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Message from Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

The Gift that Keeps on Giving and Living



I heard on the radio the other day a catchy slogan as part as a fund raising campaign for Fox Chase Cancer Center. They are letting their would-be donors know that a gift to cancer research is a “gift that keeps on living.” This is most likely a spin on the advertising slogan that we are used to hearing that says “the gift that keeps on giving.” The origins of that slogan go back as far as the early phonograph machine, the 1925 RCA Victrola. Others have picked it up through the years in their advertising. Among them are: Coca Cola, Kodak cameras, flower stores that sell tulip bulbs, kitchen appliances, Hyundai cars, Chesterfield cigarettes, Avon cosmetics, ConocoPhillips (Petroleum oil) and even banks. We like the idea that our gifts have a long and enduring quality about them. We don’t want to give something that is opened quickly on Christmas morning and then stored away in a sock drawer or worse yet, thrown out with the used wrapping paper.



best ways to give a gift that keeps on giving is to give to missions. There are many opportunities to give to our wonderful United Methodist mission projects. We have missions all over the world that provide education, medical care, agricultural training, and emergency relief to name a few. That is a gift that keeps on giving as a gift to missions extends blessings in many ways.

We should also give the gift that keeps on living and that would be to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with those in our communities and in the world. John 1:4 declares “in him (Jesus) was life, and the life was the light of all people.” As people come into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ they have life eternal as well as the light of guidance and truthful living here on earth. What greater gift could there be than the gift of life eternal?

I am sure there is nothing more we could ask for than life in heaven with Jesus. Why is it that we don’t share our faith with people more?

The UMC has launched into a “Call to Action” program that is emphasizing the importance of increased church attendance, membership, small groups, mission involvement and mission giving. None of this can happen unless people are invited and drawn into conversation about Christ. We Christians are the ones who are called to share our testimony. This Christmas give to missions and make the world a better place here on earth. This gift keeps on giving. Don’t forget to give the gift of Christ by sharing your faith so that more people might know the joy of heaven. This gift keeps on living!

This is the season of giving. Christ came to earth as the ultimate gift of God’s love to the people of earth. The wise men came to Bethlehem to offer rare and valuable gifts to the Christ Child. We typically exchange gifts with loved ones and friends. This business of gift giving has often obscured the true meaning of Christmas as it can escalate into over-indulgence and extravagance. Many children are asked “what do you want for Christmas” and from an early age they are conditioned to seeing Christmas as a time of receiving.

Christmas should be above all else, a time of giving, giving to others out of love for Christ and especially for giving to those in need. One of the

The most frequently asked questions about Continuing Education Units

There have been a number of questions asked about continuing education units. I will answer these questions.

- Q. Where do I go to get an application for continuing education units?**
- A. Go on the Peninsula Delaware Conference Web site. [pen-del.org] Go to ministries. Go to the Board of Ordained Ministry. Under continuing education you click on CEU request form. Download the form and fill in the information and send it to Rev. Bill Ross. Address is on the form.
- Q. How many hours are 1 CEU?**
- A. 10 Contact hours
- B. Contact hours are hours in the class room. Breaks and lunch are not included.
- Q. How many CEUs are needed for continuing Education units to fulfill Peninsula Delaware Conference requirements?**
- A. 2 CUEs per year
- B. 8 CEUs per quadrennial
- Q. What are the basic criteria for approval of CEU event?**
- A. 1. Sponsorship by a responsible institution or organization.
2. Qualified instructional personnel.
3. Skill development in one or more functions of ministry.
- Q. Does the Board of Ordained Ministry keep records of each person CEUs?**
- A. No. It is the responsibility of each clergy person to keep his or her records of CEUs.
- B. Each clergy persons is required to provide a report to the district superintendents and Committee on Pastor/Staff Relations each year.

I hope that I have answered your questions concerning CEUs. If you have more questions contact me at bilross@verizon.net or rosswtumc1@verizon.net. You can also call me at 410-749-4252.
Rev. Bill Ross, Chairperson of CEUs for Board of Ordained Ministry of the Peninsula Delaware Conference United Methodist Church.

54th Annual UM Men’s Retreat

In an exciting two day program, sixty men from Peninsula-Delaware Conference were uplifted spiritually at PeCoMeth the second weekend in September.

The main speaker was Dr. Derek Stringer, National Director of Good News Broadcasting Associations in England. He presented a teaching series that include “Making Disciples”, “Facing Hindrances”, “Surviving Burnout”, “Finishing Well”, and “He Can”. His teachings and books reflect the inspirations provided by God for a personal relationship with God. His humor and real life stories bring his

teachings to life and prompt one to remember the key points long after he finishes speaking.

Alan Loomis, The Conference United Methodist Men’s president, presided for the weekend. PeCoMeth Director, Rev. Jack Shitama welcomed the group and attention to details were handled by Mrs. Ann Ashe, Director of Retreat Ministry. Rev. Gary Moore, Easton District Superintendent, shared communion with the men on Sunday morning.

Plans are being made for 2012—the dates are September 8 & 9.



For the Conference Calendar of events please go to the Conference Web site: www.pen-del.org. There you will find not only the events but registration forms for trainings and workshops like Nurturing Wholeness in Community, Level 1 which is being held at the Pecometh River Retreat March 19–21.



VIM HAITI MISSION TRIP

ATLANTIC UMC—OCEAN CITY—NOVEMBER 12–19, 2011

After months of planning, fundraising and preparation the Atlantic UMC Haiti Team began its adventure in the wee hours of Saturday, November 12th. We left the church at 12:30 AM with eight members of Atlantic, and on our way to Reagan Airport, picked up Benita Harris (Associate Pastor, Asbury UMC, Salisbury) and Eric Bowman (Member, Asbury UMC, Arnold). Our travel to Port Au Prince was relatively uneventful.

Our team knew, in advance, that we were assigned to a rural project in Arcahaie (ark-eye-aye) which is about an hour north of Port Au Prince. We were forewarned that we would be living with the extended family of the local pastor and that we should expect very basic accommodations. I am not sure we fully understood the ramifications of words like "latrine" and "bucket shower" but we quickly learned and adapted to our somewhat rustic lifestyle. The family we met were wonderful and kept us well fed and taken care of throughout our five days in Arcahaie. We came to very much appreciate being in this very real environment versus staying at a guest house as we experienced the true Haitian situation and culture.

Our work assignments involved both construction and a Vacation Bible School setting. The local Methodist Church had been rebuilt but they were adding a kitchen, storage and generator rooms in order to better serve the church and local community. The team members who worked in this spent most of our time moving cement blocks, carrying cement, moving boulders for foundations and digging where needed and assisting the Haitian work

crew as much as we could. Each day the temperature exceeded ninety degrees, with heat indexes near one hundred, so we had to be cautious and stay hydrated. We were very gratified, that after our time there, we left with the walls of all of the buildings up

Inside the church several team members interacted with about fifty children, ages six months to sixteen years, doing games, crafts, sing-alongs, and providing lots of love to the kids. It was a difficult task because most of the children have very little and we found a definite "survival of the fittest" mentality. By the end of the week we were able to get most of them to share their toys and the overall experience was wonderful.

A highlight of our week was a church service on Thursday evening, during which team member Benita was asked to deliver the sermon, and the church was filled with the families and children we interacted with during the week. We found it very difficult to say goodbye to many of our new friends in Arcahaie when we departed on Friday but we felt gratified that God sent us there and that we were able to help.

As we traveled through Port Au Prince and the countryside we became aware that some rebuilding is definitely taking place. However, the plight of the average Haitian remains difficult. We have come to admire the strength and courage of the Haitian people who do everything they can to provide for their families. Their hope in the future certainly was an encouragement to our team to work hard and to potentially return again.

Bill Jones, Team Leader



VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION UMCOR

The HUB... Located @ Christiana UMC... Connecting the Peninsula-Delaware Conference to Mission Central and the World www.missioncentral.org

The HUB is a satellite location of Mission Central. Mission Central is one of our United Methodist Mission warehouses, which collects and distributes UMCOR kits and much more.

The Christiana HUB is open the first Friday of the month. Volunteers work hard and have a great time. So far, more than 1,000 kits have been processed through this HUB.

The current needs:

- School Supply Kits: <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/school-kit/>
- Sewing Kits: <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/sewing-kit/>
- Clean up Buckets: <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/flood-bucket/>
- Layette Kits: <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/layette-kit/>
- Birthing Kits: <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/birthingkit/>

Want to learn about hosting a HUB in your area? Mark your calendar for May 19, 2012. Plan to attend Journey into Mission at Asbury UMC in Salisbury. Leaders from Mission Central and Christiana will be on hand to educate people about this ministry and how you can participate.

UMCOR Kits are a wonderful way to be in mission... locally, nationally, and internationally.

If you would like to have a speaker come to your church and share about the HUB ministry, contact: Jill Custer 302-563-3362; jill_cu03@yahoo.com or Rev. Bonnie Jones Goldstein 302-286-7002; revbonnie@yahoo.com.

Save this Date: Sat., May 19, 2012

Journey into Mission: How to be in Mission at Home or Away

8:30a.m.–3p.m.—Asbury UMC, 1401 Camden Ave, Salisbury, MD

Registration Information coming soon.

Mark your calendars now.

Breakfast and Lunch provided.

Contact persons: Benita Harris benita@asburyweb.org or

Amy Yarnall pastor.amy@wesleyumc-dover.com

Offerings:

- Volunteers in Mission Training: How Mission Trips are done
- Stop Hunger Now: Assemble food for the hungry all over the world (www.stophungernow.org)
- Sewing for Mission (bring your machine)
- HUB Training: How to be a Satellite for Mission Central (missioncentral.org) & Assembling Clean Up Buckets
- Ramp Building: Step by step training

This is a mission opportunity to help connect the church with the wider community

NORTHEAST FLOOD RESPONSE

Our sisters and brothers around the Northeast are still recovering from the flooding...

It's going to take years to finish the work...

Here's who you can call to volunteer to help.

If you want to learn more about forming a Volunteer in Mission Team to serve, contact Amy Yarnall pastoramy@gmail.com

VOLUNTEERS OF ALL SKILL OR NO SKILL LEVELS ARE NEEDED

UPPER NEW YORK

Greg Forrester
607-756-7799 or cell 607-345-2928
umvimnej@twcny.rr.com
Serving locations in Schoharie, Binghamton, Owego, etc.

NEW YORK

www.nyac.com; 914-615-2226
Contact Person: Melissa Longley
Contact Email: nyacdisaster@gmail.com

VERMONT

Rev. Bill Elwell—DR coord.
Contact : Eric Covey, ericjamescovey@gmail.com
Organization handling volunteers is SerVermont

NEW ENGLAND

Dave Stackpole: vinnecumc@charter.net
Doug Spanks: doughfishboy67@verizon.net
Stacey Bullock: sdowbullock@gmail.com

SUSQUEHANNA CONE. (CENTER OF PA)

Larry Siikanen: 570-898-8710,
lsiikanen@susumc.org

EASTERN PA

Debra DePrinzio: Disaster Response Coordinator:
ddeprinzio@comcast.net
Bob Simcox: ERT Coordinator:
simkim9788@aol.com
Ben Botti: VIM Coordinator:
bbbotti@verizon.net

Deacons: Partners in Action *Responding Together to the Bishops' Call to Action*

March 24, 2012

Aldersgate United Methodist Church—Wilmington, Delaware

The United Methodist Call to Action is designed to be the catalyst for recognizing and building vital congregations making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Deacons in The Peninsula-Delaware and Eastern Pennsylvania Conferences are eager to be partners with other clergy and laity in supporting the changes and efforts of churches to fulfill that mission.

Deacons: Partners in Action is a day-long event to be held March 24 from 9:00am until 3:30pm at Aldersgate United Methodist Church on Rt. 202 in Wilmington, Delaware. The morning will include a message from Bishop Peggy Johnson followed by interactive group sessions on vital worship, making disciples and growing faith, and serving in mission and responding in generous giving. In each of these sessions, deacons will propose and listen as to how this growing order can lead, assist, and support pastors and lay persons in meeting the challenge for effective ministry. The afternoon session will invite participants to vision in what ways God will have the church go forward in new and bold efforts to extend Christ's love.

A \$25.00 fee includes a light lunch and continuing education credit hours. Specific registration details will follow. Contact Rev. Susan L. Worrell at 610-436-9298 for more information.

This event is endorsed by:

Bishop Peggy Johnson
The Board of Ordained Ministry of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference
The Board of Ordained Ministry of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference
Eastern PA UMC Order of Deacons
Penn-Del UMC Order of Deacons
Greater NJ UMC Order of Deacons
Susquehanna UMC Order of Deacons

Reserve now ~ March 24, 2012 from 9:00am–3:30 pm for this time of holy conversation.

St. Paul UMC Free Christmas Dinner

Christmas is a one of the loneliest days of the year for many people. We talk about the joy of Christmas and fail to realize that many do not experience such joy. They may live alone, are homeless, or hungry. We are here to help. The pastor and congregation of St. Paul will be hosting their annual FREE Christmas dinner on Christmas Day. There you will find food, fun, and fellowship.

The dinner will begin 12 noon and conclude 4 pm. It will held at the Masonic Lodge locate on -----North street Milford, DE. It is located across from Benjamin Banneker Elementary School. Come and share Christmas Day with us. Tell a friend and bring a friend. You will be blessed.

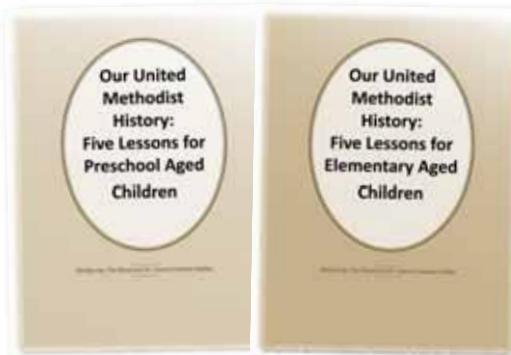
It will be a full Christmas dinner with turkey, ham and all the dressing. If you would like to donate to this worthy cause, please call the church at 302-422-0709 to speak with Rev. Jeanel Starling or James Starling. You may also check our webpage and see us on facebook.



New Resource for teachers preschool and elementary aged children

We have a new resource available for teachers of preschool and elementary aged children—*Our United Methodist Heritage*. This is a five lesson, activity-based resource. It may be just what teachers are looking for during that difficult planning time in January.

The resource can be found at <http://www.gbod.org/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=nhLRJ2PMKsG&b=5161275&ct=11476305¬oc=1>



An invitation to prayer from Rev. Tom Albin, Co-Chair of the Prayer Support Team & Dean of The Upper Room Ministries and Ecumenical Relations

Our desire is to engage the entire United Methodist Church in prayer with and for the 2012 General Conference. We want to pray for God's will, to be done God's way, and in God's time. We need your participation in the following ways. 1) Please

pray for the elected delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference. 2) Begin to talk with the leaders of your local congregation about praying together each week (we suggest Friday) for the UMC Call to Action process and the work of Interim Operations Team. And, 3) pray for God's will to be clearly discerned by the 2012 General Conference. Below you will find the current plans for prayer support.

A Prayer Website: The General Board of Discipleship website will contain information, guidance and suggestions to help us pray together in new and meaningful ways. Please visit it regularly http://www.gbod.org/prayer_initiative
A Prayer Guide: "The Upper Room 50-Day Prayer Guide for the General Conference" will include the 40 days before the event and the 10 days that the Conference will be in session. This guide will be available for every United Methodist to download in one of the official languages of the Conference.

A Prayer Room will be available at General Conference: a sacred place of beauty, peace and prayer for delegates, visitors and guests; everyone is welcome, everyone valued. Within the prayer room, sacred spaces will provide settings for multi-sensory prayer experiences.

A Prayer Ministry: trained volunteers will serve as "prayer delegates" to pray with and for the needs of elected delegates, visitors and guests; every request is honored and lifted to God.

Spiritual Guidance: trained spiritual directors will be on hand to provide an experience of holy listening and to help those desiring assistance in discernment and holy conferencing.

Prayer Ministry Training: offered by The Upper Room for all Annual Conference, District, and Local Church prayer leaders; the first national training event will be Saturday, August 27 at St. Luke's UMC in Orlando, FL. Other training is available upon request.

Please join us in prayer. Help us engaging the global family of The United Methodist Church (and every local congregation) in intentional, fervent prayer. [For general information about the General Conference, go to: www.umc.org and type General Conference in the search engine.]

Sincerely,
Tom Albin

Tom Albin, Co-Chair of the Prayer Support Team
Dean of The Upper Room Ministries and Ecumenical Relations
General Board of Discipleship (GBOD)
Toll Free: 1-877-899-02780 ext. 7110; Direct: 1-615-340-7110
email: talbin@gbod.org

Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders

A *Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders* led by the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, will take place March 19–23, 2012 at Grace Episcopal Church in Wilmington, DE.

The *Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders* is designed to equip judicatory leaders, pastors, and other leaders, with the skills necessary to deal effectively with interpersonal, congregational, and other forms of group conflict. This institute also includes a component on congregational mediation and consultation, placed within the context of family systems theory.

Perhaps you know pastors who are currently in the midst of a challenging conflict situation who you can particularly encourage to attend. Participants who have attended this institute in the past, while facing such a situation have often commented that they find the training "not only enlightening, but also healing."

Please consider attending and sharing information about the institute with others. For further information, registration information and costs: email: Admin@LMPeaceCenter.org Web site: www.LMPeaceCenter.org Call (630) 627-0507.

It's Your Season

God made us a promise that if we stood the test, God would open the windows of heaven for us, and would pour out a blessing so great we won't have enough room to take it in! Try It! When I say "It's Your Season" I am not referring to the Holiday Season or the Seasons with which we are most familiar; spring, summer, fall and winter. Oh No—it's your season to be blessed. I am talking about the blessing Season. One of our very own the Johnson-Goslee family of the Sharptown-Zion Charge, stood the test and it's their Season to be blessed. On September 28, 2011 ABC's Extreme Makeover Home Edition came to San Domingo, Maryland and surprised our very own, the Johnson-Goslee family. Last year on Christmas Eve, (December 2010) Wyzhir Johnson lost his hand in a tragic accident helping his family with home improvements. Through this tragedy God has blessed not only Wyzhir's family but also the community in which they live.

The producers of Extreme Makeover Home Edition narrowed down the applicants and the Johnson-Goslee family was selected to receive a new home. But the community was blessed also because the team extended their talents and services with ramps, curb appeal, and solar panels which were donated to Zion United Methodist Church where the Pastor is Rev. Dr. George B. Moody, by a separate source.

Just stop and think for a minute, Wyzhir Johnson a teenager at home on Christmas Eve, making home repairs, not thinking about the gifts and presents that are usually dancing around in the mind of teenagers and some others as well. He was making repairs to the home that he shares with his Mother, Patrice, Sister Renee and his Aunt Sonora. He was thinking of others, his family and not of



himself. Even though he lost his left hand during the accident, he did not lose his praise. This accident has bought the family and the community closer together. He is an inspiration, a motivator to others in the community, outside the community, and in the school as a mentor. He has a gift, a special gift, and God is using him to be an example to inspire and not allow his disability to hinder him from fulfilling his dreams and determinations on his Christian journey. If you get the opportunity to meet 16 year old Wyzhir Johnson, you will see the joy and the enthusiasm in his eyes, in his smile. His smile and laughter are contagious.

December 24, 2010 changed the life of Wyzhir Johnson, and September 28, 2011 changed the lives of this small rural community known as San Domingo when Ty Pennington and members from the design team come to town and knocked on the door of the Johnson-Goslee family. The other team members including: Michael Moloney, Paige Hemmis, Ed Sanders and Johnny Littlefield where nearby along with the entire community and others from the surrounding area to inform the family of the blessing that they were to receive.

With only one-week to complete this great



task The Fusion Companies (Josh and Wes Sims owners) the lead builders, were in agreement that they could handle this task, build this dream home along with other sponsors and thousands of community volunteers as well as students from Salisbury University and The University of the Eastern Shore. The dream home would replace a home that belonged to the family for 80 years. A home that was filled with love and lots of shared memories that will forever remain in the hearts of the Johnson-Goslee Family. Those same memories will also be treasured by Jeremy, Jaketa and Justin a place they call home when they take a deserved break from college life and other activities and come home to Mother, Sonora, Aunt Patrice and other family members. The street was lined with blue shirts and hard hats ready for assignments as the Johnson-Goslee Family headed for a vacation in Santa Barbara, California; all except for Wyzhir who stayed behind a few days just to oversee the

beginning design phase. Once the design was completed and the structure he once called home removed—Wyzhir joined his family in California and enjoyed some family fun.

God has a way of showing up and blessing us when we least expect it, and for the Johnson-Goslee Family and this Community God was present on December 24th, God was present on September 28th, God was present on October 4th. The bible says God will never leave you, nor forsake you, God is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

The Family returned home to see their new dream home on Tuesday, October 4th, surrounded by Family and Friends with the shout of "Move That Bus". The episode of Extreme Makeover: Home Edition with the Johnson-Goslee family aired on December 9, 2011. We can truly say that God is still in the blessing business. It's Your Season.



Praying at "The Well"



Small group discussion at "The Well." People learning and growing together



ABOVE: People stood in line to get in the door! LEFT: Rev. Dr. Jeanel Starling leading at "the Well"

Celebrating "The Well" in pictures

Over 300 persons gathered once again this past October at St. Thomas Moore Academy on a Saturday morning to praise God, to share their faith, to learn about new ministries, and gain some new skills and information to share with their local churches. We share these pictures as a celebration of this Annual Healthy Church Initiative training and resource event.