

## Hickory Hill Quilters



**O**dette Wright, a member of the Indian Mission UMC in Millsboro, was presented with a handmade quilt by the members of the Hickory Hill Quilters group of Hickory Hill UMC also in Millsboro. The quilt was a gift of love which was

made possible by the talent given to the group who made it. It was blessed by all the members of the church and to show her appreciation, Odette blessed everyone by singing Amazing Grace both in English and in her Native American tongue.

## Making Love Last a Lifetime!



**O**n Sunday, November 20, twelve couples from Christ UMC in Laurel renewed their wedding vows during the worship service. Pastor Fred Duncan and his wife, Pat, recently co-led an eight week marriage study based on the book by Pastor Adam Hamilton of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leewood, Kansas, entitled, *Making Love Last a Lifetime*. During the study, the

couple agreed that the only way to celebrate and affirm what they learned during the study was to renew their wedding vows during the worship service. The congregation also participated, using the service "Order for the Reaffirmation of the Marriage Covenant" in the United Methodist Book of Worship. The couples gathered at the parsonage afterward for a time of food and fellowship.

## All Saints Sunday

**S**alem UMC in Selbyville recently celebrated its 215th anniversary with a special service on All Saints' Sunday, November 6, 2005. The congregation traces its roots to a meeting in 1790 at the home of David James Murray, on a farm in Polly's Branch. Twenty eight people were soon converted at a "basket meeting," and a chapel was built at Sandy Branch (an early name for the area that came to be known as Selbyville). This is said to have been the fourth

Methodist Church in Sussex County. Additional historical information can be found on the church's website: [www.sumc.com](http://www.sumc.com). A reception was held in the Salem Center after the service. Church Historian, Fred Stevens, prepared and displayed a photographic history of the church, including pictures of many of the former pastors. Salem was the home church of former Governor and U. S. Senator John Townsend and several other prominent Delawareans.

## Mission to the Dominican Republic

By Pastor Curt Dotson

**O**h it was early, 2:45 a.m. and pitch black darkness, seemingly bright eyed and ready to go. Our family members gathered with us and it was a feeling of anticipation and excitement. I hope we didn't wake our neighbors around Wyoming Church as we gathered in a circle on the street and had prayer before we left. What a site that must have been! The Wyoming UMC van and trailer were packed and idling ready to lead the way to the BWI airport. The Whatcoat UMC (Dover) van soon pulled in and we said our goodbyes to our family members and split up between the vans. Eight youth and seven adults were on our way, not knowing what to expect, but trusting God that we were following His leading. Of course there was also the fact that most had not gone to bed Friday night so it was just a matter of sitting in the van before most were sound asleep.

This was the middle of our mission to the Dominican Republic. It was the middle because we had been preparing with prayers, with training, and with a commissioning service the night before. I have always said it is an incredible honor that God allows us to represent Him. To think that God works through us to touch and love other people is overwhelming and is how I fell in love with God. God's love was very evident in our preparation, in our travel, and in our ministry to the Dominican people, many of whom were illegal Haitian immigrants.

The cross cultural training was invaluable as we learned about incarnational evangelism...that is bringing the Gospel to life. We were going in as learners first, then as servants, and only then could we apply the gospel to those people's lives. We were going in with no agenda of our own, and following the Spirit as we interacted with the people whose language most of us spoke very little of. We learned about experiential learning as well as team building. All of this preparation was well worth it as the ministry blessed all. Not only that, the training applies to all parts of being a Christian, whether we are on mission far from home, at our places of work, or across the street.

On this trip we witnessed healing, we witnessed people coming to Christ, we witnessed people rededicating their lives to Christ, and we witnessed an overwhelming task (a one-room schoolhouse) being completed. We were in an area with floorless tin shacks for homes. If there was more than one room it was due to a blanket hung from the ceiling. The people we ministered to had never seen Americans for the most part. Most of the men had gone off searching for work. Being Haitians, many could not legally work.

The church we partnered with had a building with no ceiling and the walls were about four feet up. Yet their concern was for us to complete construction on the schoolhouse so they could minister to the community of Consuelo. They would continue to hold their worship services under a tarp or in the open with the pulpit placed among the dirt and rocks. With all that they did not possess in the way of material things they did possess in the way of faith. The

## Winter Vacation Bible School

**C**onley's United Methodist Church in Angola held its first ever Winter Vacation Bible School (VBS). Although not as strong as summer Vacation Bible School, for three days between Christmas and the new year, an average of 30 children came out for a Prayer Safari. The largest class was the teenage class, comprising about 40% of total attendance. At Conley's, VBS is much stronger than Sunday school. Last August they realized that they could do VBS in the winter. The sessions were Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for five hours



people were joyous in their poverty and they welcomed us with open arms. The children clung to us and we made many new friends during the VBS (Vacation Bible School) portion of our ministry. I was asked to preach on the Sunday after we arrived and felt the spirits leading, as I had not prepared anything. So, through an interpreter, I spoke of our connection and how we are brothers and sisters. The message was received with joy. It is a time I will never forget. I will also never forget the home visits we made as we built relationships with the people. These visits are where we truly witnessed God at work.

I am submitting this article now because it is time to start preparing for a summer trip. God works miracles as we Christians reach out. The training is valuable to all of our ministries. I encourage you to plan a trip of your own or to join with us. We will be traveling to West Virginia on a youth trip and to the gulf coast with an adult trip. If you are interested in joining with us or if your church is interested in the training, please contact me at 302.697.6651 or [pastor-curt@comcast.net](mailto:pastor-curt@comcast.net).

each. Lunch was provided. All five lessons of a regular VBS curriculum were taught.

In addition, the church was open at 7:30 a.m. each morning for working parents who couldn't drop off their kids at 9:00 a.m. Child care was also offered from the end of class to 5:30 p.m. for working parents. Winter VBS also attracted a completely new set of volunteers who teach neither Sunday school nor summer VBS.

Leaders of the church are evaluating winter VBS' impact and praying about holding it in December 2006.



The Gala – Old Delaware Conference Remembrance Forty Years Merger Celebration, October 29th



District Clergy Lunch and Meeting at Zion UMC in Cambridge on Nov 11th



Institute for Small Membership Churches October 15th, Union UMC, Federalsburg, MD

## District Training Event for Local Church Leaders

### “Cultivate The Vision”

Workshops will be held for: SPRC members; Finance Committees, Lay Leaders, Trustees/Parsonage, and Evangelism: Church Vitality Growth And Demographics and Outreach Committees. In addition, there will be a workshop on **The Book of Discipline** that will be reviewed in Spanish.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, February 4, 2006 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (Snow date: February 18, 2006) at St. Marks UMC, Easton. Peachblossom Drive (Next to YMCA)

Registration Fee: \$5.00 per person with your **sixth person** attending at no cost (free).

## Olivet Church Burns Mortgage On First Day of 2006



Representatives from the small groups of Olivet United Methodist Church in Galena set fire to a retired \$75,000 parsonage mortgage on January 1, 2006. From left to right: Myrtle Cahall (United Methodist Women) Ann Dwyer (Trustees), Lindsey Blackiston (Youth Group), Addie Walters (United Methodist Men), Cheryl Santmyer (Sunday School), Merle Craig (Lay Speakers), Martha Sawyer (Choir), & Debbie Conner (Administrative Board).

Members of Olivet United Methodist Church in Galena celebrated the **first day of the year by burning their \$75,000 Parsonage mortgage.** “In 2005 I felt led to preach about ‘Miracles’, and I think this one qualifies” said Rev. Larry Jameson, pastor of the church. Just four years after building a new parsonage and taking out a 15-year mortgage the congregation was able to retire the debt. “One of our members, Doug Walters, made a faith state-

ment during a worship service last year. He suggested that it would be wonderful to be able to completely pay off our mortgage by the end of 2005. Thanks to the good Lord, and a lot of generous people, that is exactly what happened!” Jameson said.

On Sunday, January 1, 2006, the Olivet congregation celebrated together by gathering for prayer at the Parsonage where they burned the mortgage and then enjoyed an open house.

“Now that we have accomplished this goal, we have a fresh vision for a new handicap accessible fellowship hall,” Jameson said.

I love the Lord  
Because he hears my prayers  
And answers them,  
Because he bends down to listen.  
I will pray as long as I breathe.

Psalm 116: 1-2

**Mt. Olivet (Warwick)  
Galena, MD**

**Pastor Rev. Lawrence Jameson**

## A Message from your Editor

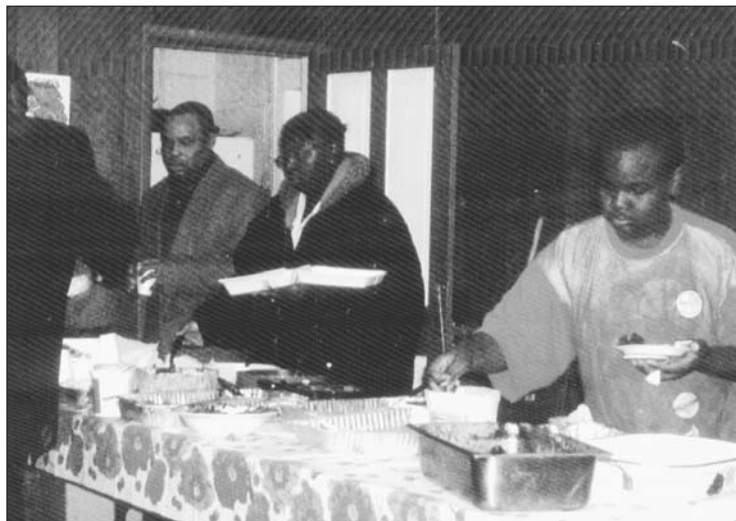
I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. Whom I am grateful for his presence in my life.

My name is Tonya L. Pinkett-Wongus. I am a wife, mother, grandmother to three teenagers, full time student, full time substitute teacher, Lay speaker and still I have this burning desire to be more in service for my Lord.

There are many opportunities to be in ministry each and everyday and I am overwhelmingly grateful for the opportunity to be Editor for our district page. It is a ministry, and I need your help. I want to thank you for all the articles that you have sent into the district office in the past few months. I would like to encourage you to continue to send in your articles and photos. All Information concerning upcoming events, training, and workshops is greatly appreciated. I would like to get the information in time to beat our deadlines, and to be able to get the information into our district page before the event takes place, so that each and everyone will be aware of what is going on in and around our district.

This is our publication, the Easton District, and we want your input for future issues. To submit articles and photos please e-mail your information to eastondistrictoffice@verizon.net or call the District Office at 410.221.1786 or contact me at tonyalwongus2005@aol.com or call 410.221.0158. God Bless You and Thank You.

## The Spirit of Christmas



**W**hen we share the gift of God's immeasurable grace — we see grace wrapped in love, a ribbon of hope, a gift tag that reads from God to my children, filled with salvation — called Jesus. Samuel Wesley UMC enjoyed the season of grace and the Spirit of Christ over dinner and the sharing of presents; with the greatest present being, "loving our neighbor."

On Sunday, December 11, 2005, the pastor and congregation of Samuel Wesley UMC located in Manokin exchanged names for the first time in the church's history. The majority of the member-

ship placed their names in a gift bag and every one present chose a name. On Sunday, December 18, 2005, after morning worship, every one that had exchanged names brought their gift and gave it to the person. Each person was surprised at who had whose name they had. After everyone had received their gift, the congregation moved to the Fellowship Hall for dinner. There were many, many laughs because this event brought so much joy to the church that it has been placed on the calendar for the 2006 Christmas season. The host pastor is Rev. Bernadette Beckett.

## Setting the Atmosphere



**M**t. Zion UMC — Pocomoke City starts a new ministry. By the grace of God, Mt. Zion is reaching out in a new way. There are twelve adults ranging from their 30's to 60's year young, praising the Lord in Dance. The gift of dance is in the power of the message in the song. With the grace of a gazelle these women give their entire mind, body and soul to our Savior Jesus Christ. They tell the story of salvation in their faces, movements and conversation with God through body language. The "Soldiers of Zion" have ministered now twice during worship and are a blessed addition to setting the atmosphere for a relationship with Christ.

## Country Gospel Artist Kathie Wright visits Charity UMC, Salisbury

**W**e were blessed on Dec. 4, 2005 to have Kathie & Sam Wright visit us at Charity. Sam has a gifted talent for playing the keyboard and Kathie is a Country Gospel Recording Artist from Galena, Md. Kathie won the Country Gospel Music Association's Silver Heart Award for Eastern USA in 2004 & 2005. Kathie may have a stuttering problem when she speaks but she doesn't let that stop her from the Lord's work. She added greatly to our Sunday school class discussion before blessing us during our worship service. When she sings, you feel the power of the Holy Spirit upon her . . . and no stuttering! This is a very gifted couple. We praise the Lord for allowing us

the blessing of having them worship with us and are looking forward to having them again.

We thank God for the opportunity to help others during this Christmas season. We were able to supply new clothes, toys, candy, inspirational books, and gift certificates for WalMart and McDonalds to two families with children (five children in all). We gave a gas card certificate to a young lady on our prayer list who has to travel to Baltimore several times due to health. Two fruit baskets were given to Mollie's Place, an assisted living facility, and 12 others given to many shut-ins, people in nursing homes, and the elderly. We supplied a great supply of food to another needy family. On Dec.

18th we had our Christmas dinner which was well attended. Following dinner we had our Christmas program that shared with the audience how we really should celebrate Christmas. Desert and more fellowship followed, with gifts given out to those children present.

We are having our fellowship luncheons following worship service each second Sunday of the months and invite all to join us when they can. Our men meet for prayer breakfast every third Saturday of the month at 8:00 a.m. at English Grill. Please come join them as often as you can.

We are looking forward with excitement to see what God has in store for us in 2006.

Pastors Major & Doris Bailey

## Jack Foreaker, Entertainer and Puppeteer



Bethany United Methodist Church is sponsoring this Christian-based variety show that includes audience participation and fun for all ages!

**DATE:** January 21, 2006  
**TIME:** 2-4 pm  
**PLACE:** Stephen Decatur High School  
**COST:** \$5 Adults; \$3 Children to age 12.  
 No charge for children 2 and under.

**TICKETS:** 410.629.0926

Jack has worked in motion pictures, television, on stage and in hospitals, both locally and nationally. He has performed as a puppeteer in Miss Piggy's Wedding in "The Muppets Take Manhattan."

The deadline for the February 17th issue is January 27th and the March 17thth issue deadline is February 24th. To submit articles and photos please contact the editor, Rev. Shirlyn Brown, at [sistalady@hotmail.com](mailto:sistalady@hotmail.com) or call 410.957.0689.

## From the D.S.

In my reading of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, I have been grasped by the references to "the Way." One of the earliest names for the Christian community was "The Way." This phrase appears in Acts 9:2, 19:9, 22:4, 24:14 and 22.

I am concerned that we, clergy and lay leaders within the church leadership, can become so involved in the administrative tasks of the institutional church that we begin to take for granted some very important truths and insights of our Christian faith. To be a person of faith, to be a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, to be an authentic United Methodist Christian, is to be a follower of "the Way."

In John 14:6 Jesus is quoted as having said to Thomas "... I am the way, the truth, and the life..." During the Advent season we anticipate the coming of this Way, at Christmas we celebrate the birth of this Way and as we enter into the New Year we are expected, as Christian women and men, youth and children, to follow this Way.

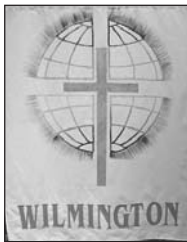
We live in a pluralistic society and in a world filled with diverse ways of thinking and living. The witness of men and women, children and youth of the Christian

faith throughout the centuries has been that "a" way has become "the" way—"The Way" to life and love, to value and meaning, to hope and peace.

Jesus of Nazareth, our Teacher and Example, Lord and Savior, lived the Way, showed the Way and taught the Way. This "Way" is "The Way" of the God of justice, mercy and love and is to be our way even at administrative meetings and church fellowship times in our congregations, even at District and Conference gatherings where different opinions may be expressed over current topics in our world and denomination, and even in our personal lives in our homes and neighborhoods.

It is my prayer for each of us that, empowered by the Spirit of God, we may be faithful followers of THE WAY throughout this New Year. Let us be more intentional and deliberate about living, sharing and teaching THE WAY for the sake of our own salvation, for the sake of making disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world and for the sake of God's will for justice, mercy and love.

Your Partner in Ministry,  
William M. Fitzhugh



## Wesley Chapel Celebrates 175 Years of Ministry

Celebrating 175 years of Worship, the anniversary service for Wesley Chapel in Elkton was held on October 16, 2005. Rev. Dr. William Fitzhugh, Wilmington District Superintendent, gave the Homily at the 8:00 a.m. traditional service and Rev. Thomas Edwards, a former pastor of the church, spoke at the 3:00 p.m. anniversary service.

Located five miles below Elkton on the Old Elk Neck Road stands a remnant of an earlier time in out national and denominational history. It is Wesley Chapel of Elk Neck, a Methodist house of worship, which has served the community for 175 years.

Built in 1830, it is small by today's standards for houses of worship measuring only 25 feet by 30 feet, original hand hewn beams support the structure on its field-stone foundation. For the Chapel's anniversary, a new pipe organ is being given by Glenn Hampton Arrants in memory of Rev. Doctor Charles Chapman Herman.

Wesley Chapel was the last church "Chap" pastored before going into the field of teaching in 1971.

The organ is being built by the Fratelli Ruffatti Organ Company of Padua, Italy and is scheduled for completion in the Fall of 2006.

The congregation is looking forward to having a replacement of the old pipe organ, which was removed in 1982 due to the cost of constant repair.



## Moore's Chapel Sponsors Mission Trip to Gulfport

By Susan McDade, co-chair  
Moore's Chapel  
Missions & Evangelism

In November Rev. Kyung Mo Koo, along with members of the congregation of Moore' Chapel UMC in Elkton, went on a short-term mission trip to Mississippi to assist in the hurricane disaster relief efforts.

We were assigned to Trinity United Methodist Church in Gulfport. Trinity had only sustained minor roof damage from Katrina so they opened their doors on day one to feed the evacuees, as many as 1,200 a day. Then they began to house the disaster response teams and they are now an official United Methodist Church disaster relief headquarters. The folks at Trinity showed us wonderful southern hospitality. In spite of the fact that many of them were victims of the disaster themselves and their lives were uprooted, they welcomed us, housed us and prepared meals for us.

Trinity also did a wonderful job of evaluating the houses and organizing the jobs they sent us to work on. Except for getting lost a few times, things ran smoothly. Many on the trip had gone to Central Florida to help with the hurricane damage from the 2004 storms but we were not prepared for what we found in Gulfport. When we arrived and saw the devastation first hand it was overwhelming. The picture was something like this...FEMA trailer cities in the Wal-Mart parking lot and other mall parking lots and wherever they could set up the trailers. There was a tent city on the gulf course just a few blocks from Trinity. Whole apartment complexes that had been flooded by a bayou were now sitting empty having been condemned. Most of the neighborhood surrounding the church faired pretty well with mostly wind damage and water damage from roofs that had blown off.

Many of the driveways had a FEMA trailer set up for the residents to live in until their homes could be repaired. As you traveled closer to the gulf the picture changed. The streets narrowed with debris piled high on both sides. We crossed a bridge and could see shrimp boats thrown up on the banks like toys. At the railroad tracks we had to go through military check points because the area was under martial law. Most of the homes in this area were not repairable with the exception of a few. Some houses were swept off their foundations and bumped into their neighbors' houses like dominos. As you went even closer to the gulf all the houses were destroyed, smashed by trees and twisted by the storm surge, and closer yet to the gulf they were like skeletons and closer yet hotels, restaurants, condos and houses were just gone. We came across a bathtub still attached to a foundation as the only sign that a house ever existed there. Most of the majestic live oaks survived but they were strewn with debris. It made us wonder how the ten of us could possible make a difference in just one week amongst all that destruction.

Many of us were feeling unsure of our skills as construction workers, in actuality, we were more like demolition workers, and wondered what we had to



offer. But as we met with many of the people at Trinity and talked with many of the homeowners we gained courage from their faith and shared in their hope that their lives could be rebuilt one at a time.

It was awesome to meet the people on the different teams that had come from across the country. There were people from Virginia, Georgia and Oklahoma (forty some people in all) and to combine efforts with them in the common bond of being the hands and feet of Christ in Gulfport. We were adopted by the eighteen members of the team from the Northern Virginia Conference. They have been sending teams each week since Katrina. Under their direction we worked hard and with a sense of urgency. We developed new skills and stepped outside our comfort zones and did things we never thought we could do. We came to realize, although our labor was vital to the clean up operation, just our presence and caring was equally as important to the people themselves.

On the job site we always had the opportunity to meet each homeowner and hear their stories. Some of them walked into their houses for the first time when we arrived. They walked around stunned. Others already had a chance to recover some of their things and were anxious for us to remove all that was wet and moldy, walls, insulation, flooring, cabinets, appliances, furniture, everything. When we were finished with a house much of the owners lives were piled up on the street. But the houses already started to smell better and feel dryer. Although it was demolition, it was the first step to rebuilding and gave the homeowner a sense of hope. Before we left each house we formed a prayer circle and often the homeowner would join us in prayer for them and their home. The people were so appreciative and we heard over and over from them, that without the volunteers from the various churches they don't know where they would be.

At the end of the week we were told that all the teams combined at Trinity that week gutted one church and 15 houses. That made us feel our trip was worthwhile and validated the aches, pains and fatigue our bodies felt. If The Lord is willing, we are planning to go down again in March. We should have recuperated enough to be able to close our hands on our hammer and raise our arms above our head with our pry bar by then.

Although we went down to offer our help we came back blessed. Blessed by the people we met and by being in the presence of God at work in Gulfport.

## Chesapeake City Bazaar Becomes Christmas Present Blessing

Following the Christmas Bazaar at Trinity, the Missions team decided to share the unpurchased items with people in our community who are unable to Christmas shop in a traditional fashion.

Debbie Alexander-Forsythe worked with church and community folks to organize a free Christmas present shopping day. Toy donations were given by Dollar General. Along with the remaining Bazaar

items, these were offered to middle school children who participate in the Generation Station after school ministry, the Meeting Ground Homeless community, the Cecil County Pregnancy Center, and families who receive food from the food pantry.

Many adults and children were blessed by this event. Next year there are plans to partner with other area churches to combine leftover Bazaar items for a larger event.