-December. The vigil raised awareness of the need to reduce carbon emissions to below 350 parts per million.

On Dec. 11 through 13, millions of people held rallies and candlelight vigils in over 130 countries, calling for progress in the Copenhagen climate talks. Concerned Bradford, Vt., area residents met at **Grace United Methodist Church** for a sidewalk candlelight protest and a prayer vigil. Handouts encouraged people to form carbon reduction accountability groups (through **Vermont Interfaith Power and Light**), and sign the **350.org Survival Pact**; which allies signatories with those whose lives are at risk now due to climate changes around the world. The message continues in the life of the church in the weeks to come.

Supporters were asking for all countries to urgently sign a climate agreement that is: fair by securing \$200 billion in climate financing for poorer countries; ambitious, by peaking global carbon emissions by 2015 and returning atmospheric carbon dioxide levels below 350 parts per million; and binding.

Retired chaplain the Rev. **Martin Fors** of Lyndon Center, Vt., recently presented a total of 300 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Count* to Lt. Col. **Charles Purinton**, chaplain of the **86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team-Mountain Division of the Vermont National Guard**. Money for the purchase of the books was raised by Fors and the Rev. **Melvin Bridge**, pastor of **Wesley United Methodist Church** in Waterbury, Vt. In all, 600 copies of the devotional have been presented to one-third of the 1,500 troops being deployed from the Waterbury Army.

For years, the large pine tree standing in front of the **Moors Library** in New York has not been lit up for the holidays. But for the holidays in 2009, the story changed. Through the combined efforts of **Jack Dragoon**, a member of **Moors United Methodist Church of Dragon Farm Equipment**, Librarian **Edie Morelock**, members of the library



Moors member **Charlie Sturniolo** perched in the cherry picker decorates the large pine tree in front of **Moors Library** while member **Jack Dragoon**, right, keeps an eye on his company's crane, operated by **Christ Bulriss**.



Completing a course offered by the Rev. **Ralph W. Howe** at **Hedding United Methodist Church** in Barre, Vt., are newly certified lay speakers, back row from left, **Renee Flint**, **Mary Ann Ritchie**, **Tim Boltin**, **Richard Beach**, **Brad Young**. Middle row, **Vivian Hooks**, **Kelly DeFelice**, **Rena Flint**, **Skip Davison**, **Hale Ritchie**. Seated, **Charlene Calcagni-Boisvert**, **Becky Mackin** and **Jim Archer**.

board and volunteers from the church. Pastor **Al Johnson**, **Charlie Sturniolo** and **Ted Kolff van ooster wyk**, the tree was adorned for Christmas with bright, energy-efficient led lights.

On the Sunday after Thanksgiving, the organ at **Mayfield United Methodist Church** in New York, was dedicated in the memory of **Ted and Helen Montgomery**. The dedication was followed by a recital.

A proclamation by Schenectady **Mayor Brian Stratton** declaring Dec. 6 as **Stanford United Methodist Day** in the city and special afternoon worship service were part of the celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the church. Helping to celebrate the anniversary during the worship were the **Guided Footsteps** from **Emmaus United Methodist Church** in Albany, N.Y., the **Schenectady City High School's Sayles School of Fine Arts**, and the **Stanford Church Choir**.

Bishop Susan W. Hassinger delivered the message "Looking at the Future through the Eyes of the Past." **Bishop Hassinger** and Rev. **David Heise** presided over the confirmation of four youth as they were received into the **United Methodist Church** and the **Stanford congregation**.

Among the guests attending the celebration were Albany District Superintendent the Rev. **Jim Fenimore**, Troy Conference Minister the Rev. **Holly Nye**, other **United Methodist** pastors, as well as pastors and members of the congregations from **Duryee Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**, the **Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church**, clergy from the **Hamilton Hill Clergy Prayer Group** and the **Central State Street ecumenical churches**.

The congregation of **Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church** in Schenectady, N.Y., put out a call for help on Facebook, via e-mail and by

telephone asking for donations for **UMCOR Health Kits**. Over 40 church members and friends bagged and boxed the over 3,400 items donated to create a total of 282 health kits. Another \$1,100 was contributed by members and friends to cover supplemental supplies, the \$1 per kit for the purchase of toothpaste and help pay shipping costs. **Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church** is just one of many congregations throughout the conference donating health and other emergency kits and money.

As of Feb. 16, **Troy Conference** members had donated \$69,748.40 to the **United Methodist Committee on Relief Advance #418325** for Emergency Relief to Haiti, with an additional \$1,400 in cash donated to purchase toothpaste for health kits and pay for shipping. Treasurer's Assistant **Leah Robinson** reports that another \$7,468.04 was sent from Troy Conference churches directly to **UMCOR**, bringing the total donated to \$77,216.44.

Disaster Relief Coordinator **Hank Coghill** reported that he delivered 712 health kits to Mission Central in Cortland, N.Y. Conference staff estimates that since **Coghill** picked up the first delivery, an additional 2,000 kits have come to the conference office to be sent on to **UMCOR**.

After a year of prayer and consideration, the Vision Team from **Highgate United Methodist Church** in Vermont responded to a need in the communities of Highgate and Rice Hill. Working with **Rice Hill United Methodist Church**, they opened a community center in the church's unused parsonage. The parsonage is being renovated to house the pastor's office and sleep quarters, a food shelth, thrift store, craft sales corner, Christian lending library, a community room and a Teens and Tweens Room. "The vision [of the churches] has been

Notes continued next page

Lay Speaking Ministries

By Vivian Melin

Lay speaking in Troy is a success

I have been through all of the reports I have received to date from lay speakers—and the reports show that the ministries of the lay in Troy are wonderful! The 2010 cards for Certified Lay Speakers were sent out in February.

Certified Lay speakers participate by serving on district and conference committees, serving within their own churches. All serve within their own community in various ways: volunteering with Meals-on-Wheels, Literacy Volunteers or Habitat for Humanity, or helping elderly neighbors. As lay speakers, we participate in our own churches through being liturgists, teaching, serving on and chairing various committees, and caring for those in need.

A Lay Speaker is a person who has committed her/himself to the roles beyond how we had once understood the program. Teaching, training, serving, leading, communicating, caring, sharing, and communicating are all very important parts of the Lay Speaking Ministries program. How you use the training you receive and how you help in your congregation and community is limited by your own imagination, willingness and ability to serve in living out your relationship with Jesus Christ.

Many have felt a nudge or even a push to serve the church in a greater capacity than you are now doing. Lay Speaking Ministries is one way of taking that first step on your faith journey or in finding a closer relationship with God. It may help you find your area of ministry or it may challenge you to 'step outside of your comfort' level and explore a new area.

The new Basic Lay Speaking Course is a wonderful introduction to the program and is the basis for all of the other learning and leading courses. The course covers Leading, Caring, Communicating, material on our Wesley heritage and the role of leaders in and beyond the church. All Lay Speakers are not "preachers," nor do they wish to be. Thus, the new basic course emphasizes the broad range of ministries within the program. But, for those who do want to pursue the preaching aspect of Lay Speaking Ministries, there are two wonderful preaching courses available, too.

The United Methodist Church relies upon its laity to aid in carrying out its mission and purpose. It is up to the laity to move forward in our faith and to make disciples. As we move through 2010 and into our new conferences, let us remember John Wesley's General Rules: do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God.

Melin is the Conference Director of Lay Speaking Ministries.

Travel with fellow Christians along Paul's missionary route

Educational Opportunities Tours is offering a 10 day tour—Paul's Second and Third Missionary Journey 2010 to Greece and Turkey departing New York on Nov. 3. A part of the excursion will take place on a chartered cruise ship.

To learn more about this tour, contact Rev. David Schlansker at (518) 251-5737 or pastordhs@frontiernet.net. Brochures and more information are available through Schlansker, one of the tour hosts.

Notes *continued from page 12*

to provide services to an economically hard hit area and to bring the word of Jesus Christ in a different way," said the Rev. **Kerry T. Cameron**, pastor. "We are 'rethinking church' in the way we hear and feel God is leading."

Cameron said both churches will come together to provide community dinners and activities, mentoring programs for women and teens, classes in budgeting and cooking, a "God garden" providing fresh produce for low income families, a craft corner with low cost items to purchase, handicapped accessible Saturday worship services, Wesleyan groups, old fashioned knitting bees, bible studies, Christian weight loss group, and more.

On Jan. 18, the Rutland, Vt., Area Interfaith Council observed **Martin Luther King, Jr.**'s birthday by inviting area congregations to join in a day of service. Thirty volunteers met for breakfast and prayers, and viewed slides and audios of King's speeches before being sent out to six Rutland locations: **The Community Cupboard, Dismis House, The Open Door Mission,** and area nursing homes. Some volunteers worked at the Food Shelf in Barre, Vt. The volunteers included members of the **Rutland United Methodist Church, Lutheran Church, Congregational Church and the Universalist Unitarian Fellowship.**

Upcoming Lay Speaker classes

Basic Lay Speaking Course, a five week course facilitated by Ken Munding, will begin March 17 at 7 p.m. at Danville United Methodist Church in Vermont. The Basic course is the foundation for all other texts in the Learning and Leading series for lay speaker. It offers guidelines for best practices as a church leader and outlines a number of ministries in which lay speakers may assume roles. If you are interested in taking this course please complete and have signed a Request for Recommendation form which you can get at www.troyac.org and send it to Marie MacDougall at macdome@juno.com, 19 Eastern Ave., Barre, Vt. 05641; (802) 461-4452. Include a for \$20 to cover registration and book.

Advanced Lay Speaking Course, "Lead In Evangelism," will be offered March 24 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Warrensburg United Methodist Church, 10 Main St. The course will be led by Iris Civilian. Registration is \$15 and the book is \$14. For more information or to register, contact Maxine Carrol at [Rte. 10, Whitehall, N.Y. 12887, \(518\) 499-1565, maxcarol2002@troyac.org](mailto:Rte.10,Whitehall,N.Y.12887,(518)499-1565,maxcarol2002@troyac.org)

http://www.troyac.org/console/files/oFiles_Library_XZXLCZ/connect3-10a_XRRMCH7C.pdf

Conference Critical Issues grant applications accepted until April 15

Applications for Critical Issues grants can be accepted only up until April 15 for funding by June 30, 2010. Critical Issues are the ministries of Troy Conference which are most essential to achieving the conference vision and mission. The critical issues receive the highest priority in organization, energy

and funding. For a list of criteria and information on requesting Critical Issues Fund, go to the Troy Conference web site at www.troyac.org or request an application from Conference Minister Holly Nye, 396 Loudon Road, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866, (518) 584-8214, ext. 18, hnye@troyac.org.

RAISE THE PRAISE, INCREASE THE PEACE

at

4WORD2010

April 23 through 25
Syracuse Holiday Inn in New

Join youth from North Central New York, Troy, Western New York and Wyoming conferences for—

- WORKSHOPS**
- GAMES**
- OPEN MIC PERFORMANCES**
- DANCING**
- KARAOKE**
- TEAM CHALLENGES**

For more information, contact Sue Petrosino at suzieym@aol.com or Ashley DuBois at Ashley0705@hotmail.com



District shifts from page 1

core values adopted by our conferences last June. That task force continues to work, and may or may not be ready to make recommendations to the June 19 uniting session, for implementation by July 2011.

The Cabinet began a thorough process of looking at future leadership for the current Oneonta District by identifying some guiding principles. (See appendix to this announcement.) Out of that process, we began to develop a means of moving forward with that. The shifts that are described here are considerable, which is appropriate in times of great missional change.

I have met twice with the Committee on District Superintendency in the Oneonta District. The first time was to share the information about Rev. Jan Marsi's new appointment; the



Marsi



Rowell

second was to share with the committee the next steps. Rev. David Masland and Rev. Janice McClary Rowell were part of the second meeting, as they shift their current superintending responsibilities and parts of the Oneonta District will become their areas as of July 1.

The Rev. David Masland, Superintendent of the Binghamton District since 2006, will add as part of his supervision and oversight some Oneonta churches closer to the southern end of the current Oneonta District. Six current churches on the Binghamton District are in Pennsylvania, and will become part of the new Susquehanna Conference. There are also five churches in the Oneonta District that are located in



Fenimore

Pennsylvania and will become part of the new Susquehanna Conference. Rev. Masland has previously served as pastor of churches on the Oneonta District. His appointment prior to becoming district superintendent was for eight years at Sidney, N.Y.

Much of the northern portion of the Oneonta District, plus approximately 15 churches in Schoharie County, which are currently part of the Albany District in the Troy Conference, will be given oversight by Rev. Janice McClary Rowell. Rev. Rowell is in her second year as Superintendent of the Embury District the Troy Conference. She has served churches in various parts of the current Troy Conference,



Masland



Frueh

most recently for 11 years in Scotia, N.Y.

The Embury District currently includes churches in Vermont, which will become part of the New England Conference, and churches in New York State, which will become part of the new conference in Upper New York. Rev. Rowell and I have met with the Committee on District Superintendency in the Embury District to discuss the pending shifts. The Embury District Churches in Washington County will become part of the Adirondack District. Those in Rensselaer and southern Saratoga County will become part of the Albany District.

In the "Imagine" statement of what we feel God calling

Districts *continued next page*

Shifts in district supervision

Bold indicates churches that will be shifted to a new district

Adirondack District as of 7/1/2010

- Argyle
- Aussable Forks
- Balkton Spa
- Bloomingsdale
- Blue Mountain Lake
- Bolton Landing
- Cambridge**
- Champlain: Three Steeples
- Chestertown
- Chilson
- Clintonville
- Corinth
- Crown Point
- Dannemore
- Eagle Bridge**
- Easton**
- Ellenburg United
- Ellenburg Center
- Essex Community
- Fort Ann United Protestant
- Fortsville
- Glens Falls: Christ
- Granville
- Greenwich**
- Harkness
- Hartford
- Hudson Falls
- Indian Lake
- Keesville
- Lake George First
- Lake Luzerne
- Lake Placid: Adirondack Community
- Lake Pleasant
- Long Lake
- Lyon Mountain
- Malta Ridge
- Middle Grove
- Mooers
- Moriah
- Morrisville
- Newcomb
- North Cambridge**
- North Creek
- North Gravelle
- North River
- Peaseville
- Peru: Community Federated
- Plattsburgh
- Porter Corners
- Pottersville
- Quaker Springs
- Queensbury
- Raceville
- Reber
- RW Johnsonburg
- Rock City Falls
- Salem

- Sanford's Ridge
- Saranac
- Saranac Lake
- Saratoga Springs
- Schroon Lake: Community
- Shushan**
- South Cambridge**
- South Corinth
- South Glens Falls
- Speculator
- Thurman
- Ticonderoga First
- Warrensburg
- West Fort Ann
- West Hebron**
- Westport Federated
- White Creek**
- Whitehall
- Willboro
- Wilmingon: Whiteface Community
- Wilton: Trinity

Albany District effective July 1

- Albany: Emmaus
- Albany: McKownville
- Albany: Pine Grove
- Albany: Trinity
- Alplaus
- Ames-Sprout Brook
- Amsterdam United
- Averill Park**
- Berlin**
- Bleecker
- Boytontownville
- Brainard
- Broadalbin
- Burnt Hills
- Canajoharie
- Castleton: St. Paul's
- Centre Glenville
- Clifton Park: Clifton Park
- Clifton Park: Jonesville
- Clifton Park: Shenendehowa
- Delmar
- East Greenbush
- East Sone Arabia
- Edinburg
- Fonda-Fultonville
- Fort Plain
- Freybush
- Gloversville: Foothills
- Gloversville: North Main Street
- Graton
- Green Island
- Hagaman
- Johnsonville
- Latham Calvary
- Mayfield

- Mechanicville**
- Melrose**
- Nassau: Grace
- Newtonville
- Niverville-Chatham Center
- North Bush
- North Chatham
- North Hoosick**
- North Petersburgh**
- Northampton at Fish House
- Northville: First
- Petersburgh**
- Pittstown**
- Ravena: Grace
- Rensselaer: Broadway
- Rensselaer: First-Emmanuel
- Rexford
- Round Lake**
- Schenectady: Albany St.
- Schenectady: Carman
- Schenectady: Eastern Parkway
- Schenectady: Faith
- Schenectady: First
- Schenectady: Rotterdam
- Schenectady: Korean UMC of Albany
- Schenectady: Stanford
- Scotia
- Slingerlands
- South Bethlehem
- Stephentown: Federated
- Tomhannock**
- Troy: Center Brunswick**
- Troy: Christ Church**
- Troy: Hope**
- Troy: Lansingburgh**
- Troy: Pawling Avenue**
- Valley Falls
- Waterford
- Voorheesville
- Watervliet
- Wells
- West Sand Lake**

Binghamton District effective July 1

- Apalachin & Little Meadows
- Barton
- Binghamton: Boulevard
- Binghamton: Brookvale
- Binghamton: Centenary-Chenango Street
- Binghamton: Fairview
- Binghamton: High Street
- Binghamton: Nimbombsburg
- Binghamton: Ogden-Hillcrest
- Binghamton: Tabernacle
- Candor: McKendree & Germany Hill
- Caring Covenant Cooperative Parish:
- Berkshire: First, East Berkshire & Jenks-

- ville; Flemingville & Fiarfield; Newark Valley
- Chenango Bridge
- Castle Creek & Glen Castle**
- Deposit & Hale Eddy**
- Endicott: Campville
- Endicott: Central
- Endicott: First
- Endicott: Union Center
- Endicott: Wesley
- Endwell
- Gibson Corners
- Gospel Hills Cooperative Parish: Afton & Bainbridge; Coventry & Union Valley; North Afton**
- Greene & Smithville Center**
- Halsey Valley
- Harpursville & Ouaquaga
- Hawleyton & Conklin Forks**
- Johnson City: Chocouton Center
- Johnson City: Lao
- Johnson City: Sarah Jane Johnson Memorial
- Johnson City: Westover
- Johnson City: Abbot West
- Chenango
- Killawog**
- Kirkwood: First**
- Lisle: Associated**
- Litchfield
- Lockwood
- Lounsbury
- Maine: Federated
- Marathon**
- McClure & North Sanford**
- Nanticoke
- Nichols
- North Fenton**
- Owego
- Park Terrace Community
- Sanitaria Springs**
- Spencer: Federated
- Tioga Center & Smithboro
- Vestal: Calvary
- Vestal
- Vestal Center
- Waverly
- Whittemore Hill
- Whitney Point**
- Willet**
- Windsor**

Churches to Susquehanna

- Arhens
- Franklin Forks
- Hancock-Emory?
- Rome and North Orwell
- Union Corners
- Warren Center

Oneonta District effective July 1

- Barnerville**
- Central Bridge**
- Cobleskill**
- Cooperstown
- Davenport & West Davenport
- Delanson**
- East Worcester
- Emmons & Cooperstown Junction
- Esperance-Sloansville
- Fly Creek & Schuyler Lake
- Franklin & Treadwell
- Gallupville**
- Grosvorners Corners
- Hartwick & Mount Vision
- Huntersland
- Hyndsville 7 Dorloo**
- Middleburgh**
- Middlefield & Roseboom
- Milford & Portlandville
- Mineral Springs**
- Morris (Garrattsville)
- Mount Upton & Guildford
- New Berlin
- Norwich: Broad Street
- Oneonta: Elm Park
- Oneonta: First
- Otego
- Oxford & McDonough
- Plymouth, North Norwich & Preston
- Richmondville & Warnerville**
- Sand Hill
- Schenevus & Westford
- Sharon Springs**
- Sherburn & Smyrna
- Sidney
- Unadilla & Sidney Center
- Unadilla Center
- Westville
- Wharton Valley: Burlington Flats
- Wharton Valley: Edmeston
- Wharton Valley: West Exeter
- Worcester

Churches to Susquehanna

- Community
- New Milford & Heart Lake
- Susquehanna, North Jackson

Districts from page 14

us to be as United Methodists in Upper New York, several of the lines include the invitations: "opening to new ways of being and doing Church" and "trusting the ambiguity and messiness of change." These matters of changes in district leadership and relationships illustrate this invitation to openness and trust, and demonstrate a call for us to adapt. It is my hope and prayer that other leaders in the conference and in congregations will risk the kind of thoughtful changes that the district superintendents have pursued.

I recognize that these shifts in district superintendent responsibilities and district connections had not been anticipated. For some there will be a sense of loss and for many there will be challenges. Pastors, lay leadership, and congregations, as well as district superintendents who are increasing their workloads will feel losses and challenges. It is important to be able to name that, and then to ask where God is leading us into the future. The appointment cabinet is considering how to engage in superintending in ways that maintain the contacts and relationships, while honoring the superintendents' needs for renewal and personal care.

Adaptive steps

Jan Marsi, in her responsibility as convener of the redistricting task force, has reminded us that what we are engaged in "is an adaptive step towards a comprehensive redistricting proposal that will be grounded in what we hope will enable the vision, mission and purpose of the new conference." In these times of change and transition, we affirm that the God who has guided us thus far will not desert us, but will continue to provide guidance and direction and encouragement. "Be not afraid! I am with you! I go before you!" We trust God's promise in Jesus Christ to be with us, and we hear the word of the prophet Isaiah to be attentive to the new thing that God is doing.

Guiding Principles:

- paying attention to the deep longings within ourselves,
- finding personal wholeness in the midst of the shifts,
- asking "what is this Kairos moment asking of us?" so that the force of the spirit will be greater than momentum of the system,
- to keep in mind the adaptive work while we frame the technical work,
- to recognize that the technical changes we must make now, can and must be changed again as we move forward and discern God's vision (and this means communicating to all that these changes are temporary),
- see our response as "seeding something bigger",
- making use of ALL of the abundance of the resources God has given us (gifts that are not being fully used now).

2009 Honor Roll

The following churches are paid in full for the year in all apportioned funds

Adirondack

Argyle UMC
 Argyle UMC
 Ausable Forks UMC*
 Ballston Spa UMC
 Bloomingdale UMC*
 Blue Mountain Lake UMC
 Bolton Landing UMC*
 Chestertown UMC
 Corinth UMC
 Crown Point UMC
 Dannemora UMC
 Ellenburg UMC
 Essex UMC*
 Fortsville UMC*
 Galway UMC
 Glens Falls: Christ UMC
 Glens Falls: Queensbury UMC
 Granville UMC
 Harkness UMC
 Hartford UMC
 Indian Lake UMC
 Lake George UMC*
 Long Lake UMC
 Malta Ridge UMC
 Middle Grove UMC
 Moriah UMC*
 Morrisonville UMC
 Newcomb UMC
 North River UMC*
 Plattsburgh UMC
 Pottersville UMC
 Quaker Springs UMC
 Raceville UMC
 Reber UMC*
 RWJohnsburg UMC
 Rock City Falls UMC*
 Sanford's Ridge UMC*
 Saranac UMC
 Saranac Lake UMC
 Saratoga Springs UMC
 South Glens Falls UMC
 Speculator UMC
 Ticonderoga UMC
 West Fort Ann UMC*
 Willsboro UMC*
 Wilmington/Whiteface UMC
 Wilton: Trinity UMC

Albany

Albany Emmaus UMC
 Albany: McKownville UMC
 Albany: Pine Grove UMC
 Alplaus UMC*
 Amsterdam UMC
 Barnerville UMC
 Brainard UMC*
 Braodalbin UMC
 Center Glenville UMC
 Central Bridge UMC
 Cobleskill UMC
 Delanson UMC*
 Delmar UMC
 Dorlooo UMC*
 East Greenbush UMC
 East Stone Arabia UMC*
 Edinburg UMC
 Fonda-Fultonville UMC*
 Freysbush UMC
 Gallupville UMC*
 Green Island UMC
 Grosvenor Corners UMC
 Hagaman UMC
 Hyndsville UMC
 Latham UMC
 Mayfield UMC
 Middleburgh UMC
 Mineral Springs UMC
 Nassau UMC
 Niverville/Chatham UMC*
 North Chatham UMC
 Northampton UMC
 Northville UMC
 Ravena UMC
 Rexford UMC*
 Richmondville UMC
 Schenectady: Carman UMC
 Schenectady: Eastern Parkway UMC
 Schenectady: Faith UMC
 Schenectady: First UMC
 Schenectady: Stanford UMC
 South Bethlehem UMC
 Stephentown Federated*
 Voorheesville UMC
 Warnerville UMC
 Wells UMC

Embury

Averill Park: Church of the Covenant UMC
 Berlin UMC*
 Boyntonville UMC*
 Brattleboro UMC*
 Brownsville UMC
 Cambridge UMC
 Center Brunswick UMC*
 Chittenden UMC
 Eagle Bridge UMC
 East Arlington Federated*
 Easton UMC
 Grafton UMC*
 Johnsonville UMC
 Jonesville UMC
 Melrose UMC
 Mendon UMC
 North Cambridge UMC
 Pittstown UMC
 Poulney UMC
 Pownal UMC
 Proctorsville UMC*
 Rutland UMC
 Sandgate UMC
 Shenendehowa UMC
 Shushan UMC
 South Cambridge UMC
 Tinmouth UMC
 Troy/Christ UMC
 Troy: Hope UMC
 Troy/Pawling Ave UMC
 United Church of Ludlow*
 West Arlington UMC*
 Windsor UMC

Green Mountain

Bethel UMC*
 Bloomfield UMC
 Bradford UMC
 Bristol Federated
 Burlington UMC
 Chelsea West Hill UMC
 Danville UMC
 East Middlebury/Ripton
 Elmore UMC
 Enosburg Falls UMC
 Essex UMC
 Essex Junction UMC
 Ferrisburg UMC*
 Grand Isle UMC*
 Groton UMC
 Hardwick United
 Highgate UMC
 Hinesburg Federated
 Isle La Motte UMC*
 Jericho UMC
 Korean-American UMC of Vermont
 Lincoln United
 Lyndonville UMC
 Marshfield United Church*
 Middlesex UMC
 Monkton Federated UMC
 Montgomery UMC
 Montpelier UMC
 Moretown UMC
 Morrisville UMC
 North Ferrisburgh UMC
 Northfield Parish
 Plainfield UMC
 Rice Hill UMC
 Richford UMC
 Rochester Federated
 St. Albans UMC
 St. Albans Bay UMC
 St. Johnsbury UMC
 Shelburne UMC
 South Burlington UMC
 Underhill United Church*
 Union Village UMC*
 United Church of Thetford*
 Vergennes UMC
 Walden UMC
 Waterville Union
 West Addison UMC
 West Danville UMC
 West Swanton UMC
 White River Junction UMC*
 Williamstown Federated*
 Williston Federated*
 Winoski UMC
 Worcester UMC*

The following churches are paid in full for 2009 in the apportioned funds listed

Adirondack

Champlain Three Steeple UMC 6
 Hudson Falls UMC 56
 Keeseville UMC 23456
 Lake Luzerne 6
 Lake Placid UMC 6
 Lake Pleasant UMC 12345
 Mooers UMC 23456
 North Creek UMC 6
 Peasleeville UMC 6
 Porter Corners UMC 345*
 Schuylerville UMC 16
 South Corinth UMC 1256
 Warrensburg UMC 12*

Albany

Albany/Trinity UMC 6
 Ames/Sprout Brook 6
 Bleeker UMC 12345
 Burnt Hills UMC 6
 Esperance-Sloansville UMC 12345
 Fort Plain UMC 3456
 Gloversville: Foothills/Trinity UMC 6
 Ames/Sprout Brook 6
 Bleeker UMC 12345
 Burnt Hills UMC 6
 Esperance-Sloansville UMC 12345
 Fort Plain UMC 3456
 Gloversville: Foothills UMC 345
 Gloversville: North Main UMC 6
 Huntersland UMC 1*
 Newtonville UMC 12345
 North Bush UMC 1345*
 Rensselaer/Broadway UMC 23456
 Rotterdam UMC 23456
 Schenectady: Albany Street 6
 Scotia UMC 12456
 Sharon Springs UMC 23456
 Slingerlands UMC 12345

Embury

Clifton Park UMC 13456
 Fair Haven UMC 345*
 Greenwich UMC 12345
 Mechanicville UMC 126
 Round Lake UMC 6
 Salem UMC 45
 Shafsbury UMC 2*
 South Royalton Federated 3456
 Troy: Cornerstone Community 23456
 Valley Falls UMC 156
 Waterford UMC 6
 Wells UMC 23*
 Weston UMC 6
 West Hebron UMC 6
 West Sand Lake UMC 6
 White Creek UMC 2345

Green Mountain

Albany UMC 5*
 Barre UMC 12
 Barton Federated 2345*
 Binghamville UMC 6
 Chelsea Federated 1*
 Fairfax United Church 6
 Georgia UMC 3456
 Greensboro Bend UMC 12
 Middlebury UMC 12345
 New Hope UMC 12345
 Riverton UMC 345*
 Sheldon UMC 12345
 Swanton UMC 6
 Waterbury Center UMC 12345
 West Burke UMC 23456
 West Enosburg UMC 12345

*1=Admin. Apportionment; 2=World Service & Conf. Benevol.; 3=Ministerial Ed. Fund; 4=Black College Fund; 5=African Union. Fund; 6=Pension Fund.

*Church is not responsible for pension payment because it either doesn't have a pastor or is being served by a pastor from another denomination or annual conference.

Troy Annual Conference Session

Schedule

Saturday, May 8

District Meetings: Times and places TBA.

Friday, May 21

Clergy Session, Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church, 175 Fifth St., Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

Retiree Service, 7 p.m. at Christ United Methodist Church, C, Glens Falls, N.Y. Members of the 2010 retiring class include Herman Benjamin, Eileen Deming, Cheryl Heater, Richard Hibbert, Peter Kelly, G. William Pattison, William Sheldon, Denise Stringer and Robert Zittel.

Saturday, May 22

Closing Session, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Christ United Methodist Church, 54 Bay St., Glens Falls, N.Y.

Note: The preconference journal will be published in downloadable format only. Each conference member (Clergy Member, local church Lay Member, equalization Member) is expected to print a copy to bring to the May 22 session.

Registration

The Registration Form for the May 22 Session will be available on the Troy Conference web site at www.troyac.org and will not be mailed.

Registration is \$35. Mail the completed form together with a check made payable to Troy Conference to Troy Conference Office, Attn: W. Davis, 396 Loudon Rd., Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866-5332.

Forms without accompanying payment and payments without forms will be returned. Registrations postmarked after April 28 will be \$50.

Housing (if needed)

Members wanting to spend the night May 21 in the Glens Falls area must make their own arrangements for lodging.

Awards

Nominations for the **Denman Evangelism Awards** for clergy and laity, the **Small Membership Church Award**, and the **Stimmel Peace with Justice Award** will be accepted until April 1. Applications for each award are available upon request from Ilah Sisson Walser, (518) 584-8214, ext. 11 or (800) 684-9377, ext. 11, iwalser@troyac.org.

Information about the **Camping Volunteer of the Year** is available from Stuart Williams, Board of Camping and Retreats Chair, at sdwilliams56@aol.com, or about the **CORRageous Award** is available from Bee McCollum, chair of the Conference Commission on Religion and Race, at beemccol@together.net.

Other dates to note

New England Annual Conference Session, Wednesday through Saturday, June 16 through 19, Gordon College in Wenham, Mass. Vermont clergy and lay members are required to attend.

Upper New York Area Uniting Conference, Saturday, June 19, 9:30 a.m., ON Center in Syracuse, N.Y. Lay members and clergy can reserve seats on a charter bus from Albany to the ON Center for the June 19 Uniting Conference. The bus will leave the capital at 6:30 a.m. and return around 10 p.m. Reservations and a payment of \$30 per person are due to Ilah Walser, 396 Loudon Rd., Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866, by April 5. Contact Walser at (800) 684-9377, ext. 11, or by e-mail at iwalster@troyac.org.

Upper New York Worship Celebration, "In the Name of Love: We Journey Together," Saturday, Sept. 11, 9:30 a.m., Empire State Plaza, Albany, N.Y.



Yes. I'll stay with you, I'll protect you wherever you go, and I'll bring you back to this very ground. I'll stick with you until I've done everything I promised you.

Genesis 28:15

Asking God to 'Lead On,' Troy Conference will hold final Session

Inspired by Genesis 28:10-22, the Worship Planning Team for the Troy Conference Annual Session have chosen "Lead On" as the theme of the one-day gathering, to be held Saturday, May 22 at Christ United Methodist Church in Glens Falls, N.Y.

The theme echoes prior Session's themes of creation and journey, a reflection of the journey towards the closing of Troy Conference and the new conferences that are being formed or reformed.

As of July 1, the conference, which was organized in 1832, will separate along state lines. Vermont

churches will become part of the New England Annual Conference and New York churches will become part of the new conference in Upper New York.

Though only a one day conference session, the Troy Conference Session will mirror a regular conference session with worship, recognition of awards' recipients, and business sessions.

The business session will deal with those legal issues that must be resolved before the conference is closed and limited to that which is essential or required for the transition to the new conferences.

Share your memories



The last issue of *The Connection* will be published in early May. A portion of the newspaper will be dedicated to celebrating Troy Conference and its members.

- Who influenced you in your faith journey? Who enriched your life? Who inspired you?
- What ministries helped shape you?
- What do you want others to remember about Troy Conference?
- What made the conference special? What has made Troy Conference strong?
- How will you stay connected with those you have shared ministry with?
- What scriptural passage best reflects the ministries of Troy Conference?
- What will you take from your experiences in Troy Conference to your new conference?
- Who would you like to thank?

Stories, poems, photos and tributes are welcome. Submissions should be no more than 300 words, and photographs need to be high resolution and at least 5-inches-by-7-inches. Send submissions electronically to sbrands@troyac.org, or by mail to Sandra Brands, Troy Annual Conference, 396 Loudon Rd., Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866.