



# UPPER NEW YORK UNITED METHODIST ADVOCATE

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Being God's love with our neighbors in all places

A PUBLICATION OF THE UPPER NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Volume 2, Issue 5 - May 2011

## Preparing for an offering of names for Jesus Christ

### AC opening worship will celebrate new members

By Maidstone Mulenga\*  
Advocate Editor

A name on a 3 x 5 card; someone who has come to Jesus Christ since July 1 last year.

That is what United Methodists in upstate New York are being asked to bring as their offering to the opening worship of the 2011 Annual Conference Session in Rochester.

When Resident Bishop Marcus Matthews toured the 48,000-square-mile Upper New York Annual Conference area last year, he challenged United Methodists to bring one person to Jesus Christ. Now he wants those names given to God as a praise offering.

"Whether it is someone new to the church or a youth finishing confirmation classes, we want to celebrate what God continues to do in this area," said Bishop Matthews, who is in charge of more than 185,590 members in 930 United Methodist churches in 49 of the 62 counties in New York state.

Bishop Matthews has asked



Advocate archive photo

Participants at the Upper New York Annual Conference's first Conference Session in 2010. This year, Resident Bishop Marcus Matthews is seeking the names of those who have come to Christ since July 1, 2010 be brought as an offering to the opening worship. FOR MORE STORIES ABOUT THE SESSION, SEE PAGES 11 AND 12.

### What to bring to Annual Conference Session

1. Names of people who have come to Jesus Christ. (One name on each 3 x 5 index card.)
2. Donations to give to the Open Door Mission in Rochester. (See list on Page 11)
3. Offerings to support Bishop's Discretionary Fund, Mission of Peace and clergy care.

pastors and their lay leaders attending the Annual Conference Session to place the names in the offering plate during the opening worship at 9 a.m. June 8.

Nearly 2,000 United Methodists will be at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center for five days to worship, conduct the business of the Church and ordain new ministers.

### Good neighbors

The United Methodists will also be putting into practice their mission statement of being good neighbors by contributing thousands of items to a Rochester homeless shelter. They will donate food, utensils, toiletries and other items to the Open Door Mission in Rochester.

The Open Door Mission Inc. is a not-for-profit Christian ministry that provides

food, emergency housing, addiction-recovery programs, clothing and medical assistance to thousands of people.

"We are called to be God's love to our neighbors in all places," said Bishop Matthews. "And what better way can we show that than by helping our brothers and sisters in the Rochester area who need to know that God's love extends to all people?"

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Eastside Mission in Utica hosts neighborhood cleanup  
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## Growing churches: Two congregations' stories



By Beth DiCocco\*  
Advocate Writer

This is a tale of two churches.

One has a nomadic history, the other is firmly rooted in place – with the 60-year members to prove it.

One has 100 members, the other has a little more than half that many.

But these two churches have something important in common: They are growing.

Amherst: Asbury United Methodist Church and Reynoldsville United Meth-

odist have both seen growth in the last year or so, and their pastors and congregants point to what they believe are some of the things they've been doing that contribute to that growth.

Rev. Jackie Ann Rose Kraft, Asbury's pastor, says, "We have been intentional about outreach. We have become intentional relational builders with believers and nonbelievers alike, being involved in small group and service ministries in a variety of ways."

Asbury will celebrate the

first year in its new building on Dodge Road in Amherst on May 30, and since May 30, 2010, has had 13 new members join; the church also has a confirmation class of five young people who were not part of the church last year.

### Reaching out

Betsy Arthur, who became outreach chairperson in November, noted a number of events the church has hosted to draw people in – among them two Bible studies for seniors, a Dinner with Santa, an Easter Egg

Hunt, a Game Night, a Chili Dinner and Valentines for Veterans, in which church members wrote cards thanking veterans for their service to the nation.

The church is planning a big garage sale/craft fair – that could possibly become a block party for the church's Dodge Road neighbors.

"We try to do one program a month for community and one for the congregation," Arthur said.

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# Meet Sherri Mackey, Conference treasurer

By Beth DiCocco\*  
Advocate Writer

Errol Flynn, Zorro and Sherri Mackey all have something in common: They can handle a sword.

Well, Flynn may have been faking it, but Mackey is the real deal, and could have offered Captain Blood some pointers.

"I know what they do wrong," she said of watching movie sword fights. "I know when the style is wrong."

Still, she said, "I always like those scenes."

She and her son, Michael Manfredo, now 28, were both fencers, and competed together at the Empire State Games in the mid-1990s. The Saratogian did a story on the pair.

"It was quite an experience," she said of the games.

Mackey, who calls herself "a reasonable fencer," learned to wield three weapons: foil, epee and saber. The "very healthy sport" is one that she enjoyed because it required her to rely on herself.

"The outcome is entirely me and what I do with the weapon," she said.

She's laid her weapons down, and now Mackey is treasurer and direc-

tor of administrative services for the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. She joined the conference on June 1, 2010.

For 15 years, Mackey worked as associate director and coordinator for business services at the Capital District Educational Opportunities Center (EOC), a division of Hudson Valley Community College, in Troy, N.Y. EOC provides free educational and vocational training for those who are economically disadvantaged.

Mackey wasn't looking for a new job, she said, but a particularly bad day at work got her thinking about making a move.

"I did an Internet search of positions within the church, and the only one was this one," she said.

But her decision to pursue a job with the Conference was not a random one. Mackey and her husband, Doug, had been becoming more and more involved in their home church in



Albany, she said.

In fact, Doug Mackey, an archeologist with the state Department of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, is currently in seminary part time at Drew University and is a quarter-time pastor at Schenectady United Methodist Church.

"I thought about it for about a week; prayed on it," Mackey said, "because in all of this is prayer; I am seeing this as a calling ... that I was called to this position with whatever gifts and graces I have to bring to it."

The new job has meant a new lifestyle as well with homes in two places. Mackey rents an apartment in Syracuse where she stays during the week, heading home to Albany on weekends and holidays. It works, she said, because the couple's youngest child, Alex Mackey, 18, headed off to college at SUNY New Paltz last fall. Daughter Alyssa Manfredo, 20, also attends New Paltz as a theater design/technology major.

Mackey was born in Wichita, Kan., but her father's job with Boeing took the family all over the country – she's lived in Louisiana, Washington state, Iowa and Pennsylvania, where she graduated from high school.

She returned to Kansas for college,

majoring in fisheries biology. Her goal at that time was to become a marine biologist. But with no coast in Kansas, she "started with the next best thing," fresh water fish.

"I always loved nature, the outdoors, animals, but I have a lot of allergies, so I leaned toward the water," she said. She never did work as a biologist, and ultimately went back to school for accounting.

A marine biologist in Kansas may be a fish out of water, but Mackey has a clear idea about her role in the Conference and how she can best fulfill it.

"I believe in and support the vision of the Annual Conference," Mackey said. "... the financial aspects of any business are there to provide a foundation for the real work. I try to keep that in mind in everything I do. ... I believe in what we're here to do, what Jesus taught us to do: bring the Kingdom to earth. I'm not doing the actual ministry at the front, I am behind that; that's where I can provide the most benefit."

\*Beth DiCocco is writer/editor for the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Reach her at bethdicocco@unyumc.org.



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# Excitement builds for Africa University choir

## Concerts

**NOTE:** The original concert schedule has been revised; some dates/locations have changed.

All concerts are at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

**JUNE 3**  
Trinity UMC, 8595 Westmoreland Road, Whitesboro

**JUNE 4**  
Covenant UMC, 1124 Culver Road, Rochester

**JUNE 5**  
8:30 & 10 a.m., Asbury First UMC, 1040 East Ave., Rochester  
7 p.m. Kenmore UMC, 32 Landers Road, Kenmore

**JUNE 6**  
East Aurora UMC, 345 Main St., East Aurora

**JUNE 7**  
Bath Presbyterian Church, 6 E. Morris St., Bath

**JUNE 8-11**  
Annual Conference Session, Riverside Convention Center, Rochester

**JUNE 11**  
2 p.m. University UMC, 324 University Ave., Syracuse  
7 p.m. Broad St. UMC, 74 N. Broad St., Norwich

**JUNE 12**  
10:30 a.m., High St. UMC, 1288 Vestal Ave., Binghamton  
7 p.m. Rotterdam UMC, 1915 Helderberg Ave., Schenectady

**JUNE 13**  
Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, 30 2nd St., Troy

**JUNE 14**  
Newcomb UMC, Route 28N, Newcomb

**JUNE 15**  
Malone UMC, 345 W. Main St., Malone

**JUNE 16**  
Watertown Asbury, 327 Franklin St., Watertown



Next month, the Upper New York Annual Conference will host the Africa University Choir, a premier vocal ensemble that performs in more than 18 languages.

Their tour kicks off on June 3 with a performance at Trinity UMC in Whitesboro.

Trinity Pastor Marilyn Baissa said the church is excited about hosting the choir; eight families from the congregation will be hosts, and the church is planning a dinner for the families and choir members.

"The families are really excited; everyone is really excited," Baissa said. "We're very mission oriented."

Baissa said that the church has been working to publicize the concert, and a member who owns Life Discovery, a local Christian bookstore, has heard a lot of enthusiasm about the concert from area churches.

Baissa heard the choir perform at an Annual Conference Session a number of years ago.

"I remember what a difference it made at Annual Conference," she said. "It livened everything up and got people excited."

Over the two weeks, the choir will tour the conference, including spending four days at this year's Annual Conference Session in Rochester.

Africa University, which opened in 1992, is a United Methodist-related institution located in Mutare, Zimbabwe, and its 16-member touring choir features a select group of international singers who perform sacred and secular choral music drawn from the Western and African repertoires.

## Group plans first Palestinian dinner

Relationship building, education and some great food are on the menu for the first UNY Palestinian Dinner hosted by the newly-forming Task Force on Peace w/Justice in Palestine/Israel of The Upper New York Annual Conference.

The dinner will be Thursday, June 9, following the Annual Conference afternoon session. The buffet of authentic Palestinian food will begin at 5:15 p.m. Along with Conference delegates, members of Rochester-area churches, Palestinian community members, and all those who seek peace with justice are invited to attend.

The goal of the dinner, organizers say, is to build relationships among delegates, offer information about Palestine/Israel and raise funds for Palestinian mission schools and for the Gary Bergh Scholarship, which enables young adults to travel to Palestine/Israel.

A brief program will include an update by Bergh Scholarship recipients on their May-June 2011 delegation to Palestine/Israel.

Palestinian crafts and T-shirts will be sold. Dinner is \$15, and 150 reservations will be taken; contact Linda Bergh (315) 492-8507, 116 Edna Road, Syracuse, NY 13205, or Karen Peterson, (607) 739-3141, 116 Greenridge Drive, Horseheads, NY 14845. Checks should be made out to "UNY Conference" with "Palestinian Dinner" on the memo line. Donations to the Bergh Scholarship will be accepted as well.

## Advocate now accepting letters

The *Advocate* is accepting letters to the editor. You can discuss specific content in the *Advocate* or any issues within the conference or Church.

Letters are limited to 250 words. The publisher reserves the right to reject or edit letters.

The deadline is the fifth of the month for the following month's newsletter.

To submit a letter, e-mail: [news@unyumc.org](mailto:news@unyumc.org). (Please put "letter to the editor" in the subject line).

Or send your letter to:  
**UNY Annual Conference**  
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Attention: Letters to the Editor



Submitted photos.

**LEFT:** A parade of 1,000 origami paper cranes at the Cicero United Methodist Church. **RIGHT:** Tari, Kaz and Jody Otabara, who initiated the project to create a chain of 1,000 origami paper cranes that will be sent to the Tohoku Disaster Relief Center in Japan.

# 1,000 paper cranes travel to Japan for tsunami relief

Following the March earthquake and tsunami in Japan, parishioners at the Cicero United Methodist Church decided to make a chain of 1,000 paper cranes. An ancient Japanese legend promises that anyone who folds 1,000 origami cranes will be granted a wish by a crane, such as long life or recovery from illness or injury.

The church requested a donation of \$1 for each piece of origami paper. The donor was given the opportunity to write a message of hope and concern to the Japanese people on the back.

Several members of the church, most from the youth group, folded the cranes and created the chain.

As a result of this effort, \$1,000 will be sent to the United Methodist Committee on Relief, which will transfer the funds to the United Church of Christ in Japan to help with the relief efforts.

The chain of cranes will be sent to the Tohoku Disaster Relief Center.

# Churches reaching out to grow

Continued from Page 1

Rev. Mike Kelly, who has been pastor at Reynoldsville since December of 2009, has seen his congregation grow from 12-15 attending weekly to nearly 60, with an average attendance in the 40s.

"We've done well," Kelly said. "We just keep pushing forward. It's certainly not all us, we're blessed."

Kelly said the church has hosted events similar to Asbury's.

"We keep doing a lot of different things," he said. "One of the biggest is (that) we're trying to bring the church back into the center of the community."

"We've had dinners, Kids Days, Easter Egg Hunts, Bible Study; any reason we can come up with to get people in the church, we are."

And not all of the outreach efforts are directly about faith. Charles Syms, lay leader at Asbury, said allowing groups – including an SAT study group – simply to use the church facilities is another important way to build connections to the community.

"We're pretty eclectic about what we try to do," Syms said.

## Outside the box

Reaching out to the community doesn't just mean bringing people into the church, Arthur says, it means going out to where they are.

A statistician charted an area of 3 miles around Asbury UMC to determine what populations were growing, Kraft said, and it turned out to be people older than 80.

"God gave us a ministry with older people," she said.

As one of the efforts to reach those older people church members Bob and Nancy Moore were part of a group that traveled some 40 miles to an elderly East Aurora couple's home to help with yard work and other chores. The Moores brought their dogs "for a little pet therapy," Arthur said. Church members have also visited seniors at the Erie County Home.

"We are a seven-day-a-week church, not in the building, but out there in the community," Kraft said. "We have T-shirts ... the flame and the cross is out there. We represent Christ; that's what we do here."

## Defining success

The key, Kelly said, is not to give up too easily when a church tries new things.

"(There's) a lot of doing away with programs because there's no participants," he said. "Go forward either way."

For example, he said, Reynoldsville had done away with its choir. Now, it's not uncommon to have 14 singing in the choir.

"We have to keep moving forward," he said. "I made up my mind, if there were two of



The Amherst: Asbury United Methodist Church held an Easter Egg Hunt this spring as part of its outreach efforts.

**"It's a challenge. ... how do we (in a) non-church oriented community make church relevant for them without losing the basic idea of who we are as United Methodists?"**

— Charles Syms, lay leader at Asbury UMC talking about growing membership

us singing, we'd have a choir."

Kelly said it's important not just to use numbers as a measure of success or as a reason for continuing a program.

"It doesn't matter if you have two or 20 – you never want to go (backward)," he said. "If there's a prayerful reason to something, then there's a reason to do it."

Syms agrees that it's important to give new programs time to catch on.

"When you try different things, some work and some don't; don't abandon them too quickly," said Syms, who joined the church in 1988. "Sometimes it just takes awhile to catch on."

That can be six or seven months, rather than two or three, Syms said.

Both Syms and Kelly said it's about measuring success in new ways.

"It's pretty amazing when you see that church ... Christmas Eve we had 80," Kelly said. "... The first few weeks I was there, I thought, 'oh, my, this is pretty sad.'"

Now, Kelly said, there are three Bible study groups (there had been none) and after 20 years without a cantata, "we just did an Easter cantata," he said.

Kelly is proud of the church's progress, even if its numbers are still small compared to some other churches.

"You're told to take those baby steps," Kelly said, "but don't just take them, celebrate those baby steps."

## Impediments

Adding members isn't easy, as most churches can attest, and for both Reynoldsville and Asbury there have been setbacks.

Kelly said that in the beginning it was tough not to get discouraged when the church was struggling with very little

congregation and minister responds to them. (Pastor Kraft) is really people oriented, and people respond to that."

"It hasn't been smooth, but that's OK," Kraft said. "I think people need to know that it's OK. As long as you (have) Jesus as a foundation, you can't fall far."

## Be welcoming

But both congregations have found success bringing people into their churches, and, they say, what happens once people get inside the door is equally important.

"A lot of work (is done) within the church to make people feel welcome. Greeters – that's not new, people have been doing that forever – but we are intentional about it; making sure they're connecting with people when they first come in," Syms said. "People (feel) welcome, important, that we're glad to have them there."

Attitude means a lot, Kelly said, "... this is a very loving, very kind church, ... and without being overbearing they are very welcoming ... and we are having a great time."

When asked if the new members have helped reaffirm the Reynoldsville congregation's faith and excited them, Kelly said: "I think we've done exactly that."

Asbury member Bob Moore said, "Basically, people feel welcome, and they're allowed to assimilate as opposed to being dropped in and assigned duties. When we moved from Baltimore we were looking for a church for a couple of years – that was several locations ago – it felt like it was home right away. (We were) extremely welcome right away. We do that very well; we are very accepting; nobody looks down their nose ..."

Kelly offered encouragement to other congregations seeking to bolster membership.

"You never can think it's impossible to dig out, because we will – with lots of help – we will," Kelly said.

And Kraft offered this advice: "They have to be willing to say: 'What can we do differently?' Not be bound up in the building, be bound up with God's love reaching out to be in relationship with the people in the community. Get out there, all the time; represent Jesus, be intentional relationship builders...and pretty soon, (people will say): 'Do you have a church?' Yeah, we have a great church ..."

\*Beth DiCocco is writer/editor for the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Reach her at [bethdicocco@unyumc.org](mailto:bethdicocco@unyumc.org).

## Meet new church member Don McQuiston

Amherst resident Don McQuiston and his wife, Jane, became members of Amherst: Asbury UMC a few months ago; Don began his relationship with the church in 2005.

He talked about what that relationship is like:

"It's become a family to us. I guess that's the best way to describe it. I'm not a lifelong Christian; I was away for about 40 years. There's a sense of love ... I've been to other churches; they're nice, but I didn't get the feeling I get here. It's a family."

McQuiston said Asbury is a "different kind of church," and while the basic tenets of the faith are the same everywhere, an individual church puts its own stamp on the faith, and that can make a difference: "... Christianity – the faith, what the Bible teaches – is pretty set in stone; the story, everybody knows the story, but ... everybody uses it differently. ..."

"Conversations between the congregation (members) and interacting with the pastor makes it all very inclusive ... You're part of the story. Your faith is allowed to develop and be shown as you choose. It becomes easier to accept it."

Though he is not inclined to take part in outreach efforts, McQuiston said his experiences with the church's efforts have been good ones.

"There's no pressure to participate in outreach, there's the invitation. ...The outreach committee is run by a woman who is exceptionally positive. I've not gone out to service, but she speaks to me and makes me think."

McQuiston said he didn't sign up at first for a church visit to a soup kitchen, but ended up going. "... two days before, I decided I needed to go to the soup kitchen, experience something I'd never experienced. It was not the climbing of Mt. Everest I thought it would be ... It felt good."

McQuiston recently had an illness that affected his kidneys, and he talked about how the church responded:

"I was very scared. I was getting cards from people and telephone calls from people. If you're trying to build faith, that's a very easy way to build faith."

# Conference members gather for Global Summit

By Beth DiCocco\*  
Advocate Writer

As part of *A Call to Action: Reordering the Life of the Church*, The United Methodist Church has affirmed Four Areas of Focus:

1. Developing principled Christian leaders for the church and world,
2. Starting/renewing congregations,
3. Engaging in ministries with the poor, and
4. Combating the diseases of poverty by improving health globally.

The UMC Leadership Summit was an opportunity for church leaders, clergy and laypeople to discuss those focus areas as well as pose questions to the church leadership.

The summit was disseminated around the world via webcast on April 6; for the Upper New York Annual Conference, the summit took place from noon to 3 p.m. — but as this was truly a global summit, for some participants it was early morning or even the middle of the night.

Gathering together and being connected was a critically important part of the summit, said Bill Gottschalk-Fielding, director of Connectional Ministries, who served as facilitator for the group of about 40 who gathered in the Welcome Center of the Cicero UMC to watch the webcast live and participate in the discussion groups.

“(I think that people were) really excited about being connected,” Gottschalk-Fielding said. “These are folks who use Skype, so it was not just the technology (that impressed them).

“It was the chance to connect with Nashville and our sisters and brothers all over the world.”



Photo by Maidstone Mulenga

**About 40 gathered at the Upper New York Annual Conference's offices to watch the April 6 Summit. Participants broke into small groups to discuss the questions the summit posed.**

Altogether, there were more than 4,000 web connections to the three-hour event.

The groups were asked to spend 20 minutes discussing ideas raised in the first hour of the summit, including the four focus areas. The first question was about the need to increase vital congregations.

“We understood that that was our challenge before ... it is certainly our challenge here (in Upper New York),” Gottschalk-Fielding said.

While the need to revitalize did not strike the group as revelatory, addressing it as part of a group was beneficial, he said.

“I think folks appreciated the chance to sit around talking about some of these questions together,” he said. “The problems and challenges

### See the Summit

View the webcast at [www.umc.org/leadership-summit](http://www.umc.org/leadership-summit).

we face are not unique to us; it's all over the connection. Particularly in the United States, we have the challenge of revitalizing existing congregations and planning new congregations.”

Another topic raised was the need to find objective measurements to promote accountability and indicate the success of churches' efforts.

There were some concerns in the local group about whether the right things are being measured and about how best to measure efforts that go beyond church attendance.

“Is there a way to measure less tangible things,” Gottschalk-Fielding asked, “such as mission engagement in the neighborhood?”

“Our conference is committed to being God's love to our neighbors in all places. ‘How well are we doing sharing that love with our neighbors?’” is the question, he said.

“It's what happens outside our four walls that really counts.”

And going beyond the walls — indeed beyond states' and nations' borders — to connect the people of the Church was what the webcast summit was all about.

And despite a few glitches, the webcast showed, Gottschalk-Fielding said, that “we can do this.”

“The technology will

## Some survey results

### Who participated

63.5 percent of participants responding to the survey were clergy  
36.5 were lay people

### How

69 percent participated through a conference gathering  
31 percent online on their own

### About the Four Areas of Focus (strongly disagree to strongly agree)

51.3 percent agree  
28.3 percent strongly agree  
6.9 percent disagree

### When asked about the priorities for the local church

73.8 percent said engaging in ministry with the poor should be the first priority  
63.9 percent said developing new leaders

### About the priorities for the annual conference

60.5 percent said forming new congregations  
47.8 percent said developing new leaders

improve, and this is another means for us to get connected.”

“This is the future,” he said.

\*Beth DiCocco is writer/editor for the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Reach her at [bethdicocco@unyumc.org](mailto:bethdicocco@unyumc.org).

## Summer campership funds available

The Camp & Retreat Ministries have available several financial assistance options to help families afford summer camp.

### CRM Campership Fund

The Upper New York Camp & Retreat Ministries Campership Fund is available to families who are unable to pay the full cost of one week of summer camp for their children.

### Ethnic Campership Fund

This fund, made possible for the summer of 2011 through the generosity of the Upper New York Area Conference Leadership Team, will provide full camperships for one week of camp for children in the following ethnic groups: Asian American, African American, Hispanic American, Pacific Islander or Native American.

### Local Site Campership Funds

These funds are administered through each of the six UNY camp sites. Individuals should contact the site directors for availability and an application form. Log onto [www.campsandretreats.org](http://www.campsandretreats.org) for a link to each of the six sites.

### First Camper Fund

In an effort to promote summer camp within the churches of the Upper New York Annual Conference, Camp & Retreat Ministries is offering a full campership for one week of camp to the first child who signs up for summer camp from any UNY church that has not sent a child to one of the six UNYAC camps in the

past five years. Individuals needing information or an application form may contact Joan Newlon, CRM executive assistant, at (315) 424-7878 ext. 309 or email: [JoanNewlon@unyumc.org](mailto:JoanNewlon@unyumc.org).

**Register today for summer camp programs at [www.campsandretreats.org](http://www.campsandretreats.org)**



## Camp & Retreat Ministries event schedule

### MAY

- 21 ASBURY – Work Day
- 23-25 SKY LAKE – Wildflower Photo Retreat
- 27-30 SKY LAKE – Spring Fling
- 27-30 SKYE FARM – Family Camp
- 28-30 CASOWASCO – Memorial Day Family Weekend

### OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULE

- CASOWASCO 2-7 p.m. June 12
- FINDLEY: 2-5 p.m. June 12
- ALDERSGATE 2-6 p.m. June 18
- SKYE FARM 10 a.m.-3 p.m. July 2

### JULY

- 1-3 CASOWASCO UNITE – Summer Youth Weekend
- 3-5 ASBURY – 4th of July Family Getaway
- 13-15 CASOWASCO – Father-Son Adventure
- 15-17 ALDERSGATE – Family Life Weekend
- 18-20 ASBURY – Genesee Valley Lectionary Retreat
- 20-23 ASBURY – Asbury Express I
- 24-27 ASBURY – Asbury Express II
- 24-29 CASOWASCO – Director's Invitational
- 24-30 FINDLEY – Family Bible Camp
- 29-31 ASBURY – Family Retreat

# Things are picking up at Utica Eastside Mission



## Utica Eastside Mission

The Utica Eastside Mission was established in 2007 as an effort to reach out to those individuals living on the east side of Utica. Utica Eastside Mission is located in the Mohawk District of The United Methodist Church.

Among others, the mission runs a Summer Program for children ages 4 to 15 weekdays during the summer; activities include music lessons, Bible stories, theater classes, games and healthy food.

932 Rutger St.,  
Utica, NY 13501  
(315) 292-1239  
E-mail: [uticaeastsidemission@gmail.com](mailto:uticaeastsidemission@gmail.com)  
[www.uticaeastsidemission.org](http://www.uticaeastsidemission.org)



By Beth DiCocco\*  
Advocate Writer

The Utica Eastside Mission is “young and small,” says Mary Gladstone-Highland, the church & community worker who leads the Utica mission.

But on April 30, things were picking up – literally.

The mission organized a clean-up day, and about 15 volunteers, including some kids from the mission’s afterschool program, donned rubber gloves, grabbed trash bags and picked up trash and recyclables around the mission’s Rutger Street neighborhood.

For Gladstone-Highland, the clean up was “a chance to show this community – we have programs for the kids – we’re also here for the adults,” she said. “We care about them and care about the earth that they live on.”

After the cleanup, the volunteers were going to share a “picnic for the planet,” serving mostly local and/or organic foods.

It was a bright and sunny Saturday; the first nice day in awhile, and Gladstone-Highland admitted that the day’s activity of picking up trash was going to be a tough sell.

But her husband Andrew headed out to gather some of the kids who attend the afterschool program.

“Here comes Andrew like the Pied Piper,” Gladstone-Highland said as he came up the street leading the Sudanese family of children back to the mission.

The afterschool program only has seven students, but they represent the diversity of their neighborhood that’s home to Vietnamese, Italians and Sudanese.

Both the chance to work with kids and in such a diverse neighborhood attracted Gladstone-Highland, who had worked in Baltimore previously.

“It’s my opportunity to be in mission – to get to help

you, learn from you and you get to help me,” Gladstone-Highland said. “It’s not just me giving.”

A big part of that exchange of knowledge is cultural.

“We all learn from each other about the places we’ve been,” she said.

A discussion about dogs at the afterschool program offered a lesson in these cultural differences. The Italian kids were talking about how much they love their pet dogs. The Sudanese kids, however, think of dogs, which in their country are wild and not domesticated, as frightening.

Working with different cultures can lead to some “misunderstandings.” The dog, conversation, Gladstone-Highland said, got a little heated.

But there were no clashes on Saturday.

Miriam, 7, wearing her blue rubber gloves, accepted her orders – to collect plastic bottles – with a salute, and the groups of volunteers headed off.

While Jimmy and Miriam, both from the afterschool program, picked up trash with Gladstone-Highland, she took the chance to remind them what they learned during a field trip to the recycling center, one of the mission’s 16 field trips. (“That’s what you can do with a small group,” she said.)

The three discussed recycling paper into tissues.

The area around the mission was a little cleaner after Saturday’s efforts, but the clean-up day did more than fill a few trash bags.

Activities like these, Gladstone-Highland said, show that the “church is available to everyone, not just those in the pews every Sunday.”

\*Beth DiCocco is writer/editor for the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Reach her at [bethdicocco@unyumc.org](mailto:bethdicocco@unyumc.org).

Photos by Beth DiCocco.  
Volunteers and students in the Utica Eastside Mission afterschool program spent the afternoon April 30 picking up trash and recyclables in the neighborhood around the mission. It was the mission’s first clean-up day. At right Mary Gladstone-Highland with Miriam, 7.

# Water tank projects overflow into strong relationships

## Two Rochester-area churches are working with nonprofit Ugandan Water Project

By Christian Vischi\*  
Advocate Writer

Perhaps these lines from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" best summarize Uganda's water plight: "Water, water, every where, Nor any drop to drink."

Like that crew amid a sea of salty brine, the people of the Republic of Uganda have sufficient water around them, but collecting it is another matter. That was until 2007, when a chance meeting led to the creation of the Ugandan Water Project (UWP), and communities in East Africa were transformed.

The Ugandan Water Project is the brainchild of James Harrington of Lima, NY, George Nsamba of Kawanda, Uganda, and Derek Joseph of Avon, NY.

There are three major goals: provide safe, accessible drinking water to communities across Uganda; strengthen communities by providing a shared resource located at a community-valued location such as schools, clinics, churches and orphanages; and facilitate relationships between sponsors in the United States and communities in Uganda.

According to a report by NASA, the Republic of Uganda's total annual precipitation is between 39 and 60 inches, depending on geography. That compares to Buffalo (38.58 inches per year) and New Orleans (61.88), according to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

While those rainfall totals provide adequate supply, over 40 percent of the country still only has access to unimproved water sources — rivers, lakes and unprotected wells, according to a 2006 UN report, National Water Development Report: Uganda.

The Rush United Methodist Church (Genesee Valley District) is contributing to the flow of water through its fundraising efforts to purchase rainwater collection tanks to communities; the tanks hold just over 2,600 gallons — enough water to supply 100 families or 500 students. The tanks cost \$3,500 and have a 35-year lifespan.

"Our church has been fundraising on behalf of the Ugandan Water Project, and in less than two months we raised enough for a water tank, and are on our way to a second," Devin Lyles, youth pastor at Rush UMC, said in February.

Lyles was also doing some fundraising for the project on his own by participating in the Ugandan Water Project's second annual 5K Run/Walk on April 23.

Right now, the church is in the process of creating a cookbook titled *A Recipe for Water*. Lyles said, the proceeds from which will be donated to UWP.

So far, Lyles said, the church had collected about 100 recipes. A member of the church who is a graphic artist will be putting the cookbook together. The church isn't ready to take orders for the books yet, but those interested can contact the church to learn more.

Continuing the church's efforts to raise money for the Ugandan Water Project had real appeal, Lyles said, because the organization has a recipe for success.

"It is a cost-effective group," he said. "Getting a local contractor to build a water tank can cost \$10,000 and the quality can vary — sometimes they take the money and not

provide the tank. For \$3,500, the group can put a tank in place."

But the group does more than provide water; the group has other efforts, including providing microloans for businesses, Lyles said, and he said, "it's a ministry for them."

"This is a group that has a heart and a vision: What we can do for Christ in Africa," he said. "That connected with me and with the students (of the youth group). They are raising money for a ministry and a vision Christ has for Africa. They are staying connected with these communities and these churches, not just providing water."

Going beyond just providing water was also important to Rev. Matthew French, pastor of the Honeoye Falls UMC.

French went to college with UWP founder Harrington, but said that wasn't enough to make him sign on to help the project.

"I talked with James, and even though we are friends, I really grilled him pretty well on what they were doing," French said.

It was important that the effort be sustainable, he said, and not end up costing the Ugandans more in upkeep than if the church hadn't helped.

"As a church," French said, "we try to focus mission efforts (in terms of international projects) to find a project we can support, but with the possibility to extend relationship if there was good energy there, and to support United Methodists as well."

The UWP provided exactly that.

The church wanted to partner with a United Methodist Church, French said, and there was a pastor in Uganda who suggested Community Church of Faith UMC in Jinja, Uganda, which has an orphanage and a school connected to

the church.

Honeoye Falls UMC raised money to put windows and doors in the cinderblock worship space, and now gets regular updates from Pastor Samuel about the progress of the church and the children it serves.

"They've seen a huge increase in attendance," French said since the windows and doors were installed in February.

"To have an American church partner with you is huge; it tells everybody that there's credibility," French said. "A number higher-profile Christians started to attend because of that."

Honeoye Falls UMC member Jessica Albright, an elementary school teacher, traveled with a mission team after the water tank was installed, French said.

"In Uganda, a personal relationship is so important," he said.

And Albright helped complete that connection back home when she shared her experience at a pancake breakfast.

"It's important that a project like this one resonate with people ... and that they would be able to talk about it outside of the church community," French said, "with neighbors, family and friends, in a way that would be memorable and meaningful."

\*Christian Vischi is the communications associate for the Upper New York Annual Conference. He can be reached at christianvischi@unyumc.org.

Beth DiCocco, writer/editor for the Upper New York Annual Conference, contributed to this story. She can be reached at bethdicocco@unyumc.



Submitted photo

From left are Pastor George, the Ugandan Water Project's main contact in Uganda; he preached at Honeoye Falls UMC during a visit to the United States last fall; Pastor Samuel, pastor at Community Church of Faith UMC in Jinja, and Jessica Albright, a member of Honeoye Falls UMC, who visited Uganda shortly after a water tank purchased by the church was installed.



Submitted photo

Inside the sanctuary at Community Church of Faith UMC in Jinja, Uganda. Thanks to the efforts of Honeoye Falls UMC, the church now has windows and doors.



Submitted photos

ABOVE: The cement is left to cure for the water tank purchased by Honeoye Falls UMC through its work with the Ugandan Water Project.

LEFT: The water tank purchased for Community UMC in Jinja, Uganda, by members of Honeoye UMC near Rochester. The tanks cost about \$3,500 and have a lifespan of about 35 years. Rush UMC has also purchased a tank through the non-profit group based in Lima, NY.

### Ugandan Water Project

Devin Lyles, youth pastor at Rush UMC, encourages other churches to take on this mission project, saying that UWP is seeking ongoing contributions — perhaps \$10 to \$100 a month — to help defer operating costs incurred putting the purchased tanks in place.

To learn more about the Ugandan Water Project, visit them online at <http://ugandanwaterproject.com>.

# Young clergy to Bishop: Give us good mentors

‘There is no shortage of potential, just the lack of resources.’



When Resident Bishop Marcus Matthews of the Upper New York Episcopal Area met with the young clergy of the conference at Casowasco Camp and Retreat Center in March, he heard some inspiring stories of ministry by the young adults. He also told of the need for good mentors for the newest members of the clergy family. They told him they were eager to serve but need resources. Bishop Matthews assured the young clergy that his Cabinet will try to be more pastoral toward them. He also urged them to serve on agencies and bodies of the new conference.

*Photos by Maidstone Mulenga*



# Former senior leaders, lay leaders meet with Bishop

As part of his goal to consult with key leaders of the new conference, Upper New York Area Resident Bishop Marcus Matthews met with former district superintendents, former directors of connnectional ministries and other former senior conference staffers at Casowasco Camp and Retreat Center. Among the issues discussed was the need for the conference to be driven by mission, especially by checking the pulse of the state. The former senior leaders told Bishop Matthews that there was much that the conference can do to help people who are suffering in our communities.

Photos by Maidstone Mulenga



## Laity forum

In a meeting with the lay leaders and presidents of the United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men at Casowasco Camp and Retreat Center, Upper New York Area Resident Bishop Marcus Matthews heard about the need to train more lay leaders in the new conference to supplement the work of the clergy.

Photos by Maidstone Mulenga





# F.O.O.D. for youth (faith outside our doors)



UMNS photo by Clay Kisker.

In this 2009 photo, Nelson Ortiz plays the guitar at his home in Masaya, Nicaragua. Ortiz lived at the city dump in Managua for 25 years prior to moving to his new home on fertile farmland with the help of Project Chacocente, started by United Methodist missionary Cheryl Avery.

## MOP 2012 is Nicaragua bound

By Sharon Rankins-Burd\*

The Mission of Peace (MOP) is a journey of Shalom that a select number of youth from throughout the Northeast Jurisdiction participate in each year.

Candidates complete an application and are interviewed by past youth and adult MOPers.

This year, the interviews were completed during UP!WORD, and on April 9 the seven young people chosen for the trip were introduced to those gathered at the event. Four of the seven were present, and were brought up on stage to be introduced.

Attending MOP 2012 as representatives of the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church will be: Julia Kieper,

Alexander UMC (Niagara Frontier District), currently a high school junior; Stacey Rogers, Kenmore UMC (Niagara Frontier District), currently a high school junior; Lydia Hall-Lockman van Benekom, Dansville UMC (Genesee Valley District), currently a high school junior; Meghan Mitchell, Calvary UMC (Albany District), currently a high school junior; Erynn Motak, Eden UMC (Niagara Frontier District), currently a junior; Zach Stahlsmith, Hurlbut UMC (Cornerstone District), currently a junior; and Margot Rankins-Burd, Sauquoit Valley UMC (Mohawk District), currently a high school sophomore.

The group will depart on Dec. 27 for Nicaragua and expect to return Jan. 14, 2012.

The Mission of Peace was

started 25 years ago as a way for youth from the NEJ to interact with and grow in their understanding of people and cultures around the world – a true journey of God's Shalom.

Sites to visit in Nicaragua will include Project Chacocente, the mission project that brings families out of the city dump at Managua and relocates them to housing in Masaya. (see photo above)

There they receive training, skills and education to help them get out of poverty and stay out.

Several young people from previous MOP trips have taken a "gap year" between high school and college in order to serve as missionaries at Chacocente.

\*Sharon Rankins-Burd is the pastor at Cedar Lake UMC.



Submitted photo.

Among those going to Nicaragua with Mission of Peace are, from left: Erynn Motak, Zach Stahlsmith, Meghan Mitchell, and Margot Rankins-Burd.

## CCYM elects new leadership

By Sharon Rankins-Burd

The Conference Council on Youth Ministry (CCYM) is a team of about 65 people – youth and adults – from across our Conference.

They meet about six times a year to plan Fall Gatherings and UP!WORD.

On April 9, during UP!WORD, CCYM met to establish their leadership team for the year ahead.

The CCYM decided to continue to elect two chairpersons to share the responsibilities of the CCYM and representation on other conference bodies.

Led by a CCYM adult, the youth worked through a discernment

process that raised up several names before a clear decision on leadership emerged.

Chosen as co-chairs for the year ahead were Anna Malone and Paul Sweet. Malone will be a senior next fall at Lockport High School. She attends Lockport Emmanuel United Methodist Church.

Sweet will also be a high school senior next year, but he's unsure where that will be. His mother, the Rev. Becki Sweet, has been appointed the new district superintendent of the Northern Flow District effective July 1.

Congratulations, Anna and Paul! The CCYM also spent time in its four Committees: Worship, PowerPoint and Publicity,

Gathering and Organization, and the Youth Service Fund. Those teams also selected their chairpersons for the year ahead.

Worship will be chaired by Erynn Motak. Erynn will be a senior at Eden High School. She attends Eden UMC, just a short walk from her home.

Zach Stahlsmith will lead the PowerPoint and publicity team. Zach will also be a senior next year. He attends the Hurlbut United Methodist Church.

Chelsea Aiosa was chosen to chair the Gathering and Organization (GO) team. Aiosa is from Massena, where she will be a high school senior in the fall. She attends Collamer UMC, where her dad, Rev. Jeff Aiosa, is the pastor.

Finally the Youth Service Fund will have as its educator Dylan Stow. Stow will be a senior next year. He attends North Harmony UMC. His

mom, Carolyn, is also a member of the clergy.

When the CCYM meets in June, they will choose secretaries for the teams.

Together the chairs, YSF educator, secretaries, and the three adult coordinators form the executive committee of CCYM.

The meeting will be held June 26-30 at Cazenovia College.



MALONE



SWEET



Submitted photo.

CCYM Committee leaders, from left: Erynn Motak, Zach Stahlsmith, Chelsea Aiosa and Dylan Stow.

# Annual Conference news

## More than 80 candidates vie to be delegates

By Maidstone Mulenga\*  
Advocate Editor

More than 80 candidates from the Upper New York Area have indicated their prayerful desire to be elected as delegates to the 2012 General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

According to information released May 3 by the Conference Committee on Petitions and Resolutions, 31 lay members and 52 clergy members have successfully submitted their candidacy information.

Sixteen delegates – eight clergy and eight lay – will be elected to the General and Jurisdictional conferences during the 2011 Upper New York Annual Conference Session, which will be held June 7-11 in Rochester. The session will also elect eight additional delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference, for a total of 24 delegates to that conference.

According to the constitution of the Church, the clergy delegates must be elected from the clergy members in full connection. The lay delegates must be elected, without regard to age, provided such delegates shall have been professing members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years preceding their election. The lay delegates must have been active participants in the Church for at least four years preceding their election.

The General Conference is the top policy-making body of The United Methodist Church. The 1,000-member assembly meets once every four years to consider revisions to church law, as well as adopt resolutions on current moral, social, public policy and economic issues. It also approves plans and budgets for church-wide programs for the following four years. The 2012 meeting will take place April 24 to May 4 in Tampa, Fla.

The number of delegates per annual conference is calculated based on the requirement of one lay and one clergy delegate for each annual conference, with additional delegates assigned proportionately according to the conferenc-



For the full list of delegate nominees, visit the Conference website: [www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)

es' clergy and lay membership. The Upper New York Annual Conference has been assigned 16 delegates for the 2012 General Conference, the largest number in the Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Those who wish to be considered as candidates for election as delegates were asked to submit their information online. For the list, see the conference website at [www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org).

Eligible candidates who did not submit information online by May 1 are not included in this list; they are, however, still eligible for election.

The Committee on Petitions and Resolutions has asked that prior to and during the elections the will of the Spirit will be sought, and there will be no "campaigning" – by any means including: mailings, buttons and other promotional efforts – by, for, or against any candidate.

Alleged violations will be shared with the Committee on Sessions, which will take the action it deems best, in consultation with the Committee on Petitions

and Resolutions.

As part of the holy conferencing agreement, no one will speak – either directly or by implication – for or against any candidate for any reason including age, giftedness, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, theology or geography.

The above-named lay candidates will be introduced at the Laity Session of the Annual Conference session, while the clergy candidates will be at the clergy portion of the Annual Conference session, both at 1:30 p.m. on June 7.

The delegation leader for 2012-16 will be the first lay person elected. The delegation's vice-leader for 2012-16 will be the first clergy person elected.

\*Rev. Maidstone Mulenga is director of communication for the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Reach him at [maidstonemulenga@unyumc.org](mailto:maidstonemulenga@unyumc.org).

## Petitions focus on gays in the church

By Maidstone Mulenga  
Advocate Editor

Most of the petitions submitted to the Upper New York Annual Conference for General Conference approval are seeking changes in the church law regarding homosexuality as contained in the 2008 Book of Discipline.

The petitions, which were released by the Conference Committee on Petitions and Resolutions on May 3, reveal that several members of the church are seeking to repeal laws that prohibit same-sex marriages in The United Methodist Church.

One petition is calling for the removal of language regarding how marriage is defined in civil society. According to the petition, "it is inappropriate for our Social Principles to support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman."

The petition, which is calling for amending Paragraph 161B by deleting the last sentence, says the advocacy of laws excluding same-sex couples from marriage impinges on American constitutional law, "involving legal judgments outside the appropriate scope of our Discipline, and an attempt to impose a view rejecting same-sex marriage through law does not respect people or religious groups that believe differently."

Two petitions are seeking the removal of "exclusive" and "condemnatory" language on homosexuality in Paragraph 161F of the *Book of Discipline*



Supporters of full inclusion for gays and lesbians in The United Methodist Church drape the communion table in black cloth during a time of witness at the 2008 United Methodist General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. Petitioners are seeking to bring the issue to the 2012 General Conference in Tampa, Fla. UMNS file photo by Mike DuBose.

For details on these and other petitions & resolutions, visit the Conference website: [www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)

because "this judgmental, condemnatory language is in conflict with the present state of scientific knowledge." The petitioners write the language in the paragraph is "manifestly un-Christlike and hypocritical."

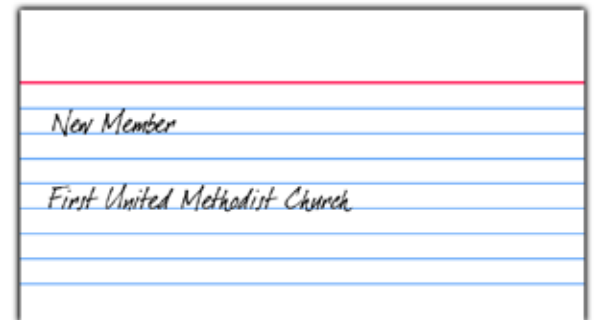
Another petition wants to "end discrimination against homosexual clergy," by challenging Paragraph 304.3, which prohibits self-avowed practicing homosexuals from becoming certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church. The petition notes the paragraph's "double standard

promotes secrecy and erects a barrier to keeping qualified clergy, both homosexual and heterosexual, serving our church."

Another petition calls on The United Methodist Church to offer the blessings of Christian marriage to homosexual couples, challenging Paragraph 341.6, which forbids ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions from being conducted by United Methodist ministers and from being conducted in United Methodist churches.

See more Conference session news on Page 12

## Bishop asks for an offering of names



Continued from Page 1

Bishop Matthews urged members to bring as many items as they can to show that "we are living the gospel of the Jesus Christ that places importance on loving each other through our gifts and graces."

The items will be collected in receptacles at the Conference site. Items to be donated include mayonnaise, assorted half-gallons of juice, coffee, creamer, sugar, coffee filters, large disposable gloves, Dawn Dish Soap, bleach, 55-gallon garbage bags, 4" Styrofoam salad bowls, 6" Styrofoam dessert plates, plastic forks, spoons, knives, paper towels, paper napkins and bathroom tissue.

### Monetary offerings

During the five-day gathering, there will be three

opportunities to donate financial gifts to the missions and ministries of the church:

•**Clergy Session on June 7 at 1:30 pm:** An offering will be taken to support the Bishop's Discretionary Fund.

•**Mission Celebration in the evening of June 8:** An offering will be taken to support the Mission of Peace (MOP) ministries.

•**Ordination ceremony on June 11:** An offering will be taken to support clergy care.

Checks may be made payable to UNYAC, with respective missions in the memo fields.

\*Rev. Maidstone Mulenga is director of communication for the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Reach him at [maidstonemulenga@unyumc.org](mailto:maidstonemulenga@unyumc.org).

## Get a 'Blueprint for Wellness' at June's Annual Conference

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits has teamed up with Quest Diagnostics to offer "Blueprint for Wellness," a free health screening program for eligible participants in the Upper New York Annual Conference.

Quest Diagnostics will be at the Annual Conference Session (in the Lilac Room, Radisson Hotel, second floor). Screenings will be conducted from 6:30 to 10:30 a.m. on June 8-10 (registration is requested; walk-ins will be allowed if time permits).

You may instead have your screening done at a local Quest Laboratory.

This is an opportunity to obtain a comprehensive "biometric" screening that provides information about your heart, liver and kidney function, diabetes risk and

blood sugar control, calcium and iron – plus PSA screening for men.

In addition to having information to take to your doctor to help implement a wellness plan, individuals can earn \$100 in Virgin Miles Health Cash.

The screening is available to all participants and spouses covered by a HealthFlex active or Medicare companion plan. To receive the \$100 HealthCash incentive, you and your spouse must be participants in the active HealthFlex plan and enrolled in Virgin Health Miles.

The deadline to register is May 15, and the screening must be completed by July 31.

Additional information on the HealthFlex 2011 incentives can be found on the conference website or at [webmdhealth.com/gbophb](http://webmdhealth.com/gbophb).

### Get pre-conference materials online

The pre-conference materials for the Second Session of the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church are available from the conference website: <http://www.unyumc.org/pages/detail/1505>.



READY...  
SET...

VOTE!

The videos are in for the Upper New York Annual Conference's Youth Video Contest. We have ten for you to vote for on our Facebook page. Voting is simple:  
1.) Watch the Youth Videos  
2.) Click "like" on any and all that you choose

Visit our Facebook page at:



[facebook.com/uppernewyork](http://facebook.com/uppernewyork)  
to start watching and voting for your favorite!



Join us at the Second Session of the Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center.

**Music:** Enjoy the golden voices of the Africa University Choir as it spends the week in residency at the conference session. Also joining us is Mark Miller, director of music at the Drew Theological School and lecturer in the practice of Sacred Music at the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University.



A "Block Party" to celebrate how the Spirit is moving among us.

**Ordination/Commissioning:** Come celebrate with us as we welcome the newest men and women who have been called to clergy leadership in our denomination. Let's encourage them as they prepare to proclaim the Gospel to new persons in new places.

**Mission Celebration:** Upper New York Area Bishop Marcus Matthews made a challenge to the churches of the conference to bring at least one person to Christ during the past year. On Wednesday, June 8, Bishop Matthews will

*The UMC celebrates*

*a soul*

*for coming to Christ April 24, 2011*

celebrate those names brought to the conference session with his Opening Worship of "Celebrating a Soul Come to Christ!"



Upper New York Annual Conference  
of The United Methodist Church