

United Methodist sergeant from Grayling may risk jail

(MCA) — "I didn't join the army to be a killer," Sgt. George Morse told *Advocate* reporter Kathy Goolian as she spoke with him Nov. 20.

As we take this issue of the MCA to the printer, we have become aware that Morse plans to become Michigan's first conscientious objector in the Persian Gulf crisis. The 25-year-old Grayling man is a member of Michelson Memorial United Methodist Church. In the Army for seven years, Morse was to leave military service next month. But he has been called for duty in Saudi Arabia and he plans to fight the deployment.

Morse said that growing up in the Church he believed war was wrong. He now thinks U.S. actions in the Middle East have "gone too far" and joins those who must stand up for peace.

MCA readers will likely hear more of

Sgt. Morse in the media in coming days. A full story will appear in the Dec. 10 edition of the *Advocate*.

At the national level, top officers of the United Methodist Council of Bishops will seek to deliver to the White House a letter produced by the council and signed by more than 2,500 clergy and laypersons at an international "Gathering" here Oct. 31-Nov. 4.

The letter, released by the bishops Sept. 10, calls on President Bush to use political and economic pressure rather than military action in the Persian Gulf.

At its regular semi-annual meeting after the Gathering, the council asked its president, Bishop Leroy C. Hodapp of Indianapolis, and secretary, Bishop Melvin G. Talbert of San Francisco, to deliver the letter and signatures directly to the White House. □



The strange intermingling of military and religious symbols are images Americans see almost daily as the military buildup continues in Saudi Arabia. Here a Saudi naval officer prays on the deck of a gunboat in the Persian Gulf. Muslims turn toward Mecca and get on their knees to pray five times daily.—ms photo/Reuters

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MICHIGAN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

1990

NOVEMBER 26,

Pastor tells of his visit to S. Africa

"Walls of apartheid are coming down"

NANCY KALEY
Staff Writer, *Battle Creek Enquirer*

"A butterfly can never change back into a caterpillar, and South Africa can never return to the past."

Black and White churches in S. Africa condemn racist sin

GUSTAV SPOHN
Religious News Service

An historic conference of South African churches ended Nov. 9 with a sweeping denunciation of apartheid, but there still are signs of continuing disagreement between white and black churches over how institutionalized racism should be dismantled.

Meanwhile, the conference in Rustenburg seemed to indicate that the country's myriad black churches are without serious disagreement when it comes to ridding the

country of apartheid.

The Rev. J. Oscar McCloud of New York, a Presbyterian and member of the World Council of Churches Executive Committee, made those observations Nov. 13 after attending the conference as an observer for the World Council.

THE LAST MAJOR conference involving the delegates from black and white churches took place 30 years ago in the Johannesburg suburb of Cottesloe in the See AFRICA, page 4

"The walls of apartheid are coming down and never have so many there tasted freedom," said the Rev. David Yingling, pastor of Birchwood United Methodist Church—optimistic at the recent metamorphosis.

He was among 55 members of a national Emmaus spiritual group who recently spent 19 days in the country at the invitation of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Emmaus is an organization designed to strengthen and renew the faith of participants.

THE GROUP OF eight clergy and 47 lay members—"half black, half white, half men, half women"—sparked more curiosity and "some crosswise looks" than criticism in South Africa, Yingling said.

"Contrary to reports by the international media, there's a great deal of hope, energy and blacks and whites working together there and a tremendous enthusiasm and a feeling of hope," he said.

"We're going to make it" is their cry, he added.

Calling the timetable for change "one day at a time, one chip in the wall at a time," the minister said optimists "are focusing their hope on Jesus and the Spirit of God more than a figurehead like (anti-apartheid leader) Nelson Mandela."

"We met briefly both with the staffs of Mandela and President F.W. de Klerk and they encouraged us to say positive things when we came home."

"There are 18 black (tribal) townships in South Africa, and Mandela's Zulu tribe, which is the backbone of Mandela's African National Congress, is only one of them," Yingling said.

Yingling said he didn't have fears walking the streets of Soweto. "People appreciated the fact that we were there." He said an irony is that many natives in South Africa said they would be more fearful of walking the streets of Detroit. "They perceive Americans as very violent people

who have to confront a different kind of fear."

BUT VISITING A black township is comparable to crossing into a foreign country. "Expect to be stopped by several policemen carrying M-1's," Yingling said. They're not discouraging visitors, rather "trying to protect their communities."

"We also had to leave our cameras on the bus in Soweto, about 25 miles from Johannesburg." The group of church lay leaders also had to leave their cameras on the bus when they visited Mandela's home and de Klerk's government offices at Pretoria.



"Contrary to reports by the international media, there's a great deal of hope, energy and blacks and whites working together there."

David Yingling

Rioting has been more tempered since last year when Mandela was released from prison after 27 years.

"South Africa is becoming less and less of a powder keg, but fights still go on. However, more are working for unification."

"Many of the same kids that were running down the streets during riots in Soweto a year ago were at a service I attended at the Kattlehong Methodist Church," Yingling said.

But the remnants of earlier riots—particularly in the Soweto Township area—are still there, he said. See HOPE, page 3



HISTORIC CHURCH CONFERENCE

RUSTENBURG, S. Africa — Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu confers with Methodist Bishop Khoja Mgojo Nov. 9 at the end of one of the largest conferences of South African churches ever held. The last major conference involving delegates from black and white churches took place 30 years ago. The churches called for the immediate scrapping of all apartheid race segregation laws agreeing on "the unequivocal rejection of apartheid as a sin."—ms photo/Reuters

MICHIGAN AREA UPDATE



Bishop's Beat

—Judy Craig
Michigan Area

Advent hope

It's hard to focus on one thing. Streams of thought come together in my experience and my mind. There is that stream still celebrating the Gathering, all its drama, its high worship, the energy let loose across the Church. In that tributary is my wonderment about the Pastoral Letter. How many congregations heard it? How was it read and received? What questions did it leave, or what boredom? What will happen next?

I HAD A marvelous time reading it in a congregation that exhibited many signs of vitality. It felt good to read it there, for I was among a people who are themselves demonstrating why I am so confident about the future of our witness as vital congregations full of faithful disciples. But what about other places? What about openness to what God might do next? Will people read the document, live with the vision, follow God's leading? I stand on the edge of not knowing... a kind of Advent hope for what is not yet keeps me going. Not bad timing, I suppose.

A request: Send me a note about how you read the letter and any plans you have in your congregation for "living with the vision."

A SECOND tributary is my awareness of Thanksgiving. My extended family in Ohio will be the focus of my celebration, and the hostess for the weekend has asked that each family unit present bring something tangible that represents something for which that family is thankful. Those things will be put together for the center piece for the dining table. Nice idea! What to take?

I have set out a wooden cross and flame given me by my sister some years ago. Why? Because I am aware that almost everything for which I am grateful comes to me through the Church, source and channel of thousands of other signs of God's generous grace in good times and not so good times. Good timing as I live out of the energy now flowing through the Episcopal Initiative that is focused on praying for God to continue to energize the Church in its form as local congregations where faithful disciples are formed.

BUT THERE is a third stream of consciousness in the river of my life these days. It is painful consciousness of the mass of soldiers and force for killing amassed in a desert halfway around the world, there in protest of a despotic act of national (and personal) rape, but there, also, as a means of saying we will protect our standard of living and economy at almost any cost. Confusing signals for me.

There is a certain rightness and lingering wonderment about wrongness in all I read and hear and watch. But whatever the argument offered for right or wrong, there is human life at stake and well being of families already disrupted, in America and other nations of the world. Here we are, approaching Advent, that season of longing for hope, for a future of security and peace, and the world teeters once again under the continuing sound of conflict actual and conflict threatened.

What impact will that have on our preaching, our praying, our personal journey through the recital of Advent scriptures, crying out with longing and hope? What impact will it have on those of us who are secure and comfortable, our family members all accounted for, or our family dismembered by world events beyond our personal control?

A second request: If you know United Methodists who have been deployed by the Military to the Middle East, please send me the names and addresses as you have them, both of the soldiers and of the families left behind. Thanks.

ADVENT, INDEED! Season of expectation that God is still moving in the world... moving through congregations of people gathered to hear the Word and to learn how to respond... scattering to be the Word in home and at work and with friends and among enemies. That I come through the season of Thanksgiving and into Advent with mixed feelings, contradictory streams of real life flowing into my consciousness, makes me not unlike those people who longed for God's revelation of hope long ago, whose stories are my scriptures in this season and whose discovery of God Incarnate is my hope today and tomorrow!

Advent, indeed! Come, Lord Jesus, come! Bring us freshly kindled beams of hope for our fear and light for our darkness. Come to us as those who would be your Body—in company of those we know and whose yearnings are kin to ours and out among those we do not know so well and whose yearnings may be contrary to ours. Come, and dwell with us in the mix of our life streams, where memories of high moments mingle with realization of uncertain moments. Advent, indeed! Come, Lord Jesus.

Around the Area

SHELTER FOR HOMELESS OFFERED IN FLINT

The Greater Flint Council of Churches announces the opening on Sept. 30 of a Rotating Church Shelter for Homeless Women and Children.

To date the shelter has been hosted by the following churches: Oak Park UMC, Christ Episcopal Center, Charity UMC, and Vernon Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Calvary and Trinity UMCs are future hosts.

The shelter has served up to ten people nightly. Meals are provided by the North End Soup Kitchen. Love, Inc. and the Salvation Army have provided clothing.

Tom Brown II

LAY PROFESSIONALS HOLD FALL RETREAT

A Spiritual Formation Retreat sponsored by the Michigan Area United Methodist boards of Diaconal Ministry was held recently at Lake Louise Retreat Center, Boyne Falls.

Thirty-four persons (diaconal ministers and candidates, certified persons, musicians, Christian educators, and secretaries) were registered for the experience which was led by the Rev. Paul Nicely, professor of pastoral care, emeritus, Methodist Theological School in Ohio.

The 24-hour retreat dealt with aspects of co-dependency in ministry. Janet Lee

PORT HURON UMW HOLD ANNUAL MEETING

Over 300 women gathered at the Marysville United Methodist Church on Oct. 10. They came from 103 local church units for the District Annual Meeting of United Methodist Women. A new slate of officers for 1991 was approved: Marie Hingelberg (St. Clair First), president; Kay Fuller (Lexington Bethel), vice-president; Aileen Drake (Utica, Sterling Heights), secretary; and Vera Philpot (Decker UMC), treasurer.

Highlights of the day included the dedication by Superintendent Ken Tousley and Global Concerns chair, Ruth Charlton, of over 400 quilts for the mission project, multiplied from 90 "seed quilts" distributed at last year's meeting. The speaker for the day was Dr. John Madar, newly retired superintendent of Marysville schools. His theme, "Children are People," gave participants much food for thought.

Phyllis Liebler

WEST MICHIGAN LIFEWATCH SETS PRIORITIES

United Methodist LIFEWATCH of West Michigan, a pro-life organization, met at the Lansing: Mt. Hope UMC on Oct. 20. Director of LIFEWATCH is the Rev. Michael Long, pastor of Rosebush and Geneva Hope UMCs.

Long led discussion on strategies and priorities, which include: 1) support to United Methodists with a pro-life orientation; 2) education about Sheltering Ministries, which serves pregnant women in crisis; 3) prayer for the church regarding the issue of abortion.

More information is available from Michael Long, 3274 E. Weidman, Rosebush MI 48878, (517) 433-2957; or Robert Gillett, 547 Waverly Ave., Grand Haven MI 49417, (616) 842-7980.

Judith Salisbury

D.S. HOSTS UNIQUE BACKPACKING TRIP

Last August one D.S. (Terry Euper, Saginaw Bay), a hospital chaplain and seven P.K.s (preachers' kids) embarked on a backpacking trip as "a group of strangers." After four days of hiking and camping along the Pictured Rocks Shoreline Trail on Lake Superior, "a warm spirit of friendship" had developed.

"Unique experiences of living in parsonages were openly shared, some humorous and some painful," notes Euper. "The mystique of the role of district superintendent melted away as P.K.s and D.S. talked openly about appointment systems and the anxiety and uncertainty of moving to new churches."

Not only were new friendships formed but a new support group was created. "The challenge of the trail helped unite us," Euper concluded. Terry Euper



"P.K.s got to really know other P.K.s; the D.S. gained many new insights regarding itinerant ministry through the eyes of parsonage families," says Terry Euper regarding a backpacking trip last summer. Participants were (l-r): Terry Euper, Lowell Gjerstad, Tim Milano, Lance Gjerstad, Beth Miller, Jay Hanson, Andrea Paulson, Pam Colby, and Doug Leffler. Another discovery according to Euper: "P.K.s discovered that D.S.s are human... after four days on the trail without a shower, they smell as bad as anyone else!"

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Marquette Volunteers in Mission journey to South Carolina

CATHERINE LABRON
Newberry, Mich.

Last July 7, a work team of nine left Michigan for a trip to Charleston, S.C. to rebuild homes that had been destroyed by Hurricane Hugo on Sept. 21, 1989.

The team consisted of two men and seven women. Although we came from different places and different walks of life, we soon became one close knit family.

The area we were to work in was Adenaw, a small community 17 miles north of Charleston.

We worked through the disaster relief coordinator Pat Goss, and Wylie Runey, project coordinator, who distributed the materials that were stored in the depot which had been a United Methodist church camp before Hurricane Hugo. There was nothing left at the camp except a brick fireplace at the end of the dining hall. Other volunteer groups had roofed in the structure so all donated materials were stored there.

THE TEAM WAS housed in an old schoolhouse that had been renovated by previous work teams. Our crew was well organized by our foreman, Don Bodi. We started off each day with devotions that got us inspired to do our very best. We sang our theme song, "Is it I Lord," and at 6 a.m. we were merrily on our way.

Our first assignment was to jack up a house where the floor had rotted. The house also needed trim boards around the roof, vents in the attic, new windows, and screens on windows and doors. There was enough work to keep us going for most of the week. The next assignment was to fix a leaking roof and make dry wall repairs on the inside of a home where a woman was caring for seven foster children. We fixed it, and it rained that night. When we came back the next morning she was singing and dancing and hugging us because it was dry in her house. She sang to us and it brought tears to our eyes, that we really

are, "One in the Spirit."

WE FINISHED our work on Saturday then did some sightseeing in Charleston. We traveled home by way of Cape Hatteras. After stops at Kitty Hawk and the mountains of Virginia, we stayed overnight in a church in Lima, Ohio, sharing some U.P. pastries with the pastor.

In summary, this was a great team and a great experience following Christ's footsteps, by trying to help all those in need.

We thank the Marquette District for their sponsorship, prayers, and gifts and are looking forward to presenting our story in person to all who are interested. If you wish a presentation contact any team member: Catherine Labron, (906) 293-8133; Don and Billie Bodi, (906) 293-5742; Paula Morgan, (906) 293-3996; Audrey Radloff, (906) 387-2977; Mary Johnson, (906) 942-7353; Clyde Bartlett, (906) 474-9264; Joyce Darling, (517) 845-3309; or Sally Dugas, (313) 391-2120.



This team of Volunteers in Mission left their homes in the Marquette District and went to South Carolina to help rebuild homes destroyed by Hurricane Hugo. L-r: Mary Johnson, Joyce Darling, Paula Morgan, Clyde Bartlett, Audrey Radloff, Don Bodi, Sally Dugas, Katie Labron and Billie Jean Bodi.



District Dialogue

—Erik Alsgaard
MCA Correspondent

Flint District

With 77 churches on 60 charges, and 68 pastors in the district, the Flint District of the Detroit Annual Conference is a microcosm of the world, according to its district superintendent, the Rev. Doug Mercer. From several co-operative parishes and many rural churches, to the urban setting and inner-city ministry, the Flint District embraces a large cross section of the people of God.

Q. Let's talk about the neat ministries that are going on in the district.

A. I'd like to begin by talking about the effectiveness of our youth programming as a district. Our project director for Christian Education and Youth, Jackie Euper, provides the youth in the district with some high quality programs. Along with the youth council, Jackie has put together what is called a "U-night" at U of M-Flint. About 400 youth and 100 adults, on two separate occasions, get together in a lock-in type setting for devotional time and recreation. Money raised from admission goes to help various scholarships, such as the Washington D.C. trip or "Chrysalis" youth walks. Jackie also provides valuable training for youth counselors, and even serves as a consultant to local churches.

Another area to highlight, Erik, is the activity of our District Board of Missions. This is a large board, with several sub-committees, that works hard all year round. We currently have 23 loans outstanding to help local churches with building improvements of many kinds. One of the most frequent improvements we see is the addition or remodeling to allow for handicap accessibility. Durand UMC and Flint: Asbury UMC have recently made major improvements to their buildings for this reason. And the board also gives out about \$4,000 in grants each year, to so called "churches of the year."

Q. Churches outnumber charges. Are there several multiple point charges in the district?

A. The Flint District has 33 churches on multiple point charges. And we have several co-operative parish ministries organized to one degree or another. Three co-ops are officially organized.

The first is the Caring Covenant

Community, made up of Davison, Bedford Center, West Forest in Otisville Otterlake, Richfield, Oregon, Elba, Columbiaville and West Deerfield. This is a large co-op, with seven pastors that

has been running for some time. In fact, this might be the pioneer co-op in the Conference.

Next, is the South Central Group Ministry. The churches in this co-operative are

Lake Fenton, Linden and Argentine, South Mundy, and Halsey. This co-op is served by three pastors, and has a long and solid history.

Then comes the Seven Churches United Group Ministry. Durand, Gaines, Byron, Vernon and Bancroft, Lennon and Duffield are the churches that make up this co-op, and they have five pastors working here.

Two other co-operatives are going on but they are not officially organized and recognized by the conference. These two, one north of Flint, and the other south, are more urban in their ministry setting.

Q. People who think of Flint might think of the city from the movie "Roger and Me." Are the problems mentioned in that movie the problems that exist today?

A. Unemployment and the social ills that often go hand in hand with it are still visible in the Flint area. But we've also seen, I think, an upsurge in racism, and our "gang culture" is on the increase. But the Flint District is more than just the city of Flint; the district deals with a microcosm of the world. We have our rural parishes, some of which I mentioned in the co-ops. We have suburban churches, some of which are growing at fantastic rates and have problems associated with that.

Q. What is the church doing about some of these challenges?

A. Well, several things, but let me highlight three. The Dort Oak Park Neighborhood House, under the direc-

tion of Bob Boyler, offers substance abuse programs, computer training, emergency relief, and many other useful programs to help persons. The Court Street Village is a ministry of the Court Street church that provides housing for persons with limited income. And we're developing our Hispanic ministry, too. With the leadership of the Rev. Estevan Davila, 33 persons on average are worshipping on Sunday afternoons in the Oak Park church in north Flint. We have hopes that one day this congregation will have their own building.

Q. Any other challenges you see?

A. From my point of view, we need money for growing churches to help them deal with expansion of ministry. I am also very concerned about the weakness I see in many church school programs. It's not unusual to see a 400 member church with only 70 people in church school Sunday morning. And we need to deal with the missing generations not in our churches. Some of our congregations are ministering to the "baby boomer" generation quite well, while others are lacking.

Q. One final question: How does Doug Mercer keep spiritually alive?

A. Erik, I have fun on the job. When I go to church conferences, sure it takes energy, but I always get energy back in return. I delight to see an attitude in local churches that they can do ministry. One thing about being D.S. is that I get to worship with my family on Sunday mornings; I find this basic. I need this.

I enjoy music. I enjoy reading, although that seems to get squeezed out now and then. I just enjoy what I'm doing.

Q. You sound very positive about your job and your district.

A. I feel positive about the Flint District on several fronts. Our numbers appear to be up—and here, I'm talking about attendance, giving, and participation. We have some outstanding lay involvement in this district. And the clergy in his district are just a wonderful set of people. Their morale, commitment, and energy seem to be at a high point. This district is blessed with very able clergy, and I, for one, really appreciate that.

HOPE

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Yingling said it's easy to realize how stress builds when you see how most of the country's blacks live, especially the prison-like quarters of workers in the country's gold and diamond mines. "These workers are housed in hot, hot cubicles which are surrounded with barbed and circled wired walls."

SPENDING AN afternoon at Krueger National park in the north, Yingling said he had a lengthy conversation with a vacationing family from Cape Town. On his return home, they asked him to "please tell people we are united and want to be free and we're working hard at it. But it's a day-by-day process."

"Tell America there is peace here and we're going to have a country—a unified country," was the plea from other blacks and whites.

"The commitment is made—blacks and whites will live together in harmony," Yingling said.

He saw firsthand one example of this new harmony involving one of his hostesses, Denise (a white Afrikaner) and her black maid Elizabeth. Denise, a hair stylist, takes two days off a week so she can work alongside Elizabeth, "as an equal," Yingling said, cleaning and gardening.

"Most South Africans realize that unless blacks and whites get to know each other and work together, there won't be a South Africa; there will be blood bath," he said.

Reprinted with permission from the Battle Creek Enquirer News, Nov. 3, 1990 edition. Five persons from the Detroit Conf. were also on the trip: Steve Boom, St. Timothy UMC; Greg Large, Saginaw; Kathy Stark, Flint; Tom Tarpley, St. Timothy UMC; and Janet Tilman, Ann Arbor.

NATION & WORLD

AIDS task force encourages anti-discrimination policies

GARLINDA BURTON
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE — Churchwide United Methodist agencies were challenged Sept. 15 by action of the panel coordinating the denomination's AIDS-related ministries to adopt personnel policies to protect rights of persons with AIDS and who test HIV-positive.

In a separate action, the Interagency Task Force on AIDS Ministries recommended that two provisions of United Methodist law be amended to prevent discrimination.

A PRESENTATION on her work lobbying the U.S. Congress in favor of the Americans with Disabilities Act was made by task force member Jane Hull Harvey of the Board of Church and Society.

She encouraged her colleagues to ensure that rights of persons employed by United Methodist church wide, regional and local agencies and institutions are protected, should those persons test HIV-positive or contract AIDS or related illnesses.

Specifically, she and other task force members agreed to forward suggested guidelines to agencies:

"requiring 'strict medical confidentiality' for employees with HIV infection, and prohibiting use of HIV status as a determining factor in hiring or continuing employment;

"enacting personnel policies complying with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act;

"discouraging HIV-related policy or benefits protection that distinguishes between

clergy and laypersons.

Cathie Lyons, New York, head of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries' Health and Welfare Ministries unit, said that, while some church agencies have enacted anti-discrimination policies regarding persons with AIDS, HIV-infected persons in many cases are not protected.

TASK FORCE members also voted unanimously to recommend an addition to the *Book of Discipline*, paragraph 815, which would prohibit church agency employers from discriminating against persons with AIDS and persons tested HIV-positive. Such prohibitions regarding race, gender, age or handicapping conditions currently exist.

Members also approved a recommendation to amend *Discipline* paragraph 906.12, which prohibits church funding to "any gay caucus or group, or... to promote the acceptance of homosexuality." The task force suggested that language be added to exempt AIDS-related ministries from the funding restriction.

In other action, the task force:

"forwarded a request to the denomination's Board of Discipleship for worship resources for use by pastors in ministry with persons with AIDS and their families:

"agreed to request funding for a pilot project of computer-based, interagency coordination of services for persons with AIDS;

"affirmed the idea of a pilot program at a United Methodist-related seminary to train pastors specifically in the area of AIDS-related outreach. □

from page 1

wake of the Sharpeville massacre, where 69 persons were shot by police during demonstrations against the country's pass laws.

McCloud said most of the 230 delegates representing 80 South African churches seemed to leave the conference in what he called a "very optimistic mood." But he noted that many delegates were apparently not aware of last-minute criticisms leveled by delegates from the white establishment Dutch Reformed Church.

Before the final draft of the conference's formal declaration on apartheid was issued, Dutch Reformed Church delegates released their own statement, saying that denomination disassociated itself from some parts of the declaration. They noted that they were not authorized to go beyond the limits of the church's "Church and Society 1990" document on apartheid approved at the denomination's synod held in October.

The conference declaration, called "The Rustenburg Declaration," says, "Some of us are not in full accord with everything said in this conference, but on this we are all agreed, namely, the unequivocal rejection of apartheid as a sin."

IN ITS EARLY formulations, the declaration made strong statements in a variety of areas that the Dutch Reformed delegates found objectionable, such as the linking of military conscription to the violence of apartheid and the call for a one-person, one-vote form of government representation.

Some of those sections were watered down or eliminated in the final draft, but the Dutch Reformed delegates said the declaration treated some issues "very one-sidedly."

On the second day of the five-day gathering Afrikaner theologian Willie D. Jonker of Stellenbosch University shocked 230 delegates from 80 churches by giving a speech in which he asked black church leaders to forgive him and other Dutch Reformed Church communicants for their historic support of apartheid.

Equally as shocking, perhaps, was the acknowledgment the following day by the

moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Rev. Pieter Potgieter, that the confession of Prof. Jonker was not simply the confession of a single person but the official position of the church, as set forth in the "Church and Society 1990" paper.

Of Prof. Jonker's confession, McCloud said, "I think it was accepted (by delegates) as being sincere on his part." Jonker's action, and the follow-up statement by Potgieter, were "very painful and difficult for them," McCloud observed.

He said Afrikaner theologians are in a particularly difficult position because, in declaring apartheid sinful, they are taking a position contrary to that taken by Afrikaner theologians of the past, who sought to provide a biblical base for the apartheid system. □



FOUNDATION STONE FOR NEW CATHEDRAL IN RED SQUARE
MOSCOW — Russian Orthodox priests line up Nov. 4 on Red Square in front of a giant Revolution Day board showing atheist communist Soviet state founder Lenin. They gathered for the blessing of the foundation stone of Kazan Cathedral, destroyed by the communists in 1936, which is being rebuilt at the edge of the square. —ms
photo/Reuters

Christmas Celebration for
People Who Care About People With AIDS

Celebration of Holy Eucharist With Healing Service

Thursday, December 13, 7:30
Christ Church (Episcopal)
East Jefferson at I-75 in Down-town Detroit

Celebrant: The Rt. Rev. R. Stewart Wood
Preacher: Bishop Judith Craig

Gala Reception to follow.
You are invited to bring a present to be taken to a hospitalized person with AIDS.
For information call (313) 864-6070

Gift suggestions: sweaters, sweatshirts, bathrobes, slippers, underwear, scarves, gloves, wallets, personal hygiene kits; bus tickets (D.O.T.), gift certificates; movie or theatre tickets; toys, food baskets. (Remember, 90 percent of persons with AIDS are adult males; medium and small sizes suggested.)

GCOM meeting abroad to symbolize global nature of the Church

DENISE HAWKINS
United Methodist News Service

FORT WORTH, Texas — United Methodism's chief coordinating council voted overwhelmingly Oct. 28 to "demonstrate the global nature of the church" by visiting the denomination's conferences in Europe, Africa and the Philippines next April and then holding its spring meeting in Switzerland.

The 133-member General Council on Ministries (GCOM) approved a proposal recommending the trip by a vote of 66-30 during its meeting here Oct. 26-30.

Council members are expected to visit at least seven administrative church regions throughout Europe and five in Africa and the Philippines.

After visits April 17-21, 1991, with local congregations, church and community leaders, GCOM members will gather at a Methodist-owned hotel in Switzerland April 22-25.

The goal of the trip is to equip council members "with a perspective that will shape a vision for global ministry in all places and all structures of the United Methodist Church," according to an eight-page report from the council's Division of Research Planning and Futuring. The report was presented by the Rev. Sharon Zimmerman Rader, Grand Rapids, Mich., and the Rev. Willard R. Stevens, Phoenix, Ariz.

THROUGHOUT SOMETIMES impassioned four-hour debate here on the trip, issues of stewardship and social justice surfaced, with one of the most vocal responses coming from the council's

Native American Concerns Committee, headed by Becky Thompson, Tulsa, Okla.

On the eve of the vote, Thompson told United Methodist News Service that the committee had decided to oppose the European meeting because of "ideological and justice issues." Pointing out that "the meeting is being proposed because it would be a global experience for the church," she added, "global should also include the perspective of indigenous people."

In an address on what it means to be a global church, GCOM President Bishop Felton E. May of Washington, D.C., contended that one aspect of the church's global understanding should include visiting places and meeting people who are "hurting and suffering locally" in this nation.

Thompson also said that "for some members of the council," the trip to Europe would "be a going home, a reclaiming of their North American roots." The exact opposite would hold true for Native Americans, she said.

From an historical perspective, Thompson noted the trip reminds us of our oppression at the hands of European settlers. The council approved a motion from Thompson calling for a Native American emphasis at its Dec. 2-6, 1991 meeting with the denomination's General Council on Finance and Administration in Chicago.

COUNCIL MEMBER Sharon Adair, Dallas, Texas, said she is reluctant to inform her annual conference about the decision to visit the Central Conferences and is "at a loss on how to convince them the trip is little more than a junket."

Bishop May said he wants those who are concerned about whether the GCOM is being a good steward to know that "the council is exercising prudent financial management and is operating within its quadrennial budget."

Based on a preliminary budget, the trip will cost about \$1,640 a person based on 125 participants from the 133-member council. If held in the United States in 1991, the spring meeting would cost about \$875 for each member. The council usually meets in Dayton, Ohio, where it has headquarters.

Both Stevens and Rader said that the historical changes in Eastern Europe—the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the political and religious implications of that move, "provided compelling reasons for us to travel to Europe."

At the close of the council meeting, 101 of the 133 council members had already agreed in writing to participate in the Central Conference visits, according to GCOM top executive C. David Lundquist. More responses are expected.

Lundquist said he is pleased with the way the council dealt with this issue. "The council operated well, expressed sharp opinions, but with no acrimony." □

ISSUES & INSIGHTS



From the editor

We've been framed!

Yes, friends, we've been framed... by our United Methodist bishops! At least that's my conclusion at the end of my morning reading of the many reports about the recent Gathering in Ft. Worth and an essay in the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Let me hasten to describe what I mean by "framed," as talked about in the aforementioned article by Christopher Andree. In "Picture the Frame" (Monitor Oct. 29, p. 16) Andree explains how throughout history frames "have frequently been treated as persuasive packaging." At times, he says, the frames, so splendid in themselves, have "made the painting more or less unnecessary." In more recent times, however, modern artists have opted for almost a "no-edge, no-frame" approach to their expression. In any case, says Andree, the frame defines the picture from the surrounding background and delineates the image without upstaging it.

Within that context, I am thankful that our bishops have now framed us in these last years of the 20th century. For in their newly announced initiative—Vital Congregations/Faithful Disciples—our *episcopal leaders begin to focus the denomination on an image they deem to be central—the local congregation*. Their letter, read from many of the pulpits around the state and the world this past Sunday, states: "Here [the local congregation] the gospel is preached and taught; here the sacraments are celebrated; here the offerings of the people are given and received; here discipleship finds its source and its direction." The portrait the bishops lift before us is that of a "blessed connection of vital congregations that seek to respond in unique and individual ways to the command of our Lord to teach, to baptize, and to make disciples."

Andree closes his essay on frames with the declaration: "Good paintings are too self-sufficient to be dolled up in fashionable frames like dowagers in florid hats and pretentious pearls." Understanding the beauty in that principle, the bishops have chosen to set apart this central image of the local church in a way that opts for simplicity. They are taking a minimal, "no-frame" approach which: 1) does not impose a heavy program load from above ("What we offer is not... a grand master plan."); and

2) expects and trusts the local congregation, once empowered, to march off the canvas as it were to express their discipleship ("...scattered for ministry in the world.") This is not a frame that restricts or confines. It encourages local creativity and provides incentive for neighborhood outreach.

The bishops have taken an important step in lifting as central this image of the vital local congregation. We've too long taken for granted, I think, the basic wholeness and health of our local congregations. A real reorientation of our assumptions and reallocation of our resources is needed. If, first, the bishops take themselves seriously, this action will begin to reorder the investment of energy, time, personnel and money at all levels of the Church. The bishops are calling this an "initiative." Whatever else that means in our United Methodist "connectionalism," unless it means "priority," it will likely not move anything or anybody from business as usual.

To persons who find the bishop's initiative to be abstract, I recommend the reading of two things. First, some of the word pictures painted by our bishops to be found in Wayne Reece's summary on page 8 of this paper. Their anecdotes and stories help make concrete both the problems to be addressed and the hoped for fruits of the initiative. Just a sample quote from Bishop Calvin McConnell (and read it carefully because your eyes, like mine, will try to trick you): "We must think more about how to be a kingdom as well as a kingdom."

Second, beginning in this issue, watch page 16 of each Advocate. As a way of illustrating the "Vital Congregation/Faithful Disciples" initiative, we will be presenting portraits of Michigan churches of all sizes. The "Church of the Week" feature will offer success stories (that's "success" defined in gospel not corporate America terms, folks) from congregations selected by the district superintendents. We hope that these examples will offer not only inspiration but some practical help as well.

Yes, we've been framed. The image of the vital local congregation is on an easel before us and it's now up to you and me and the rest of our United Methodist brothers and sisters to make the new commitments that will bring that image to life. Get the picture?

—Kay Lukins



Spiritual power flows forth from Ft. Worth Gathering

DOUGLAS VERNON
MCA Correspondent

1990 is mid-point in what I hope and pray by God's grace may be a 40 year journey in ministry. That is, I began in 1970, and hope to retire in 2010. So when news of The Gathering came last winter, it seemed like an appropriate opportunity to pause and consider whence the church and I have wandered in these 20 years, as well as where we're headed in the two decades to come. What I saw, heard and

experienced in Fort Worth encourages hope and belief that better days are ahead for this church I love.

From the beginning, it was clear that the pastoral letter, and the 160-page foundation document expanding on it, were thoughtfully and prayerfully wrought. This is no "quick fix" program for the depressed clergy and declining churches. Rather, it is properly and powerfully grounded in Scripture and around the essential ele-

See POWER, page 9

LETTERS to the editor



PREACHERS' TRUE AIM

I write to decry Harry T. Cook's concept of "prophetic preaching" as he detailed in his column on Oct. 29. I vigorously oppose the use of the pulpit for a private editorial vehicle to moralize about sundry political issues. Like Harry, I have some reservations about U.S. involvement in the Persian Gulf and our government's handling of the S&L crisis. But I do not feel confident that making myself known on these issues is the same as Christian preaching.

The primary task of preaching is to announce God's Word, to speak of what God has done and is doing, not what politicians are doing. Mr. Cook's philosophy runs the risk of using the biblical text as a pretext for his personal opinions. Too many sermons attempt to mimic the journalistic concept of the editorial. A sermon's aim is to foster new life and not new legislation. If preaching is merely editorializing on the issues of the day why should the Church bother reduplicating the efforts of so many fine newspapers today? The media are already doing a fine job of "crying aloud at the fiscal sins of the savings-and-loan bailout and demanding justice." The Gospel people need not usurp this role.

Doesn't the church have anything else to say? Do not we have a Gospel message that gets to the root of all modern issues? Is not offering a right relationship with God a truly prophetic message that no one else is announcing? Mr. Cook, why should I go to hear you when I can read the same things in a good liberal newspaper? I suspect that growing numbers of United Methodists in the last 20 years are answering that question by staying home on Sunday morning to do just that with a cup of coffee.

—Tom Anderson
Durand UMC

NEW WORLD ORDER

Two major crises in the Middle East, one began by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the other by Israel's domination of the Palestinians, need to be solved by the United Nations and not by actions dominated by the United States. Saddam Hussein must be stopped. The Palestinians must have sovereign identity. Both crises involve Arab peoples whose loyalties run deep through out many Middle East countries none of whom, by and large, trust U.S. motives.

Accordingly, we ask:

1) that the economic embargo of Iraq and occupied Kuwait be given time to be effective, and that it be run and monitored by the United Nations;

2) that Iraq end its military occupation of Kuwait;

3) that the United Nations establish a pan—Arab or international judicial hearing to resolve the bi-lateral disputes between Iraq and Kuwait, and between Israel and the Palestinians;

4) that the United Nations insist, under threat of economic blockade, that all hostages held by all Middle East nations be released, once and for all;

5) that the United Nations create a process of international and mutual verification, establishing neutral zones between belligerents, manned by United Nations multi-national peace-keeping forces;

6) and, finally, that the U.S. pay in full the more than 1/2 billion dollars now owed in arrears to the United Nations.

Your leadership and the support of all public and elected officials and private citizens toward these objectives we earnestly seek. Diplomacy, negotiations, and United Nation peace-keeping neutral zones are, we believe, the only viable options. Neither war between the U.S. and Iraq nor continued hostilities between Israel and the Palestinians are viable options. Modern war is undeniably obsolete and self-destructive of the entire world. The new world order calls for true world order to prevail over international disputes.

Frederick Linsell, Chair
Swords into Plowshares Peace Center
Grand Traverse District

STRONG STAND NEEDED

Today's *Detroit Free Press* has a story on the Roman Catholic bishops who have written a letter to President Bush warning him of the immorality of an immediate attack on Iraq. I should like to see our United Methodist bishops also take leadership with other Christians to prevent war that would probably pitch us into World War III.

They have already told us in a very convincing matter in the letter, "In Defense of Creation," that nuclear war is immoral. I hope they will follow through now to take a strong stand against any military offense in the Mid-East.

—Betty Ligon
Pentwater, Mich.

See story on page 1, "United Methodists send letter..."



LEADING THE WAY

The Oct. 31-Nov. 4 international conference on ways to put new life and members back into United Methodist congregations was the brainchild of the more than 100 United Methodist bishops worldwide, and staff and directors of the denomination's General Board of Discipleship. Leading the 3,500 "Gathering" participants in worship Nov. 1, were (l-r): Bishop George W. Bashore, Mars, Pa.; the Rev. Ezra Earl Jones, Pa.; Bishop Woodie W. White, Springfield, Ill.; Esther Cho, Denver, Discipleship director; and Bishop Leroy C. Hodapp, Indianapolis.—umns photo/John Goodwin, Bd. of Global Ministries

ISSUES & INSIGHTS



Dateline: Babylon

—Harry T. Cook

Rector, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Clawson

My own Episcopal Church is within a month of beginning what it is calling "The Decade of Evangelism," the goal of which, as I understand it, is to increase the number of believers and, specifically, the churched. Who could argue with such goals? There is front-office anxiety to regain the one million or more Episcopalians who have made our minority denomination even smaller than it was two decades ago. And, of course, there is the greater challenge of winning the heretofore unwon to Jesus. Again, who among us can quarrel with that?

Why am I asking you?

I am asking you, dear United Methodists, because you are better at this evangelism thing than your Anglican brothers and sisters, and because you are likely to have a church in every village, at every major rural crossroads as well as in the cities.

YOU, WHO CAME to this country originally as a small band of disciples of one of the greatest all-time Anglicans, John Wesley, have outstripped your older Anglican cousins almost ten to one, lo these 200-odd years later. That proportion does not seem likely to change anytime soon.

What is it that you have done with your original Anglican heritage that makes your church more attractive than our own? You should figure it out.

Having graduated from a Methodist seminary, I can tell you one of your strong points: "Bible-centeredness without the narrow Puritanism of *sola scriptura*. One may not have studied Hebrew and Greek at Garrett Biblical Institute (its former name which I've always preferred), but one did not walk off the commencement stage with an M.Div. (B.D. in those days) without a thorough academic grounding in Old and New Testament.

Garrett had a great faculty in the late 50s and early 60s, but the solid core of scripture scholars was awesome: Charles Kraft, Ernest Saunders, Albert Sundberg, Charles Kesler, Ed Blair, Helmer Ringgren. The Bible faculty outnumbered the theology faculty 2 to 1.

After more than a quarter of century of ministry in a variety of settings, I can safely say that lay people hunger and thirst for sound biblical preaching. After three years with Saunders, Blair, Kraft and Co., and two homiletics courses with George Arthur Buttrick, one could hardly blame me for having become a Bible-centered preacher. What chance did I have to be anything else?

The point is that I fear preachers in general of whatever tradition are opting for the anecdotal, pop-psychology-laced kind of sermon following the lead of the talk-show hosts and stand-up comedians. During my tenure as religion editor of the *Detroit Free Press* I visited many different churches over the years to sample the sermonic and liturgical fare. It was not often that I heard a good, sound biblically-centered sermon—save in the black churches in inner city Detroit.

CLERGY OF MY own church are notoriously guilty on this score. And by this, I don't mean that preachers should avoid preaching to the issues of the day. But the way to do that is from the strength of pertinent exegesis of the relevant scripture.

On a recent Sunday, the Old Testament lesson in our lectionary was

Amos 5:18ff, which includes the epoch-making line: "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an overflowing stream." That ringing declaration is as close to the epicenter of the Hebrew Testament's prophetic conscience as anything.

One could scarcely preach from that text and its larger context and not be in touch with almost any current issue one can think of.

I realize that Methodism has lost some ground in the past quarter of a century, but not so much proportionately or in whole numbers as the Episcopal Church. My instinct tells me that it is because of the scripture-centered nature of your ethos.

My church will probably fail to do what it is setting forth to do in this Decade of Evangelism because it has to too great an extent departed from that essential Wesleyan Bible-centeredness in its preaching and general life. That will leave the nuts-and-bolts evangelism to you, once again, as the Church of England left it—by default—to the Wesleys so long ago.

So hold fast to that which is good—all 66 books of it.



MARCH TO SAVE THE TREES

WASHINGTON — Daniel, Christy and Janice Norton from Endwell, N.Y., march in front of the Capitol during the "Save America's Forest" rally here Sept. 16. The rally was held to urge Congress to stop clearcutting of national forests and to end all logging of "ancient" forests.—ms photo/Reuters

Keep the bums, toss the system

Marcia Lynn Whicker

Virginia Commonwealth Univ.

Consider the American Civil War: the nature of warfare changed forever. The firepower of armies exceeded the known tactics for combat. Generals still lined up troops and forced them to march headlong into barrages of rifle and cannon fire. When those men died, more were thrown into the same battle, in the same fashion, to the same brutal and ugly end.

Now consider: the fate of the modern politician is like that of the Civil War soldier. The politics and problems confronting our government have changed irreversibly. Yet we continue to send waves of politicians to their political deaths, killed by barrages of negative attack ads.

Then we excoriate them if they try to dodge these bullets, ignoring that the politician who does not want to be re-elected is far more dangerous. We hold out conflicting goals for them and denounce them when they fail—"never raise taxes but spend freely for programs that benefit me" comes to mind.

BUT AS WITH the Civil War soldier, the reason so few modern politicians perform laudably has little to do with courage. Our political system has not kept pace with the times. The system of representative government was designed for a horseback era when elected politicians could vote on a limited number of issues, knowing they could communicate the logic for their decisions at length later in newspapers or in person.

Today's politicians must confront voters, who have an MTV attention span in 30-second blips. The politician must beg for campaign money from interest groups who expect a sympathetic ear in return for dollars. Or the politician must be independently wealthy. Just as heroic soldiers who led the charge up the hill were the first to be blasted away, so are courageous politicians who tell truths we don't want to hear. The system, not just politicians, must change.

Augmented by recent budget wars on Capitol Hill, a foul anti-incumbent mood now hovers over the country, manifested in a "toss the bums out" attitude.

Will it decrease the incidence of attack ads and negative campaigning? Will it escalate the level of public debate on

issues? Will it diminish the reliance of politicians on PACs and special interest groups for campaign funds? Will it make the budget process more rational? Will it diminish the deadlock produced by divided government? Not likely—any more than sending a fresh wave of soldiers would change the firepower of the opponent or the strategic nature of warfare to win.

IF ATTACK ADS are a problem, putting new people up to be attacked every 12 years won't change the nature of cam-

"Just as heroic soldiers who led the charge up the hill were the first to be blasted away, so are courageous politicians who tell truths we don't want to hear. The system, not just politicians, must change."

paigning. If begging for money from PACs is distorting the political process, forcing new people to beg will not sever the interest group linkage or limit their power. If divided government—a luxury perhaps more suited for a slower time—is the problem, perhaps we should consider ways to consolidate executive and legislative powers to reduce deadlock.

We were once a nation of craft masters, builders, innovators, and engineers. We knew that to fix a problem, we had to analyze it and understand it. We have become a nation of lawyers, entertainers, commentators, and headline grabbers, more eager to place a label on a complex problem than get at its root cause.

If we think the problem of our current political malaise is that most politicians are "bums," we are grasping for scapegoats. A few are, but most aren't. They are just people too. There was a Keating Five, not a Keating 535.

We can't pay members of Congress and the Senate less than \$100,000 to manage a government of more than \$1.3 trillion while their corporate counterparts are paid millions to manage a few billion—then blame them for wanting elected office for the power it provides. Surely, they don't want it for the money.

Every generation blames its leaders for its own failings. Even the mighty *Charlemagne* was tossed out at the polls. Perhaps what we really don't face is that our current politicians—in their unwillingness to deal with issues, contradictions, and trade-offs—simply reflect most voters' mentality.

This defense of politicians is not an apology for incumbents. Rather, it recognizes the almost impossible system in which they operate—in which courageous acts are unrewarded or even worse, wasted and meaningless.

WE HAVE TWO options: We can change the system to reduce roadblocks to rationality, or we can send in fresh waves of politicians to be felled by the same limits and irrational expectations.

The first choice requires an engineering instinct and debate and action on public financing for campaigns and monitoring campaign tactics by linking spending to tax increases and even constitutional change to reduce presidential/congressional deadlock. The second choice is like blood and guts entertainment.

Here's hoping the engineering instincts that fashioned this government haven't fully capitulated to our need to be entertained.

The basic problem is not the character of politicians. It's an outdated political system that undermines discussion of policies and ignores trade-offs. Until we fix it, the problem won't go away.

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DATES AND DEADLINES

ISSUE	DEADLINE
December 10	November 30
December 24	December 13
January 7, 1991	December 27
January 21	January 10
February 4	January 24
February 18	February 7
March 4	February 21
March 18	March 7



What People Pray For

1. For Health or Healing
2. For Guidance and Help
3. For Family
4. To Give Thanks
5. For World Peace



© Religious Facts 1990

Source: Gallup Organization

Most Americans say prayer is "very important" to them and believe that prayers are answered. When asked what they do to nourish or strengthen their faith, more people mentioned prayer in a Gallup survey than anything else. When asked about what they pray for, the survey showed that the most common prayer is for health or healing. In times of illness and good health, this

is what people seem most concerned about in their spiritual lives. Guidance and help in making decisions in life is the second concern. Then family, giving thanks, and world peace. Eighty-five percent of Americans take some moments of prayer, meditation, or contemplation—a higher figure than is found in many other nations.

MICHIGAN VOICES—the itineracy—strengths and stress



Jackie Holdsworth
Pastor
Allen Park UMC



Terry Euper
Superintendent
Saginaw Bay Dist.



Susan MacGregor
Lay member
Dimondale UMC

I grew up in the Methodist Church so I have a basic loyalty to the itineracy, with arguing rights. As part of a clergy couple the system sometimes says to me, "you are hard to deal with . . ." though my husband and I are both committed to the appointment system. I often feel a loss of control over my vocational destiny, but that is basic to following the call of God.

On the other hand, as a woman I enjoy the system's guarantee of appointment which affords efficient deployment of pastors and allows us to be prophetic in the pulpit without worry of being out of a job.

A second stress point is that of expectation. Pastors want to be appointed to perfect churches, and churches want perfect pastors. Unfortunately both are in short supply. Fortunately God is a God of grace, who uses us as we are, where we are.

The itinerant system has several positive aspects from a small church perspective. When a pastor leaves you know you will receive another without setting up a search committee, a lengthy and expensive process. Churches generally feel supported by the D.S. and cabinet, particularly during mid-year changes. The evaluation process the cabinet does is good and needed. This verifies a pastor's qualifications and calling. Churches and pastors also have a built in arbitrator in the D.S. and either can ask for a change, hopefully keeping both parties whole in the process. And the conference establishes like salary levels and provides a scale local churches can consult.

There are also concerns. You are not able to keep a pastor as long as you'd like because they are needed elsewhere. At times congregations do not feel they have much say in whom they will receive. It is my prayer that in making pastoral appointments salary isn't the bottom line and God's word can be heard in the process.

West WINDOW

—Wayne G. Reece
MCA Correspondent

"The emperor's new clothes"

Morale, n., The state of the spirits of an individual or group, as shown in willingness to perform assigned tasks, confidence, cheerfulness, and discipline."

Remember the old tale about the emperor who wanted some new clothes, but his tailors didn't have the right cloth. So they pretended that they were making clothes out of invisible beautiful material. The emperor paraded through the streets naked, with the on-lookers snickering but saying nothing. Until a little boy shouted out what the truth was.

In the story, the people made believe that something was there that was not; in the West Michigan Conference, some are making us believe that something is not there that is—namely, a morale problem among some of the clergy.

NEEDLESS TO say, all of us have our days of discouragement, disappointments, and frustrations—what person or profession doesn't? But most find ways of sublimating, compensating, or just waking up on another day with new resolve. However, these are not the ones whose life and profession are pervaded through and through with enui or fear, with anger and heart-aches—for whom each day brings new questions and few answers.

This column lifts up the perceptions of over 25 persons who have reflected upon their own feelings or those of others to whom they have talked. Maybe this isn't a scientific survey, but let's listen to some of the reasons for low morale given by those responding.

They come in "all sizes and shapes," both female and male, younger and older, pastors of large and small charges. They have an underlying feeling of failure, upheaval, incomplete-

ness, competition, and isolation. It is easy to say that the majority don't feel that way, or "I don't feel that way," but that's like telling a family in counseling that as long as most of them are o.k., they can disregard the feelings of that pouting child. To say such to some pastors merely has made them feel off-base and aberrant, thus only heightening their feelings of isolation and helplessness.

ONE THING that came to the fore from most of the respondents is the loss of control. Cite: "We are encouraged to do everything that we can to enable others to find ways to take control over their lives, but it seems we have little control over our own. We don't have the power to determine in what church we will work, what city it's in, what area of the city we will live in, where our kids will go to school, or when we will move. We are not able to determine the house that we live in. Once we are in that house, we don't have control over what repairs or replacements are made." Maybe this doesn't reflect the "faith of Abraham," but it does reflect the incongruity between itinerant clergy and the general society.

Also, there has been a major shift in the demands of pastoring skills over the last 40 years. This area was pointed up more by middle-age and older clergy, whose training prepared them for certain expectations, but whose churches now demand other kinds. There are high expectations of fund-raising, need for higher wage support (at least for additional staff that are being required due to the loss of volunteer reservoir), and the expanding number of administrative skills that seminary doesn't teach.

When I was at the United Methodist Publishing House, we were interviewing

a prospective editor. I asked the supervising clinician, who was giving tests to determine skills and potential, what skills he was asked to look for. His answer was that the 24 areas he was looking for implied 20 with administrative skills, "and all they're sending me is a bunch of preachers." (I found that this statement implied the lack of administrative skills in most pastors.) Also, the list of some 15 skills on the "Appraisal of Pastor's Performance" done by the Pastor-Parish Committee of each charge, gives the implication that a pastor must score high in all of these or he or she is unqualified.

ANOTHER AREA of concern on the part of many is the extreme competition one must shoulder in the community or with the television set. Pastors are always being compared with the preacher down the street as often that some either get burned out trying to out-shine or give up as a way of giving in. I recently heard about a booklet that a pastor wrote entitled "What If My Cathedral Isn't Crystal?" Many parishioners do subtly let us know that they get "a better show" on television than they do in our churches, to the point that worship becomes more of a media event than a praise and thanksgiving gathering.

A fourth area of concern, especially by younger pastors, is in salary support. Many of them are coming out of seminary with up to \$30,000 in school debts, sent to a charge that pays little over the going "poverty level salary," and are made to feel that their spouses shouldn't work because the help-mate is needed to undergird the ministry. Implied in this area, too, is

that appointments are creating more tension in the home when the spouse must work, because his or her job security is important as well.

Lastly, there is a noticeable loss of upward mobility, which for some indicates that good skills won't or can't get a pastor an opportunity to serve in a larger congregation. Some of the respondents indicated that white males are now being replaced with pastors of color or with pastors who are female—a situation that wasn't prevalent until recently. Yet, black pastors and female clergy lamented their own helplessness and isolation, because they do feel the animosity and the sniping by other clergy.

TIME AND SPACE do not suffice to share some conclusions and prognoses to this diagnosis of concern from a segment of clergy who desired to be heard. (Such will be done in an upcoming column.) We could say that their calling is lost, or their vocational expectations are misplaced, or that they are just cry-babies and should just keep quiet and/or grow up. But, these hurting brothers and sisters are continuing to serve effectively and adequately, and their tears and pain are kept quiet unto themselves and their parsonages until it might become too late.

Many are truly "bare," hoping someone will notice!

"If people knew how hard I have worked to gain my mastery, it would not seem wonderful at all."

—Michelangelo
from Quote

Bishops say young adults/teens the new missionary challenge

TOM MCANALLY
GARLINDA BURTON
United Methodist News Service

FORT WORTH, Texas — The next missionary challenge for U.S. Christians is not across the ocean, but among teenagers and young adults in their own back yards, a United Methodist bishop said here Nov. 1.

"No sizeable territory today has not heard the gospel," Bishop Leroy C. Hodapp of Indianapolis, president of the denomination's 100-member Council of Bishops, told a press conference here, suggesting that the next boundaries to cross with the gospel are generational rather than geographic. Hodapp spoke

during a international church growth conference for 3,500 pastors and laypersons from around the world.

Just as persons in developing nations learned Western Christian teachings and adapted them to their own cultural and social contexts, the bishop said, the church, particularly in the United States, must find new ways to reach young people.

Without "missionary expansion" among the young, Hodapp said, the United Methodist Church in the United States could "die in one generation."

ALTHOUGH CHURCHES in Africa and the Philippines have successfully bridged the age gap and are growing, "in North



MAKING A JOYFUL NOISE

United Methodists sing in celebration of "God's forgiveness" and "freedom to soar" during "The Gathering," an international church growth conference held in Fort Worth, Texas, Oct. 31-Nov. 4. More than 3,500 bishops, clergy and laypersons came together for worship, Bible study and strategy sessions for reversing a 20-year decline in church membership.—umns photo/John Goodwin, Bd. of Global Ministries

America, we have not learned to do it very well," he said. He attributed the continued membership decline among U.S. churches to lack of relevance to and, therefore, involvement by youth and young adults.

His remarks hit home for the 3,500 clergy and laypersons from the United States, Europe, Africa and the Philippines who came together Oct. 31-Nov. 4 to develop ways to put new life back into local churches.

For more than 20 years, the United Methodist Church has seen U.S. church membership and attendance decline to just under 9 million in 1990. "The Gathering," a churchwide growth conference, was the kick-off of an episcopal initiative to build membership and pump new life into local congregations.

Keynote speakers—all bishops—called "Gathering" participants and the entire church to "repentance" for clinging to traditions and practices that have hindered church growth.

Denouncing the "quality" vs. "quantity" argument some have used to justify membership decline, Bishop Roy I. Sano of Denver said "that is a lie we have lived with." He claimed that such "old games" pit groups against one another.

"It is easy for us to start turning on each other and violating each other's contributions," Sano added.

CALLS FOR repentance, renewal and celebration of diversity came also from Bishop Felton M. May, who heads the denomination's anti-drug and -violence initiative based in Washington, D.C.

May contended that the world is in need of spiritual rebirth, and the church must have "its act together" to meet those needs.

"Why can't we get on with cleaning up the mess?" he said, describing the "mess" as "misery and evil side by side."

"Oh, how I have repented from selling the church like detergent, and of not leaning on my Jesus as Lord and Savior," he said.

Besides 270 workshops, worship services, too, offered a sampling of diverse ritual and musical styles, interspersing selections representing Bach, black gospel and country-western to calypso, Filipino folk and hard rock with traditional hymns.

Bishop Hodapp applauded such diversity, including even rock- and-roll music. "That kind of music drives me nuts, but it speaks to thousands of teenagers ... we must accommodate the multiplicity of lifestyles," he said.

"THE GATHERING" was co-sponsored by bishops and the Board of Discipleship of the denomination. Participants—grass-roots pastors and laypersons hoping to learn ways to revamp their churches—spent time between sermons and worship celebrations in strategy sessions with their respective bishops and with church program staff people.

A prospective member's first impression is often the one that determines whether or not one chooses to become a member of a local church, said the Rev. James Cowell, evangelism staff person for the Board of Discipleship.

In a session on the "internal climate" of local churches, Cowell said congregations that attract new members are the ones in which pastors and laypersons are cordial to one another, are compassionate and friendly to newcomers, practice the gospel they preach and remain open to new ideas.

"Every church puts out an unwritten sign," which either welcomes people unconditionally or "may say 'People with real problems are not welcome here,'" Cowell said. □

Sights and sounds from Ft. Worth show signs of new life

WAYNE G. REECE
MCA Correspondent

Dear United Methodist Christian:

As I sit here in the vast Convention Center, I wish you were able to be with me, taking in the sights, the sounds, and the feelings of 3,500 United Methodists from around the world, "gathering" to challenge each other and to be challenged to be the church.

I wish that you could hear the music of combined choirs, the fervent preaching of some of the bishops of our denomination, preaching as I have not heard from bishops before. They are talking about evangelism, God's story, local congregations, salvation in ways that I have not heard in a long time.

"Vital Congregations—Faithful Disciples" came alive for me, not as another program for churches—they constantly told us that this **cannot** be another program handed down from on high—but a new way of local congregations assessing themselves as to what makes for a vital congregation and how they match up with that assessment.

I WAS PROUD of our own Bishop Craig, as she was the one who was chosen to interpret the theme of the Bishops' Initiative. I was proud of our own Billie Dalton and the congregation of St. Paul's UMC of Lawton, who were the first church and pastor presented in the outstanding video that has been produced, showing representative congregations across the U.S.

I was pleased to see comments and suggestions included in the Vision Statement that came from persons and congregations from our state. I was pleased to see that the final document was far more helpful and challenging than the original one that the Advisory Committee first saw.

I know that you were unable or unwilling to come to Ft. Worth, but as I am preparing to leave, I realize that this was, for me, the most outstanding and provocative and inspirational and challenging event that I have been to across the span of years of my ministry.

For too many times, when we get together for a "family reunion," we lament

who is no longer a part of the family, talking about what's wrong with the church, wringing our collective hands about losses.

But here we **worshipped in the midst of** diversity and pluralism—the multi-colored dress, the reminders that we are different (I saw two cars parked together, with one having a bumper sticker stating "Proud to be a Liberal" and the other reminding "Fundies Can Have Fun Too"). We have heard from congregations and approaches from around the world, challenging the church to be the church in new and vital ways or reminding us of the old and vital ways of our Wesleyan heritage.

Here we **worshiped with** diversity and pluralism—from the freestanding cross whose colors continually changed, to the many hymns that we now have in our new hymnals that can be sung in a variety of languages, from the various visual reminder that were on the altar, from our service of remembering our baptism with water brought from different sections of the world, and eating bread that was made from flour presented from different persons around the world—all reminding us of the universality of the power and love of Jesus Christ.

But, this time we were not worshipping diversity and pluralism as if they were idols and ideals to be bowed down to or determine above all else who we are as United Methodists.

Because you weren't able to come, I'd like to share with you some quotes that jumped out at me, statements of faith and understanding that excited me and that I will take from here as a challenge to my future and my congregation.

Bishop Woodie White: "The distinctive character of Christians is an attitude of praise."

Bishop Carlton Minnick: "When God is trivialized, sin is trivialized."

Bishop Judith Craig: "Corporate Confession is not church-bashing; if the sins of one belongs to me, they belong to us all." "We must see the possibility of the holy in the midst of the unholy." "We are more interested in leaving monuments than an encounter with the living Christ."

Bishop Calvin McConnell: "Community is more than meeting with each other but is serving each other." "We must think more about how to be a 'kindom' as well as a kingdom."

Bishop Neil Irons: "Spiritual growth is not just a private journey with a private tutor, but we must please our neighbor by helping our neighbor."

Bishop Richard Wilke: Quoting from *Closing the American Mind*: "Youth used to come to colleges knowing a little about Moses and Jesus, but now their heads are empty." Quoting John Wesley: "I hate it when newcomers come into the Christian fellowship and are then left to die." "When did we decide to hold hands and have conversations only with each other?" "Don't give them a slogan, give them a Savior. Don't give them a newspaper, give them a Bible." Quoting chaplains in the Middle East with our armed forces: "The men and women are coming to us saying 'We're in the land of the Bible, and we don't know the Bible.'"

Bishop Emerito P. Nacpil of the Philippines: "The only stories that nations like to tell are horror stories. God's story is a

different story... When we tell the story in the Philippines, we start two new churches every week... Who must tell God's story but God's people—those whose baptism gives them a new name."

Bishop Roy Sano: "We think there can't be quality if there is growth in numbers. That's a lie that we have lived with too long."

Bishop Felton May: "I went to Zaire representing the Board of Global Ministries and was asked by a woman, 'What Good News do you bring?' I told her that we would be building a school, a hospital, sending more personnel, etc. But again she asked, 'What Good News did you bring?' Thinking she had not understood me, I repeated all that the church would do. Finally, my host whispered something to me. Then I said, 'Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior of your life.' 'Oh, yes, that's the Good News I want to hear.'"

Bishop George Bashore: "It matters not whether worship makes us feel happy or good. It does matter whether it makes us Christlike."

Bishop William Grove: "I went to LaPaz, Bolivia, and far in the reaches of the mountains we found a community of Christians. When asked how the story of Jesus had gotten to them, they said that a man was sick in the village, and a *humano* (Christian) had come and prayed, and the man became healed. 'We don't know how our brother found us here, but we know God sent him here.' I asked them what their dreams were. They said, 'We have small dreams of a school, a teacher, a hospital.' But do you have any other dreams? 'We have a big dream, that we can go over that mountain and tell the story of Jesus to them.' I see now that we must go over the mountains of our lives to tell the Story."

Well, fellow United Methodist, wish you were here! But I do encourage you to read, to pray, to discuss the Bishops' pastoral letter and the implications it can have for you. Ft. Worth was merely an event—vital congregations and faithful disciples are the life-blood of the church.

Signed, yours in and for Christ, Wayne.



Bishop David Lawson, Wisconsin Area, and Bishop Judith Craig march forward during a procession at the Gathering.—mca photo/Jim Morgan



The Gathering, an international church growth conference, brought 3,500 pastors and laypersons to Ft. Worth Oct. 31-Nov. 4. The throng included nearly 100 United Methodists from the Michigan Area, who spent time in worship, workshops and strategy sessions aimed at generating new life in the local congregation.—mca photo/Jim Morgan

Methodists 'have church' while gathered in Texas

JAMES M. MORGAN
MCA Correspondent

"Faithful Disciples and Vital Congregations" was the theme for what was called "The Gathering" which took place in Fort Worth, Texas from Oct. 31 through Nov. 4. Though fewer in number than had been envisioned, 3,500 United Methodists gathered to celebrate the life of the church and to find training and resources to enable the new vision of the church lifted up by our bishops to become a reality.

Bishop Woodie White set the tone for worship when he talked about growing up in a family which would "have church" even before they arrived at the common building shared by the brothers and sisters. In a very real sense those gathered in Fort Worth did "have church."

NO LOCAL CHURCH can ever avail itself of the resources for worship and celebration provided by such a gathering. There were dozens of choirs, the S.M.U. orchestra, singers and special musicians from Africa, the Philippines, Mexico, and Germany and, of course, from all over Texas. The languages, the visual artistry in paraments and vestments, the hymn singing, and all combined to lift us to new heights of religious experience. When it was all over, we said with one voice, "Didn't we have church today? Amen!"

Each day began with a worship experience, a Bible lesson, hymn singing, and an interpretation of a section from the foundation document which is an expanded interpretation of the Bishop's letter to the churches which was to be read from every pulpit in United Methodism on Nov. 18.

Some of these times of exposition were rather down, and one could experience some "Methodist bashing" going on. Some participants remarked that this is one of our favorite pastimes in such gatherings. At other times we were challenged and lifted up to new understandings and new motivations to "... be in ministry to all the people, in all the places, all the time."

Afternoons were given to times of reflection and to in-depth study of areas of ministry which were of greatest concern to those who attended. Each United Methodist present was asked to choose his or her area of interest and great pains were taken to match areas of interest with study groups. There were literally hundreds of options to choose from and they were each well taught by an informed clergy or lay person currently at work in that field of ministry either as a paid staff person or a volunteer.

I found the areas I attended were at times superficial, but not everyone in attendance at the small group was "up to speed" and the leaders had to take that into consideration and explain the programs to some persons who were inter-

ested in, but unfamiliar with the work.

WHEN THE TEXAS sun went down and the warm Texas breezes began to blow we gathered in the area for our evening worship programs. These programs were marred by some technical problems in the projection system, whines from the sound system and some missed cues. If you are tolerant and patient (I try) such inconvenience is a small price to pay for the quality of the music and worship.

The most powerful moment in the conference for this reporter was the presentation by Bishop Richard B. Wilke. Bishop Wilke spoke during the interpretation time on Friday morning. He began with a quote from the Book of Revelation.

"But I have this against you that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not I will come and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent." Rev. 2:5

The good bishop reminded us of the work we have to do with the admonition that if we fail to do the work God will take the flame from our altar and we will be left in cold and darkness. We need to tell the story especially to the "baby boomers" and to their children. We are face to face with a generation of men and women who do not know the story which the scriptures tell. He reminded us that Wesley himself was most judgmental toward societies and classes who would bring newcomers into the faith and then leave them to die without a knowledge of the scriptures and clear guidance on how to become a true disciple.

"We are doing far more funerals than we are baptisms!" said Wilke. "The plain fact is that members are not leaving the United Methodist Church in search of more meaningful faith in other denominations, they are growing old and dying and we are not filling their places with young members."

AS A RATHER jaded pastoral critic I am quick to find fault with some of the excesses of this event. Could the money this event cost have been better spent if it were contributed to local churches? That is for God to judge. All in all the event was positive and I will believe it will have a positive effect on the future of United Methodism.

This event will live on in the lives of many United Methodists as a "holy memory." May God take the memories and new knowledge and new friendships from this event and bless the entire Church. I personally think my money was well spent. If I had to do over I would have pushed some of my lay people harder in an attempt to get them to attend. They missed something of great value which our local churches, district and annual conferences will never be able to duplicate. □

When two or three are gathered

Laurie Haller
MCA Correspondent

As United Methodists gathered in Fort Worth from all over the world, the Spirit of Christ was indeed moving in our midst. The first person I met at the Gathering was a pastor from West Germany who was full of enthusiasm and hope for the church. I met two young women from Mississippi, lay workers in the church, who seemed awed by the immensity of this international conference. I met a pastor and his wife from Ohio who made their first plane trip to come to the Gathering. I met pastors seeking a fresh vision for the church, diaconal ministers searching for new ideas to communicate the gospel and lay persons looking for ways to energize their local congregations.

The Gathering was not a how-to seminar, although the many workshops offered ample opportunity to learn. Rather, my sense of the Gathering was to lead the United Methodist Church boldly and confidently into the 1990s and into the next century.

The focal point of the Gathering was the reading of the pastoral letter, "Vital Congregations—Faithful Disciples; Vision for the Church," and a study of the accompanying foundation document. I found that the interpretations given by our bishops of the various parts of the document to be the most stimulating aspect of the conference.

The most moving part of the Gathering for me, however, was the premier of the video, "Vital Congregations—Faithful Disciples," which featured five vibrant United Methodist churches around the country, including our own St. Paul's UMC in Lawton. The videotape, available in all district offices, is excellent, and I plan to show it to as many groups in my local congregation as possible. It will not tell us exactly what to do or how to be in mission, for no two congregations are alike. Rather, it will stimulate thinking about what the needs are to our town and country and how we United Methodists can be in ministry right where we are.

I have several vivid impressions of the Gathering which will influence the course of my ministry in the local church. First, I always have been but continue to be impressed by the diversity of our church. To meet United Methodists and experience worship from so many ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds was a blessing to me. I believe that our openness to different ways of worshipping and doing theology is the greatest strength of the United Methodist Church. In fact, it is what the vast majority of new members in my local congregation appreciate about the United Methodist Church. I will continue to work toward that kind of diversity wherever I am in ministry.

Something else which caught my attention was the **marvelous work of our lay people**. The outstanding music, the visual aids to worship and all the technical arrangements for this conference were done for the most part by lay people, and that is indicative of the kind of skills and dedication we have in our church. In a workshop taught by Bishop Robert Spain on "Evangelism and the Church God is Creating," he emphasized that the United Methodist Church of the future will be a

lay-empowered church. In order to grow, we must recover the potential of our lay people to lead, evangelize and claim their strengths. I am going to work harder to equip lay people for ministry in my local church.

The last thing which I brought home with me was a **renewed dedication to evangelism and mission**. We will have a great future ahead of us as the United Methodist Church if we discover the hurts of our people and our community and then dedicate ourselves to healing them. □

POWER

from page 5

ments of Christian worship. For me, worship was the outstanding feature of the Gathering. Even in that huge convention center which could have held twice as many participants, the delegates were transformed again and again, each morning and evening, into a congregation that truly was "one in the spirit."

THE BEAUTIFUL multi-cultural and multi-racial diversity of Methodism was often demonstrated in those splendid services, but never more tellingly than on Saturday evening when Bishops from Africa, Europe and Asia brought cups of flour to the Lord's Table. There a baker mixed it and kneaded the dough in preparation for its use on Sunday morning as bread and Body of Christ. Powerful and lasting imagery!

There was a strong sense of sensitive episcopal leadership throughout the Gathering. That was a joy to behold. Woodie White told us and then showed us the "difference between attending church, and having church," and left a beautiful African song of gratitude on our hearts. Judith Craig called us to reaffirm our baptisms in sound and sight of pouring water. Leroy Hodapp, recalling his own boyhood in Detroit's Metropolitan Church, invited us to remember the vital congregations and faithful disciples who nurtured us years ago.

PREACHING, MUSIC, liturgy and the arts were fully employed and offered at a level of excellence beyond the ordinary. The same was true for many of the dozens of workshops offered to help us implement the theme in our lives and in our congregations. The six I attended were each worthwhile, and as I asked for evaluations from others, it appears most were effective. Add to that an awesome array of resources from Cokesbury, various boards, agencies and related groups, and you have mega-input!

Then, of course, there was networking and informal sharing, sometimes with friends I hadn't seen in years. Sharing stories of successes and sorrows, joys and failures, whether professional or personal, is always instructive and nurturing.

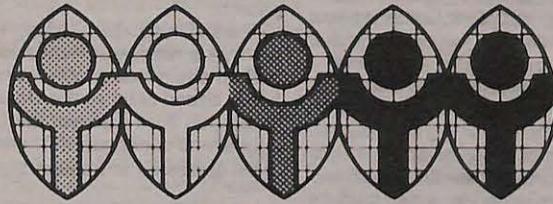
Simply put, this was the finest conference I've attended in 20 years of ministry! My perception is that in the Council of Bishops, at least, both the appearance and reality of spiritual power has converged, and visionary leadership is being offered to the people called Methodist. Not forced, but offered. □



Michigan participants at the Gathering enjoy a Texas-style barbecue. (L-r) Dean Klump, Voncile and Cliff Bullock; Bishop Judith Craig lower right.—mca photo/Jim Morgan

DETROIT WEST DISTRICT ENABLING DAY

February 2, 1991



Saturday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Clarenceville United Methodist Church
20300 Middlebelt Road • Livonia, Michigan 48152

A TRAINING DAY FOR OUR DISTRICT'S CHURCH LEADERS

BASIC WORKSHOPS Morning — 10:00-12:00

1 Your Church Can Grow — Leader: Bill Quick. A city pastor who has served rural circuit, small town, university and center city churches, will offer practical insights and strategies which, when applied to local churches, will result in growth.

2 Pastor Parish Relations Committee: Leader—Bishop Jesse DeWitt. A workshop for chairpersons and members of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, led by a retired Bishop and former member of this conference, dealing with both the "how to's" and issues of current concern.

3 Council on Ministries, Administrative Board, Administrative Council: Leader—Ted Doane. The Administrative Board and Council on Ministries are the more important planning and decision making bodies in most churches. We will explore together these tasks and the theology of administration that we might better be the Body of Christ.

4 Trustees: Leader: Donald Scavella, Sr. This workshop will cover the work responsibilities of a local church Board of Trustees and will provide helpful suggestions on how these work responsibilities can be performed.

5 Stewardship: Leader—Duane E. Miller. This workshop is for Pastors, Stewardship Committee chairpersons and committees, and Finance Committee members. It will seek to help participants understand the Biblical perspectives of stewardship so they will be able to interpret them to the congregation.

6 Young Adult Ministries: Leader—Bob Selberg. How do we reach Baby Boomers, and pre-Baby Boomers and Baby Boomers' children? Understanding their values and needs and our abilities to respond.



Bishop DeWitt



Bob Selberg



Ed Millet



Mike Seymour



Chuck Arnold



Bill Quick

The Reverend Joseph Edward Agne is on the Program Staff of the Northern Illinois Conference, United Methodist Church, focusing in the area of Global Ministries. He also is serving in the following capacities: Commissioner, Program to Combat Racism (PCR), World Council of Churches; Co-Chairperson, Racial Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches in Christ; Member, United Methodist General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.



practical business sense to have a local church Endowment Fund.

14 Developing Support Groups in the Local Church: Leader—Dick Myers. This workshop will provide ways in which a local church or a group of neighboring churches can develop support groups in needed areas such as Grief, Abuse, Divorce Recovery and AIDS.

15 Social Concerns: "Law of Criminal: Obscenity in the Marketplace and First Amendment Considerations." Leader—Raymond P. Walsh. An overview of First Amendment Law (Freedom of speech, press, and religion), and Supreme Court interpretations. A discussion of communications which are regulated or made criminal or both, and particularly those which have been made criminal.

THEME WORKSHOPS Morning — 10:00-12:00

16 The Media and Issues of Racism/Prejudice: Leader—Chauncey Bailey. Does the press and electronic media give a generally balanced view of the news, or does it tend to cater to consumer interest and sensationalism at the expense of balanced reporting?

17 Housing, Prejudice and Racism: Leader—Cliff Schrup. How prevalent is segregation in Metropolitan Detroit? What are the reasons for the divisions between segments of our community?

18 Hate Groups in American Culture: Leader—Rev. Joe Agne. What is a skinhead? What are groups like the Aryan Nation and the KKK doing to influence the youth of America, to win their allegiance to a platform of hate and white supremacy?

19 Experiences and Expressions of Prejudice and Racism: Leader—Rev. Bill Verhelst. Here our leadership will come from a panel representative of the various ethnic traditions found in local churches of the Detroit West District.

20 Experiencing Racism and Prejudice in the Workplace: Leader—Remona Green. What laws are in place to protect employees against discrimination in the workplace? What constitutes illegal discrimination, and how prevalent is it?

21 Celebrations of Ethnic Diversity: Leader—Rev. Edmund Millet. Through focus on such events as Black History Month, this workshop will seek to help us discover ways to celebrate the achievements and contributions of the many ethnic traditions that come together to form our unique American culture.

22 Racism, Prejudice, Children and Youth: Leader—Rev. Fred Moore, Sr. People are not born prejudiced, we learn such behavior. In this workshop we will seek to raise the level of consciousness those who work with children and youth.

Afternoon — 1:45-4:00

23 Strategies for Combating Racism on Institutional and Personal Levels: Leader—Rev. Ed Rowe. What is Institutional Racism? How do we sometimes discriminate as part of a group or institution without any individual malice? How do we as individuals engage in racism practices without being aware of our actions?

24 Open Itinerary, Prejudice and Racism: Leader—Bishop Jesse DeWitt. Officially, our itinerary system of deploying pastoral leadership is an open one, in which pastors are appointed regardless of race or gender. In practice, we often seem to have Black Churches, Korean Churches, White Churches, Hispanic, Arabic, native American or other ethnic churches to which we only send pastors who represent the same ethnic tradition.

25 Prejudice and Racism in Neighborhood and Community: Leader—Rosa Sims. Such questions as, how we deal with discrimination within the community, which acts as a divisive force preventing improvement of our community life, will be the focus here.

26 Racism and Prejudice in the Schools: With leadership we are not able to announce as this information goes to press, we will explore various issues of teacher training and morale, student and parent involvement, and teaching of divergent cultural traditions.

27 Worship and the Multicultural Society: Leader—Rev. Kenneth Whyte. As we prepare to enter the 21st Century, the church is increasingly aware of the need to keep worship alive and vibrant, responsive to the changing lives and experiences of worship participants. In this workshop we will explore creative ways to draw upon the rich resources of our ethnic traditions within the worship experience. Preaching, music and liturgy will be discussed and examined from a variety of ethnic perspectives.

28 A Family Response to Racism: Leader—Rev. George Covintree and Family. One of our own Detroit Conference church families will help to answer such questions as, how we can work as a family to address issues of prejudice and racism.

29 Open Forum—Prejudice and Racism: Leader—Rev. Bob Selberg. Participants in this open forum will have the opportunity to share their experiences, positive and negative, with the various issues related to prejudice and racism.

For more information:

Rev. Merton W. Seymour,
Superintendent, (313) 559-7000

Rev. Gary A. Allward
(313) 284-2721

REGISTRATION FORM

REGISTRAR: Rev. Roy Forsyth
36500 Ann Arbor Trail
Livonia, MI 48150

I wish to register for: morning workshop afternoon workshop lunch
Workshop # _____ Workshop # _____

One workshop—\$5.00/Two workshops—\$10.00 (includes lunch)

NAME _____ CHURCH _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ZIP _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Mail this form and check to Registrar
(make checks payable to The Detroit Annual Conference)

★ REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 15, 1991 ★



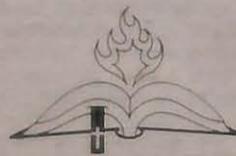
EVENTS

"Proclamation '91" to explore role of prophetic preaching

GARLINDA BURTON
United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) — Politics, war, families in crisis, love, community, and justice and peace loom large as the world moves toward the 21st century, and the challenge of training Christian preachers to address those issues in the context of faith is growing, according to church trend experts.

At least 600 clergypersons and others concerned with preaching and worship will study the role of prophetic preaching in the next century during "Proclamation '91," an April 15-19, 1991, symposium sponsored by two agencies of the United Methodist Church. It will take place at Sheraton Music City, Nashville.



In the tradition of PROCLAMATION '83 and PROCLAMATION '86...

PROCLAMATION '91

Preaching toward the 21st Century

Above is the "Proclamation '91" logo. The event is slated for Apr. 15-19, 1991, in Nashville, Tenn.

"Preaching is taking (on) new forms as a result of developments in theology, scriptural interpretations, mass media culture and an increasing awareness of the global community," said the Rev. Thomas H. Troeger, a theologian and associate professor of preaching at Colgate Rochester

(N.Y.) Divinity School, who is keynote speaker for the conference.

Troeger will present four lectures on "Preachers in Search of Their Sermons," examining historical and contemporary forces that shape interpretation of Scripture, and advising preachers how to mold sermons relevant to the times in which they live.

The United Methodist Publishing House and the denomination's Section on Worship, both based in Nashville, Tenn., are co-sponsoring this third "Proclamation" event. The 1983 and 1986 gatherings involved more than 1,200 preachers and worship leaders representing United Methodist and other churches.

Other lecturers for "Proclamation '91" are the Rev. Walter Wink, professor at Auburn Theological Seminary, New York; Parker Palmer, writer and activist, Madison, Wis.; and the Rev. Jane Middleton, associate council (program) director of the United Methodist New York Annual Conference.

Among the noted guest preachers and instructors for 20 workshops offered are: the Rev. Sue Ann Steffey Morrow, acting dean of the chapel, Princeton (N.J.) University; the Rev. Leonard I. Sweet, president of United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio; the Rev. Tallulah Fisher Williams, pastor of Hartzell United Methodist Church, Chicago; the Rev. Maurice Boyd, pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York; and the Rev. Michael E. Williams, director of preaching ministries for United Methodism's Discipleship board.

More information and registration materials are available from Cokesbury Seminars, P.O. Box 801, Nashville, TN 37202; telephone toll free, (800) 672-1789; west of the Rockies, (800) 251-8591. □

Women Vision II slated for April 1990

Laurie Haller
MCA correspondent

"An invitation to Holy Community" is the theme of Women Vision II, which will be held April 12-14, 1991, at Perrysburg, Ohio. The purpose of Women Vision II is for women of all ages to "encourage one another in matters of the Spirit and heart, listen and engage in holy talk and quiet presence and claim God's transforming power."

The first Women Vision, held in 1989, proved to be a time of singing, listening, praying and empowerment for clergy and laywomen from the Detroit, West Michigan, East Ohio and West Ohio Annual Conferences. Following that example Women Vision II will include dynamic preaching and worship, reflection groups, entertainment and "well groups."

THE MAIN SPEAKER for the three-day event will be Dr. Renita Weems, an ordained elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and an assistant professor of Old Testament studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville. Other speakers include the United Methodist bishops, Judith Craig, Susan Morrison and Sharon Brown Christopher. Pat Madden-Roth, singer and songwriter from Lansing, will provide entertainment on Saturday evening. She will be joined by Tanya Griffith, an actress and impersonator who focuses on the power of the feminine mind and will.

Registration for Women Vision II is limited to the first 700 participants. However, no registrations will be accepted unless they are postmarked on or after January

15, 1991. The registration cost, which includes speakers, special events, reflection groups, three meals on Saturday, breakfast on Sunday and professional childcare for children under age six, is reasonable. Hotel costs will vary according to how many are in a room. A limited number of scholarships is available.

Brochures for Women Vision II can be obtained from your local pastor or UMW president or from the West Michigan Conference Center. They are also available from Marlene Johns, 217 Mohawk, Jackson, MI 49203 or Pat Proctor, 5897 Green, Fremont, MI 49412. □

What's Happening

The Sixth Annual Christmas Celebration for People Who Care About People with AIDS, on Thursday, Dec. 13 at 7:30 p.m. Eucharistic celebration with prayers for healing. Location: Christ Episcopal Church, I-75 and Jefferson in downtown Detroit. Preacher: Bishop Judith Craig, joined by other bishops and leaders of other denominations. Offering is for the "Bishop's Fund" of the Episcopal church, which contributes to various Detroit AIDS organizations. More info: John Park, (313) 363-3935. **Winter Fling** at Lake Huron Camp, Dec. 31, 1990 to Jan. 1, 1991. Activities available: cross country skiing, sledding, ice skating, candlelight dinner, midnight communion service, TV football and parades on New Year's Day. For all adults (married or single) 18 years and up. Cost: \$15 per person. Reservation deadline: Dec. 24. More info: (313) 327-6272.

Florida Gathering, Michigan UM ministers, spouses and widows, Thursday, Jan. 24, 1991, at First UMC, Ft. Harrison and Turner, Clearwater, Fla. Fellowship gathering: 10:59. Luncheon and program: 11:59. Send reservations by Jan. 15 to the Rev. Clyde E. Smith, 9511 Segovia, New Port Richey, FL 34655, phone (813) 376-9341. The Rev. Joseph T. Edwards, chairperson.

Choral Workshop for Children's Choir Directors (emphasis on grades three to six), sponsored by Detroit Chapter Choristers' Guild at First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Feb. 1-2, 1991. Clinician: Terry Kirkland. Contact: Annabel Griffiths, 1510 Woodward Ct., Dearborn, MI 48124, (313) 336-9520.

Clergy Spouses Association Annual Retreat at the Bay Valley Hotel and Resort in Bay City. Speaker: Dr. Carolyn Vareesh-Walker, licensed psychologist. Theme: "Harmony in the Home, Helping it Happen." Workshops. Cost: \$66-99 varying with room. Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast included. More info: (313) 529-3731 or (313) 455-1436.



Royal Oak First UMC church members (women at the well) shown in this picture are l-r: Marion Kelley, Mary Lou Forester and Alice Cox. The Bethlehem Marketplace is an annual event.

Doors to open at Royal Oak First's annual Bethlehem Marketplace

Once again, this Advent season, Royal Oak First United Methodist Church opens its doors and heart to friends, family and community as they are invited to take a step back in time to the Bethlehem Marketplace.

This live walk-through drama brings to life the little town in Judea with the craftsmen, the shepherds, the animals and townsfolk. It is an experience for all ages as they live again the wondrous story of the birth of the Christ child.

The Bethlehem Marketplace is held on Dec. 2 from two until five p.m. There is no admission charge but visitors are invited to bring non-perishable food items for the hungry of the community.

This one-day event is an opportunity to put together the talent and time of church members, working together to provide a gift for our community to help others experience what it might have been like on that first day after Jesus was born. □

Alternative Holiday Gift Sale set at MSU Wesley Foundation

As an annual observance of the season, the Peace Education Center announces the 1990 Alternative Holiday Celebration and Gift Sale. The Peace Education Center sponsored the first local Alternative Holiday Observance in 1976. Together with the Wesley Foundation United Methodist Student Center, the Peace Education Center sponsors the Alternative Holiday as an opportunity to support the educational work and programming of area groups and small businesses.

The 1990 Alternative Holiday event is scheduled for Asbury Hall of the United Methodist Student Center, 1118 South Harrison Road, East Lansing. During sale hours, shoppers have opportunity to purchase unique gifts including recycled paper products, hand-made cards, wooden toys, cooperative games, music cassettes, and international art. The Alternative Holiday Gift Sale takes place Friday, Nov. 30, 5-9 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 1, noon-7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, Dec. 2, noon-5 p.m.

The Peace Education Center and the Wesley Foundation envision the Alternative Holiday Celebration and Gift Sale as

an opportunity to promote a holiday season which affirms dignity, life and justice in our global community. Gift items available will promote peace with justice, focusing on items of an alternative nature such as hand-made goods, stationery, recycled products, and items which raise awareness of global concerns.

The weekend also offers entertaining coffeehouse music, a family magic show with Gary Flegel, and a Benefit Concert featuring Second Opinion. Meals available during the weekend are catered by Hearthstone Community Bakery. On Sunday, from 4-6 p.m., the Middle Eastern Awareness Committee sponsors a dinner featuring traditional ethnic food to assist a Palestinian family living in the West Bank. Saturday activities for children include a visit from Bippity Bob the Clown and two storytelling sessions with Linda Lee Malone.

For more information on the Alternative Holiday Gift Sale weekend schedule of events, please contact Mary C. Knightwright, (517) 351-4648. □

Riverview UMC to hear vocalist

Christian music recording and television artist, Gary McSpadden, will appear in concert at the Riverview United Methodist Church, on Sunday, Dec. 2, at 11 a.m. Mr. McSpadden has been prominent in the contemporary music scene for 28 years. This will be his first concert after a ten-day tour of Rumania, and his only



Gary McSpadden

Michigan appearance. The Riverview UMC is located at 13199 Colvin, Riverview, just east of Fort Street, and half way between Pennsylvania and Sibley Roads. A free will offering will be taken. All are welcome. If there are any questions, or for further information, call Pastor Gary Allward at (313) 284-2721. □

LOCAL MINISTRIES



FIRST UMC OF TROY OBSERVES WORLD FOOD DAY

Sunday school pupils of First UMC of Troy decorated large grocery bags which church members filled with food and brought to the church on Sunday, Oct. 14. Eighty bags of food were given to Troy People Concerned and Lighthouse in Pontiac to help stock their food pantries and will be used for emergency needs of area people. Photo shows Pastor Terry Allen doing the children's sermon amid the bags of food.



Above is Erin Schultz, daughter of David and Mary Schultz. She is one of eight children from Saginaw First UMC who helped to raise funds for the Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Saginaw.

Saginaw First UMC elementary children help prevent abuse

A group of fourth, fifth and sixth grade children from the First United Methodist Church in Saginaw raised money for the Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Saginaw. The eight children representing the United Methodist Kids group—also called the "Special K's" participated in a bowl-a-thon to raise funds for the Council. As a result of their efforts at collecting pledges, \$150 was raised to assist in educating the public as to the prevention of and the protection from abusive circumstances for children.

The Special K's spent an afternoon helping other children. Children whose names and stories will never be known to them. These young people learned in a joyous manner, the importance of service and that they are not too young to make a difference. □

FLORIDA GATHERING

Michigan United Methodist ministers, spouses and widows are invited to attend a Florida Gathering on Thursday, Jan. 24, 1991, at First UMC, Ft. Harrison and Turner, Clearwater, Fla. The fellowship gathering will be at 10:59 a.m. with luncheon and program at 11:59. Reservations should be sent by Jan. 15 to the Rev. Clyde E. Smith, 9511 Via Segovia, New Port Richey, FL 34655, phone (813) 376-9341. The Rev. Joseph T. Edwards is chairperson of the event.



The Rev. Kenneth Bensen burns the mortgage at Faith UMC, Lansing as original building committee members Ron Little, Elaine Sweet and Reva Holcomb look on.

Lansing Faith burns \$195,000 mortgage

The flames leap high as the Rev. Kenneth Bensen, Faith United Methodist Church, Lansing, burns the church's final \$195,000 mortgage at a special ceremony Nov. 4, during the worship service.

Adopt a School program links Detroit school children with churches

KATHY GOOLIAN
MCA Staff Reporter

DETROIT (MCA) — Adopt a School is a program in Detroit whereby churches provide mentors to the school they adopt. In addition, the church and school can plan many coordinated programs and activities for schools.

The Detroit Metropolitan Coordinating Committee and the Rev. Ed Millet, along with the Detroit Board of Education, decided that representatives from churches and schools should meet. The Adopt a School idea was presented.

"We found it offered the church an opportunity to do something intentional and significant in helping the schools," said Anthony Cutting, pastor of Second Grace United Methodist Church in Detroit.

"Northville is partners with Second Grace UMC. About a year ago we hit upon the idea of expanding our work beyond Northville. We talked with Ed Millet, the urban missioner, about an urban/suburban partnership," said Jerry Rupley, parishioner at Northville First UMC.

THE PARTNERING aspect is a pilot program," said Jim Bosscher, another parishioner at Northville. "There are other UM churches involved. We're the only non-Detroit UM church working with Detroit schools. Therefore, we need a partner in Detroit."

An adoption ceremony was held at Dixon School last spring with about eight representatives of both churches present. "It was very touching indeed," said Cutting.

An awards banquet was held at Second Grace for Dixon School. Both congregations provided the meals. There were 180 people from the schools parents and children present.

In August Northville planned a picnic, which ended up indoors due to rain. There were games, refreshments and get-acquainted activities.

The aim is that every child in Dixon School would have a mentor, Cutting said. These would come from the two churches, as well as the community. Once the person has volunteered, been assessed, screened and approved, s/he can begin.

"**THERE ARE 600-700** students at Dixon," said Rupley. "At a recent meeting both churches and the school participated. We hope to have a mentorship program set up by the end of November. There are a couple of different kinds of mentors—a one-on-one function—two hours or more a week of social contact and role modeling and teaching. There is also group mentoring—club sponsorship, story telling, and providing additional non-teacher human resources."

The school gave the direction, Rupley noted. The mentoring idea came from Dr. John Porter, superintendent of Detroit Public Schools. The plan focuses on third through fifth grades. It is a first step in a solution to drop-out problems. It targets students not viewing school as a positive experience and tries to turn that around.

"We have a special relationship with Second Grace UMC," said Bosscher. "They're super people. Tomorrow we start recruitment for the mentoring program. We have six on the committee. Our objective is 25 volunteers for each church. A half-day training program was set for mid-November at Dixon School.

The times for which you sign up are flexible, Bosscher said. The time period is usually two to four hours during each week. You could meet a student for breakfast, go to school and spend an hour in a tutoring session. Extracurricular activities could include such things as a baseball game, or a trip to the Detroit Institute of Arts. Second Grace UMC is looking longer-term at an after-school program, which would be an ideal setting for tutoring.

THE THRUST OF the program will take place at the school, said Bosscher. Using classroom time is allowed, but volunteers will try to use time outside the school hours. Chester Stewart of Second Grace will be leading a Great Books time.

The larger groups will be used primarily for story, reading types of programs. Individuals will be brought in to talk about their occupation—what a lawyer, police man, engineer does.

"It is hard for a student to identify what a lawyer does—I think they would find it motivating and directional," Bosscher concluded.

Twenty UM churches were represented at the kick-off meeting for Adopt a School on Mar. 29. None of the other participating UM churches are in partnership. □

JOB OPENING

POSITION: Manager, Lake Huron United Methodist Camp

RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE: Facility maintenance, housekeeping, food service management and administration of camp operation at Lake Huron Camp, located 12 miles north of Port Huron, Michigan.

SALARY AND BENEFITS INCLUDE: \$22,600 base salary, housing and basic utilities, health insurance and United Methodist Pension Plan.

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FLUSHING UMYF TRAVEL TO S.C.

The Flushing UMYF went on a mission trip to Wadmalaw Island, S.C. during the last week and a half of July. The group of 33 people worked on five different houses. The work included putting on a new roof, drywalling, building a ramp, and painting. Participants had a lot of fun helping and meeting the economically disadvantaged people of Wadmalaw Island. Christian Lorenz is senior high UMYF president.

Curiosity meets wisdom as seniors, children become pen pals

KATHY GOOLIAN
MCA Staff Reporter

CENTREVILLE (MCA) — "I wanted to bridge the gap between senior citizens and youth. My children have no grandparents in the area. They're far away. My own family has enjoyed conversations with senior citizens. Their wisdom combined with youth's curiosity can nurture a relation that will grow from this," says Connie Heidbrink.

This is how the education coordinator at Centreville United Methodist Church got the idea to start a senior citizen pen pal program with the Sunday school children. This church is on the Albion District and the town is near Three Rivers.

"I delivered the senior citizens the children's names last Sunday and will complete the process this Sunday," she says. The children will write their cards and letters in Sunday school, and the senior citizens will write at leisure. The

children will be given one set of names, and the seniors another. That way they will all know who they're writing, but the letters they receive will be from a mystery person. The secrets will be revealed on Valentine's Day.

Children up through junior high who are active in the Sunday school will participate. Heidbrink estimates she has close to 40 pairs lined up so far. Three of her own children, Alisha, 11, Michael, nine, and Chelsea, four, will participate. Heidbrink has been a member of the church for seven years.

"This is a way to nurture the church family in feeling and to share Christian values with our youth," she said. "I encourage the senior citizens to pass on Bible verses special to them as food for thought. It'll be a fun mystery. I'm looking forward to Valentine's Day to see how many guessed correctly."

HELLO, MICHIGAN!



from

Wheatfield United Methodist Church

Holt Road and Burkley Road, Williamston 48895
Tel: (616) 948-8892

Our pastor: Rev. Carolyn Hare

"Our roots go back to our beginnings in a rural school house. We are a caring church serving our Lord in rural Wheatfield Township. We have met for worship 92 years in the original building, dedicated July 24, 1898."

Membership: 47

District: Lansing

Worship: 11 a.m.
Church School: 9:45 a.m.

Baldwin Avenue Shelter holds Halloween party for homeless kids

KATHY GOOLIAN
MCA Staff Reporter

PONTIAC (MCA) — The Baldwin Avenue Shelter in Pontiac held a party on Halloween night for 155 children, said director, Alice Hairston. The party was intended for children up to 12 who have been in the homeless shelter or soup kitchen over the past year.

Zeta Phi Beta, a women's social sorority in Pontiac, sponsored the party with \$200 in funding and by providing volunteers for the evening. There was a cotton candy machine, a popcorn machine, and a feel and touch game (spook house). A reporter from the *Oakland Press*, Diana Dillaber, volunteered her services.

The children were served hot dogs, potato chips, apple cider and donuts. They played a balloon game, bobbed for apples, found their partner with a number, and pinned the tail on the pumpkin. Decorations were provided by Chuck Korpac, and several area stores provided refreshments.

The purpose of the party, said Hairston, was to get as many children as possible off the streets, and to send them home

with enough candy so trick-or-treating was unnecessary.

Homeless can stay in the shelter for 30 days. There are beds for 20 people a night. So far this year, Hairston estimated, the shelter has provided 5082 nights of lodging and has served 79,902 meals.

The Community Center youth program meets Fridays from 4-6 p.m. (grades six through 12). A Bible study on Friday from 1-2 p.m. is for adults. A support group led by Myra McGee is for children. "All About Being a Parent" meets Saturdays from 11-12 noon. On Wednesday from 4-6 is Bible school for children. All groups are run by volunteers. Teachers and others volunteer tutoring services. The Oakland County Literacy Council tutors adults.

Volunteers also help with Emergency Shelter users' needs, assisting them in picking up furniture moving into new homes, and filling out Department of Social Services papers. Sometimes they adopt a family for the holidays, or for the whole year, Hairston said.

Colleen Walton, MSW, is on the premises two days a week and is always on call. She runs a program called "Families in Transition."

Two groups start churches—Greenwood celebrates 125 years

A 125th anniversary of the founding of two churches, now Greenwood United Methodist Church, was held Sept. 30. The Rev. Robert Matteson, former pastor, was the speaker. Marion Silverthorn, great-granddaughter of the founder, Charles Pohly, gave the history of the Greenwood church. Bernitia Wilson, granddaughter of Robert Sibbald, gave the history of the Roseburg church. Alice Gottsleben gave some personal notes.

A video tape of the congregation was shown after the worship service. A dinner was served at noon. The afternoon program was given over to former pastors. Jean Cooper gave a skit. Vocal numbers by Lois Blanchette, Katherin Jurn and Geraldine McClellan, Donna Brunk and Michele Lohr, and Brenda Turner, and a flute solo by Lori Silverthorn were also featured in the services.

In 1865 two groups started churches in the Yale community. Near Roseburg a group of Methodists met in a school house on Bricker Road until the school burned. They bought land from Robert Sibbald for \$20. They built a church on Galbraith Line in 1886.

The other group, German speaking Evangelicals, also started services in a

school house. In 1874 a small log church was built on Galbraith Line. This was replaced in 1902 with the present church, the Greenwood Evangelical United Brethren. In 1969 these two congregations merged, and a fellowship hall was added in 1973. This church is now called the Greenwood UMC.

Above is the Greenwood UMC, which recently celebrated its 125th anniversary.

school house. In 1874 a small log church was built on Galbraith Line. This was replaced in 1902 with the present church, the Greenwood Evangelical United Brethren. In 1969 these two congregations merged, and a fellowship hall was added in 1973. This church is now called the Greenwood UMC.

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The 13 United Methodist seminaries prepare tomorrow's leaders today. Merit scholarships, ethnic scholarships, and Trial Year Scholarships for those exploring ministry are available. For more information, contact the United Methodist seminary of your choice.

- Boston University, School of Theology, Boston, MA, (617)353-3036;
- Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, (404)727-6326;
- The Theological School, Drew University, Madison, NJ, (201)408-3111;
- Duke University Divinity School, Durham, NC, (919)684-2603;
- Gammon Theological School, Atlanta, GA, (404)527-7707;
- Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston IL, 1-800-736-4627;
- Iliff School of Theology, Denver CO, 1-800-678-3360;
- Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, OH, 1-800-333-6876;
- Perkins School of Theology, SMU, Dallas, TX, (214)922-2293;
- Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO, 1-800-825-0378;
- School of Theology at Claremont, Claremont, CA, (714)626-3521;
- United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, 1-800-686-4673;
- Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC, 1-800-882-4987



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PEOPLE

THE REV. ELIZABETH ISAACS left for Florida to begin more treatments for her cancer. She had major surgery 1 1/2 years ago, but the cancer has returned. A medical diagnosis is incomplete at this time. She is in good spirits and feels good enough physically to do some walking, reports friend Joyce Wood. Those wishing to send her a card or note may do so by writing: Rev. Elizabeth Isaacs, 607 Harwood, Orlando, FL 32803.

MR. THOMAS SPENCER, husband of **BARBARA NORTON SPENCER**, is very ill in St. Mary's Hospital, Grand Rapids, after a long wait for a kidney transplant, and sugar diabetes. They were both teaching in the public schools of Alaska, but returned to Michigan because of his poor health. Barbara is the daughter of the Rev. Raymond and Beatrice Tenant Norton, and is directing the music at Berlin Center UMC. Their son, Timothy, is continuing to work in Alaska; and daughter, Patty, married Mark Sollner, of Grand Rapids. They recently became parents of Spencer Mark. Patty trained as a physical therapist, and is working in Kalamazoo. Barbara and Tom's address is: 604 Jordan Lake Rd., Saranac, MI 48881. She is the niece of the Rev. Wirth Tenant.



MCA WHO'S WHO

Ray Burgess, MCA correspondent, was born in Dearborn, and raised in Dearborn First UMC, where he sang in the choir and participated in youth group. He majored in English at Albion College and received a bachelor's and master's degree in sacred theology from Boston University.

"In high school I just knew I was called to the ministry," Ray says. He was influenced by the youth ministers in his church and had a conversion experience at summer camp. He settled it completely in college.

Ray met wife Martha in Boston. Their three children are Scott 25; Amy, almost 24, and Kristina 22 and getting married.

Ray's writing interest grew with his English major in college. He wrote an article on non-violence for the *Advocate* in 1961. While in Grand Rapids he did many book reviews for the *Advocate*, the *Circuit Rider* and the *Grand Rapids Press*, where he was allowed to browse through their sample books and choose.

Ray and Martha have been interested in the marital growth movement since 1973. They are nationally certified and are trained leaders in marriage communication labs.

"I've just been elected to the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce in Sturgis," says Ray. He also serves on the Albion District Council on Ministries and the West Michigan Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

His two concerns for the church are for the renewal of established congregations and support of the family.

In October Ray tore a rotator cuff muscle in his shoulder and broke his arm in a fall. He is now undergoing physical therapy. "I'd like to get my golf swing back by spring," he says. The couple has a cottage at Lake Louise, where Ray enjoys fishing.

"I'm very enthusiastic about the *Advocate*," Ray says. "My family has subscribed as long as I can remember."



"My Peace I Give to You..."

DWIGHT H. BALLARD, 89, a member of Eaton Rapids First UMC for 57 years, died Sept. 19 at Clark Memorial Home, Grand Rapids. He was buried in Rose Hill Cemetery, Eaton Rapids, on Sept. 22, 90 years after his birth Sept. 22, 1900, in Leoni Township, Jackson County. The Revs. Larry Irvine and Robert Betts officiated at his funeral in the Eaton Rapids church. Ballard is survived by his wife of 65 years, Eva Byrum Ballard; one daughter, Mrs. Esther (Russell) Richmond of Watervliet; one son, James D. (Carolyn) Ballard of Onondaga; eight grandchildren; 12 great grandchildren; and a sister, Ruth Hawley of Eaton Rapids. He was preceded in death by a daughter, Nancy Ann Ballard, in 1956. Ballard served his church as Sunday school teacher, Sunday school superintendent, lay member of annual conference and member and chairperson of the board of trustees for many years. He also was among a crew of men who dug out room for a fellowship hall underneath the original part of First church. He served as a board member of the Michigan Council on Alcohol Problems and was a member of Eaton Rapids Kiwanis Club.

My Experience

—Keith A. Bovee
Pastor, Ionia First UMC

The value of picking blueberries

Have you noticed how people put different price tags on the various aspects of life? There are some things in life that are very important to others. Maybe a better choice of vocabulary for "price tag" would be "value." Some people place a higher value on certain activities than others do.

For example you take a couple of weeks not too long ago, when I returned from my vacation. I went into a certain business establishment. While I was in there I discovered one of our church members who had also just returned from vacation. We were visiting about what we had done and I shared that on the way home Elnora and I stopped to pick some blueberries. Immediately the guy who owns this business interrupts our conversation to let me know I had not saved anything by picking our own. He knew because his wife had figured it out and they were just about as cheap out at McCord's.

WE QUICKLY figured it out and determined that I had only saved \$6.00 by picking them myself. With the cost of gas and wear and tear one cannot afford to drive up there for that. I feebly mentioned that we were driving right by on the way home so no cost there. Evidently we had worn out the topic because the subject was changed and I was left with my solitude.

Getting back to the subject of values, it is obvious that I could see more value in picking my own blueberries than the matter of dollars and cents. Before I go any further let me be right up front, it was not my idea to stop and pick blueberries. I was not the one to put the ice cream pails in the trunk when we left home so as to be prepared. On my list of things to do on vacation I am sure picking blueberries is not near the top. In fact I am not even sure it would find a place on my list. I will confess that after all is said and done I do enjoy a handful in my waffles, or blueberry muffins or blueberry cobbler.

THIS PICKING business is Elnora's idea. She does it because she likes it. Now there is not a married person reading this that cannot appreciate the value of doing things to please the one you are married to. I found a lot more "value" from picking our own berries than McCord's could possibly provide regardless of the price.

Those of you who have been picking berries know that half the fun is listening to the conversation going on around you. Just ahead of me was a little girl about four who was with her aunt about 22. Her aunt was busy teaching her the proper way to pick. The little girl kept calling her, "grandma" and her aunt with great embarrassment kept correcting her. I also noticed a young family not too far down the row with four little children. I wondered if George Bird ever thought about weighing the kids as well as the buckets before they went into the field to pick.

There was a grandmother with three of her grandchildren picking right behind me. This grandmother was using every opportunity to instruct her grandchildren not only in the art of picking, but the dangers of eating unwashed fruit, and the importance of using proper grammar.

I WONDER HOW many valuable lessons are learned in the blueberry patch. Just the week before I had read about the newest fad in travel called Grandtravel. With most kids getting 12 to 18 weeks off every summer and parents having to work, grandparents are traveling more with their grandkids. The article said one company had 21 two-week tours to offer to such places as the Netherlands, Italy, France, Kenya, and Alaska. They also offer many shorter trips. The article pointed up the advantages both for the grandparents as well as the kids.

One grandma was quoted as saying she was having so much fun she was going to take nine more trips because she had nine more grandchildren. Well this new trend has nothing on what has been going on for years in the blueberry patches.

TWO YEARS AGO we had a study on Russia. This was before Glasnost. We learned that most of the parents stayed away from the churches for whatever reason. However, the babushkas or grandmothers would take their grandchildren to church often having them baptized without the parents knowledge. In every society and every land grandparents play a very important role in the education and spiritual growth of their grandchildren.

As you can see there is a lot more value from picking your own blueberries than saving a few cents a pound. Please don't let the word get out. If the George Birds of this land ever get wind of the real value of picking your own they will want to charge admission in addition to the price per pound.

LINER ADS

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE IN THE ADVOCATE. Advocate ads bring results. Liner ads cost only \$2.25 per line or part thereof for the first entry, \$1.60 per line for identical ads thereafter. Display ads begin at \$10.00 a column inch. Rates vary. Call for details. Deadline for submitting or canceling an ad is the tenth day before date of publication. Write the Advocate at 316 Springbrook, Adrian 49221, for more information.

ORGANIST/MUSIC Director: part-time position. Salary commensurate with experience. Send resumes to Redeemer United Methodist Church, 13980 Schaye Road, DeWitt, MI 48820.

NEW MATTRESSES—factory direct. Free delivery in the greater Grand Rapids area. In other areas, contact us for minimum freight cost. First quality, twin \$75, double \$110, queen \$150. Grand Mattress Co., 4625 Clyde Park, SW, Wyoming, MI 48509, ph. (616) 538-5782. Hrs. Mon.-Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-4. Specialists in custom sizes and custom frames.

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FOR SALE: Lovely two bedroom Redmond mobile home in a fine adult park. Holiday Mobile Home Park, Lakeland, Florida. For information call Rev. G.E. Stace, phone (517) 723-3983.

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BIBLE FOR TODAY

Stories Jesus told Stories of God's grace—Unit I

The Prodigal Son

December 2, 1990

Luke 15:1-10

"He arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him."

—Luke 15:20

The story of the prodigal son is perhaps the best short story ever told. It has characters who stand out in sharp relief. It has an impact which drives home the central point of the father's amazing love and forgiveness. It has subtle undercurrents which reflect the complexities of the human heart.

Biblical commentaries deservedly go to great lengths to uncover the many layers, tints and hues of this multi-colored parable. There is the waywardness of the youngest son. There is the forgiving and generous, even prodigal love of the father. There is the understandable jealousy and anger of the older brother. But as we look at it now, let us take another tack.

Dave Nelson shared with me a long time ago a sermon outline Dr. George Buttrick offered in a preaching class: "Sick of Home; Home Sick; Home." There is a simplicity in that story line perhaps illustrated best by another story. I share this with the permission of a friend whose life story it is.

HE WAS BORN in a southern town, the son of Christian parents. He was raised in the Southern Baptist Church and early made a Christian commitment and joined the church. He was receiving the spiritual inheritance his family and church could give him while he was young.

Then came the tensions and open confrontation of the Civil Rights Movement which rocked the nation and his home town. Almost simultaneously the country deepened its involvement in Vietnam. He joined the Army and went to war.

In Vietnam his life began to take a downward turn. To help cover the pain of that awful war, he turned to drugs; and his use did not stop at the completion of his tour of duty. It continued when he got state-side and encountered the inhospitable wel-

come experienced by so many Vietnam vets.

The toll on his life was clear. He became aimless, listless and just a little crazy. His closest relationships began to crumble to the point that his mother told him he could not stay in the family home if his drug use continued.

So he left the home physically he had left spiritually many years before. This began a year of joblessness and homelessness, a year of wandering in a "far off land" of drugged living.

Then, one night, in a park, he heard some people preaching the Gospel and handing out Christian literature. He paused and listened. Suddenly, one of the women in the group recognized him, and came to him to talk.

"Look at you!" she said. "What has become of you? What are you doing with your life? This isn't the way you were raised! God doesn't like what you're doing. You'd better get yourself straightened out." ("Twas grace that taught my heart to fear.")

Another friend saw him and said very much the same thing; and he began to think maybe there was something to it. Maybe they were right. Then, he knew he had to go home. He came to his right mind.

Reaching home, he told his mother he was going to straighten out his life, quit drugs, clean up and go back to church. His mother gave him another chance and let him come home with the understanding that he really had to change his ways.

Sunday came and it was time for church. He sat in the back of the balcony, but the words of the message still reached him. At the invitation he knew he had to respond. He knew he had to rededicate

his life. A prodigal son had come home.

THAT HOMECOMING was just the beginning of a spiritual journey which continues still today. The young man is Vernon Moore, director and pastor of Harvest House on Michigan Avenue, Lansing.

There are beautiful layers of truth to be found in the Story of the Prodigal Son, but most of all, it is a story of a young man who lost his way, who was wasting his life and who by the grace of God came to his right mind, and came home.

JOE HUSTON
Sr. Pastor, Holt UMC



simply calls out for God's mercy. Of the two, Jesus said the tax collector went away justified.

JESUS' VERDICT was likely a surprise to those listening to him. Pharisees were religious Jews who made it a practice to press themselves beyond the usual demands of the law in their spiritual discipline. This was so they could guarantee their righteousness, their right-standing before God.

On the other hand, tax collectors were hated because they were considered traitors to their country. They were hired by the Romans to collect taxes for the Roman Empire, part of which was used to garrison an occupation force of Roman legions. This alone was a great enough offense; but to make matters worse, the tax collectors were allowed to keep whatever they could cheat out of their fellow citizens over and above the tax required by Rome. This was their living made through a dishonest system legitimated by a hated overlord.

Certainly, of the two, the Pharisee should be found justified, not the tax collector. Where was the Pharisee found wanting? Why did Jesus praise the tax collector?

The fundamental reason is that the Pharisee was self-centered, not God-centered. His prayer was to himself. It catalogued his accomplishments and thereby praised the pray-er rather than glorifying God. Further, he betrayed a less than loving attitude towards the tax collector, a far cry from the forgiving love Jesus exemplified and embodied.

The tax collector knew himself to be a sinner, and with only that, asked God to have mercy. His attitude calls to mind Isaiah in the Temple: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips." (Isa. 6:5). His sense of guilt must have run deeper than remorse, too, for Jesus to have called him justified. For one to stand truly right with God, there must be repentance, a change of life, a change of behavior. The tax collector must have not only felt his need for God's mercy and forgiveness, but must also have made an inner resolution to change his ways.

ZACCHAEUS CHANGED his life after meeting the Christ saying, "Behold, Lord the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one anything, I restore it fourfold." (Luke 19:8). Perhaps the tax collector had such inner resolve.

There is another attractive aspect of the tax collector—his humility. He has no smug arrogance or pretense. He is who he is, a sinner. But that frank confession opens the door for further spiritual growth. That door, according to Richard Foster in *Freedom of Simplicity* is Holy obedience which leads to the Christian grace of humility. "When the whole of our vision is filled with the Holy, petty selfishness is squeezed out. Perpetual God-consciousness of necessity squeezes out self-consciousness." (Foster, *Freedom of Simplicity*, p. 103).

Two men in a parable: a Pharisee filled with himself and condescending towards others and a tax collector who humbly acknowledges his need for God's mercy; the latter is justified. May God grant us the grace to follow the tax collector in humility, confession and repentance.

WELCOME JOE HUSTON THANKS TO JOHN CERMAK

For the past six lessons John Cerma has led us to new understandings of Old Testament prophets and kings. We have appreciated his witness and scholarship.

We now begin a new unit, "Stories of God's Grace." Our guide is Joe Huston, senior pastor of Holt United Methodist Church since 1989.

Joe has a B.A. degree in sociology from Central Michigan University (1969), and an M.Div. from Garrett (1972). He is married to Sara, and their three children are Joyanne, 17, Sherah, 13, and Joey, 8. Sara works in home health care. At the local church level Joe's interests include pastoral care, evangelism, worship, preaching and teaching.

He is chair of the WMC Board of Discipleship and serves on the board of trustees for M.J. Clark Memorial Home and for Lake Louise.

"I enjoy reading, yard work and gardening, swimming and running," Joe concludes.



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CHURCH OF THE WEEK

A VITAL CONGREGATION IN THE MICHIGAN AREA

Concord UMC: evangelism and diversity of interests

KATHY GOOLIAN
MCA Staff Reporter

JACKSON (MCA) — The *Michigan Christian Advocate* has found inspiration in the new bishops' pastoral letter on "Vital Congregations—Faithful Disciples." This is the start of a spin-off column called "Church of the Week." Each district superintendent has been asked to name a vital church with over 200 and under 200 members.

The Rev. Eldon Eldred, Albion District superintendent, has named Concord United Methodist Church as a vital "under 200" congregation. The *Advocate* met with its pastor, the Rev. Barbara Flory, who has been at Concord since January. She asked three laity to join us: Eleanor Rowlison, chair of the administrative council; Bob Jacokes, treasurer; and Phil Friedrick, lay leader.

FRIEDRICK GAVE US a feel for the Concord area, with its population of 100. "It's a rural farming community now turned into a bedroom community for Jackson and Battle Creek. Its make-up has changed. The church is trying to reach out to new people. The town has a super school system."

An Oct. 14 Miracle Sunday, with Friedrick as chair, raised \$31,000 towards an added elevator and handicapped bathroom. A total of \$48,000 is needed. The elevator was built on faith that the funding would be raised. The following Sunday Flory announced Miracle Sunday had come short of its goal by \$19.02. Over \$900 rolled in.

"All during the process (of planning the elevator) I was struck with how many opportunities we had to postpone it," said Flory.

"In the past I did not feel comfortable," Jacokes said. "But I felt the urge to take my Miracle Sunday offering to the altar."

Flory said that at a recent wedding a grandmother was able to come in a wheelchair. On Sunday morning a parishioner brought her mother from a nursing home.

Jacokes spoke on finances: "People seem to respond when they see there's a need. As stewards we need to communicate with people. I used to be a lot more excited (i.e., anxious) about figures. People say you need to have faith. It's not like a business."

WE NEED TO keep the program young and futuristic," said Friedrick.

At a meeting for an upcoming Appalachia Service Project work team 20 people signed up for summer 1991. "There is a real concern for people's lives. I see it as evangelical and very caring," says Flory. "We have a strong spiritual foundation."

"One parishioner wanted to be baptized by being immersed in a lake," Friedrick

said. "Because it was important to her, it was important to everybody."

"We're all in it together," said Flory. There's no sense of hierarchy."

As further evidence of evangelism, the pastor noted that the youth had stayed after church the previous Sunday to cook six days' worth of meals for a family where the mother has cancer.

The church just bought Blueprints for Evangelism, noted Flory. Herb Miller a West Michigan Conference consultant in evangelism put it together. It's an organized program for church growth.

Flory sometimes asks if the youth want to say something during worship. Prayer requests are an important part of the service.

IN OTHER evangelistic efforts, a community birthday calendar is sold each year, raising \$550-600. Two groups of senior citizens meet at the church every week to play cards and have fun. At the end of August "Pack a Pew" brought in 92 visitors in four weeks. The church sends Valentine cookies to college students. On Dec. 16 a "Coming Home for Christmas" program will bring in the inactives.

Of their pastor these lay people spoke with admiration and respect, but not adulation. They realize a church is as good as its members. Friedrick spoke of her "maturity, caring and loving kindness. Barb is able to work with all the parishioners one-on-one and make them feel loved and cared for. She gives honest expressions of what she feels we can do."

"Barb is the same in the pulpit as in everyday life," said Rowlison. "That is a true gift. People feel free to share."

"Her valuable side is her business ability," said Jacokes. . . Committees are more vibrant and enthusiastic to do things."

The church was on a circuit with Spring Arbor, Pulaski and North Concord starting in 1836, explained Flory. It has been a single point charge since the early 1900s. A wooden building served as the church from the 1800s. When it burned down the present brick building was erected debt free about 1910.

The long-time laity reminisced about old-time members. "Others took us in hand. Now it's our turn," Friedrick said. □

AT A GLANCE
Church: Concord UMC
Founded: 1836
District: Albion
Pastor: Barbara Flory
No. Members: 145



Church members form a prayer circle on the occasion when District Superintendent Eldon Eldred was present for the church conference that decided to go ahead with the added elevator.



View from the Pew

—Joan Kelsey

Lay member, East Lansing Univ. UMC

A church family reunion

Are family reunions part of your heritage? If so, I envy you. Neither the Thostesen nor the Gallant families had reunions. We gathered when a grandparent died, but that was a "reason" to come. Just wanting to be together was not sufficient and no one wanted to get together badly enough to plan it. Opportunities were not created to reconnect, to share stories and feelings of past experiences, to sense our common history and connectedness, to marvel at the growth of children, meet new spouses, reminisce about family members no longer with us. I have lost contact with cousins and never even met some of them.

My family did visit my father's folks in western Nebraska and my mother's parents on the south side of Chicago. But that isn't the same as having extended family from several generations at a big gathering as the Kelseys did in New York state. At a farm home or a cottage on a bay of Lake Ontario, we'd enjoy a long afternoon of talking, eating, remembering, admiring babies, playing horseshoes or swimming, and feeling connected with one another. As the older aunts and uncles are no longer here, it has become a smaller event. The younger generation lives too far away or has conflicting schedules so it isn't as easy or important to attend. We are the lesser for the lost contact.

THE CHURCH IS like that. We are together as a family when we gather in the sanctuary each Sunday. It is the "immediate" family sharing and connecting in the remembering, story telling, sharing a meal at one table. But that's not the same as a reunion of the extended broader family.

Just like my family, the wider church does a good job of coming together when we have a "purpose"—to do business at Annual Conference, to study at Schools of Christian Mission or Pastors' School, to vote on whether to move the location of conference offices, to say goodbye to a departing bishop or hello to a bishop newly assigned to the Michigan Area.

It's been a long time—at least 20 years—since we've had a family reunion of the laity of the Michigan Area, simply coming together to reconnect.

and celebrate who we are. We are losing contact with our cousins on the other side of the state. There are many we've never met.

ONCE AGAIN WE'RE going to have that celebration. All lay persons of the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences are invited to "A CELEBRATION: CALLED TO BE LAITY," on Saturday, Feb. 16, 1991, at the Kellogg Center, East Lansing, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

There will be singing, feasting, reconnecting with other people, and rejoicing in being in ministry as lay persons in our home, church, community, and world. Participants of the convocation will explore our call to ministry. What is the nature of God's call to lay persons? How do we recognize that call? How can we witness to that call?

Resource leaders include Bishop Judith Craig and Hayland Houston (former General Secretary of the General Board of Church and Society) dialoguing on "Naming the Call" and how the call to be laity differs from the call to be ordained. Don Mendenhall, assistant to Bishop Reuben Job of Iowa (the first lay person to hold the position of a bishop's assistant), will help us in "Exploring the Call." Carolyn Johnson, of the Purdue University faculty, will lead us in "Witnessing the Call."

REGISTRATION FORMS are being distributed to all congregations and also can be obtained from District Lay Leaders or the district and conference offices. Deadline for registration is Feb. 9. Child care for children five years and under will be available if children are pre-registered. For those who want to come the evening before, you can make your own reservation at the Kellogg Center. There will be a gathering for fellowship and fun on Friday evening at 8:30 p.m.

The planning team, co-chaired by Don Williams and Chuck Arnold, the conference lay leaders, wants to fill the meeting room to capacity with 950 people. You are urged to gather a carload and join all your cousins at this "Family Reunion." Family members who are not able to come to the party will indeed be missed.

Youth at Concord UMC held a car wash this summer to raise funds for camp. "The youth help serve communion," noted lay leader Phil Friedrick. "They're being yokefellows. Our church typifies yoke fellowship. This is a church where everyone feels they can serve communion without being worried about spilling the grape juice."



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