

FIRELANDS FLAME



JUDY WISMAR CLAYCOMB, DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Along the Way

Some disciples came to Abba Poemen and said to him: "Tell us, when we see brothers dozing during the sacred office, should we pinch them so that they will stay awake?" And the old man said to them: "Actually, if I saw a brother sleeping, I would put his head on my knees and let him rest."¹

One day in my early ministry I was sitting in the middle of the living room floor in my 10th story apartment on Euclid Avenue overlooking University Circle in Cleveland. I was agonizing over some good work I had been diligently trying to do for God at the time; praying, pleading, protesting, "God, you know how I've tried and tried...!" The next thing I knew, I awoke, my head cradled in my arms on the seat of a chair. The "work" remained unfinished, the agony was gone, the prayer had been answered: Rest. Simply rest. Rest in me.

In my office last week a retired pastor (yes, a RETIRED pastor who is, nevertheless, preaching WEEKLY in a Firelands church) told a story from his early ministry. He was teaching full time AND serving a church full time. One day he woke up and he could not move. This YOUNG man had to be transported to the doctor in a wheelchair. His doctor said to him, "So, you

believe God called you to be a Pastor?"

"Oh, YES!" he answered.

The doctor replied, "Well, you'd better stop some of what you're doing, or else God's not going to be able to get much use out of you."

Right now I'm in a simple room at the Abbey of the Genesee on a silent retreat. Those of you who still can't believe this perpetual yacker is an introvert might also have a hard time believing with what ease and joy I receive being compelled to remain silent for these days. With Annual Conference just two weeks away and so much of Firelands appointment work yet to be completed, in order to protect me, Mike asked, "Is this something you HAVE to go to?" I told him it WAS, but not for the reasons he was suggesting. THIS "obligation" is so much more in tune with God's will for me than cancelling out in order to keep my nose to the grindstone, diligently trying to do so much good for God.²

The season also of YOUR rest, I pray, is near. Well, not your FINAL rest, I hope. But rest. Please rest this summer. Please support the rest and recovery, the stopped time and the letting go of your partners in ministry. And I pray you will integrate consistently into your belovedly

diligent, well-crafted, highly-gifted servant-hearted resolve to do much God for God, God's higher call for you to also lay aside, submit, stop, and allow the Holy One who loves you to fill some gaps with some other gappy people, or to let them remain, for a time, empty.

I find myself moved deeply at the heart this Spring by the faithful, tireless, loving work of Firelands pastors and active church lay workers, all in response to the love of Christ, for the sake of those God loves, all along the Way.

Judy

¹Joan Chittister, *Illuminated Life*. Mary Knoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2010, p. 113.

²I'm not completely submitted to God's obligation yet, as you can see, as I meet newsletter deadline instead of simply sitting in worship, prayer and silence.

District Gathering at Annual Conference



WHERE: ANNUAL CONFERENCE LAKESIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 450 CENTRAL AVENUE, FELLOWSHIP ROOM

WHEN: MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2011

TIME: AFTER THE AFTERNOON SESSION, (5:30—7:00 PM)

WHO'S INVITED: EVERYONE FROM THE FIRELANDS DISTRICT

District Volunteers In Mission



From March 27th to April 9th, 15 people from Firelands District VIM gathered together at Camp Love in Gulfport, MS. Their goal was to volunteer two weeks of their time to continue with reconstruction efforts following the devastation in 2005 of Hurricane Katrina. How amazing is this that 5 ½ years after the event, this team and others from across the U.S. are still rebuilding homes damaged by the hurricane.

Wesley Eddy from Grafton UMC and Darrell French from Brighton UMC are co-leaders for the Firelands District UMVIM Team. They have led the team since 2001. Wesley handles the logistics of place and cost and Darrell manages the construction projects.

For two weeks, we divided into 3 teams working on 3 different houses in different stages of reconstruction. One house, Doris', was a new build. Wesley led this team and they completed several aspects of construction in-



cluding sanding drywall seams, priming and painting throughout the house, laying vinyl and "snap-together" wood flooring, hanging interior doors, and install all floor & door moldings. The second team, working on Jamie's house, was led by Anna Binnie. They were able to paint, lay flooring, hang doors and molding, set toilets, and install kitchen cabinets. The third team, led by Darrell, worked on the homes of Lois and Shirley. Their work involved stippling ceilings, sanding drywall seams, reconstructing a bathroom floor and laying subflooring and painting. In addition, some of the team members were called upon to do some side jobs, including laying sod and hanging exterior doors. The thing to remember is that except for Darrell, all of these people come from different work backgrounds and come willing to do whatever is asked of them.

The UMVIM team stayed at Camp Love which is a building located near Nugent UMC. Teams stay in dorm style rooms with bunk beds. Meals are cooked in a kitchen with seating for about 25-30 people. When not working on the projects during the day, teams

are responsible for cooking breakfast and supper as well as daily cleaning jobs. The Directors at the camp are Stan and Jennie Lowrey who were previously the directors at Midwest Mission Distribution Center. Our VIM team originally met Stan and Jennie when we traveled to Eleuthera Island in the Bahamas. They were the host couple for teams coming to work on that island. It has been a privilege to work with them.

The District UMVIM team will be returning to Camp Love next year for 2 weeks to continue with reconstruction. The dates are March 18 -31, 2012.



Special Thanks to our VIM Team:

- Anna Binnie**, Brighton UMC
- John, Natalie, & Tim Born**, Henrietta UMC
- Warren Cermak**, Lakeside U
- Robert Denney**, Trinity UMC
- John Douds**, Wakeman Congregational UCC
- Mary & Wesley Eddy**, Grafton UMC
- Darrell & Kathryn French**, Brighton UMC
- Eugene Merrill**, Brighton U
- Paul Meyer**, Henrietta UMC
- Mary Svoboda**, Delaware U

Featured Speakers at Annual Conference

Monday Communion & Commemoration Service – Bishop John L. Hopkins of the East Ohio Conference

Tuesday Morning Worship – Rev. Jorge Acevedo of Grace UMC in Cape Coral, Florida

Tuesday Ordination Service – Bishop Julius Trimble of the Iowa Conference

Wednesday Morning Worship – Bishop Julius Trimble of the Iowa Conference

Thursday Morning Worship – Rev. Dr. Gary George, admin. assistant to Bishop Hopkins



Bishop John L. Hopkins was assigned to the Ohio East Area on September 1, 2004. He serves as chairperson for The United Methodist Church's Connectional Table which brings together bishops, staff executives of denominational agencies and representatives of ethnic caucuses and jurisdictions around the world to help guide the mission and ministries of the global church. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Council of Bishops.

Prior to his assignment to the Ohio East Area, Hopkins served the Minnesota Area for eight years after being elected to the episcopacy in 1996. He has also served as pastor of The Methodist Temple in Evansville, Indiana; director of the North Indiana Conference Council on Min-

istries; campus minister at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana; and as pastor of a two-point charge in LaPorte, Indiana. Bishop Hopkins was instrumental in the formation of Operation Classroom in Sierra Leone and Liberia. .

Born in Puerto Rico, **Jorge Acevedo** moved with his family to the United States where he was raised. He loves Jesus Christ and his Church. Touched by the grace of God at seventeen, he was never the same. Rescued from a life of addictions, his greatest delight is connecting people to Jesus and the Church.

Acevedo is the lead pastor at Grace Church, a multi-site, United Methodist congregation in southwest Florida. This church has grown in its weekend attendance from 400 to over 2600 in the past thirteen years and is recognized as having one of the largest and most effective recovery ministries in America.

Jorge co-authored *The Heart of Youth Ministry*, and has also written for the United Methodist Publishing House, *Circuit Rider* magazine, *Good News* magazine and *Our Faith Today*. He is one of three featured pastors on the "Keeping the Passion for Ministry Alive" edition of the Willow Creek Association "Defining Moments" CD.

Bishop Julius C. Trimble was born in Chicago, Illinois where he attended public school. He is the fourth of six children born to John Trimble and Marybelle

Pryor Trimble both of Montgomery, Alabama. Nurtured as a Methodist from childhood, he answered the call to preach at the age of sixteen at the Christ Methodist Church of Chicago, Illinois. Mentored by Dr. John Porter, his pastor, he became active as a lay speaker, youth leader and participant in Young Life Urban Ministries.

On July 18, 2008, Bishop Julius Calvin Trimble was elected bishop by the North Central Jurisdiction and has been assigned to the Iowa Annual Conference. His election was announced by Bishop Gregory V. Palmer, president of the Council of Bishops.

Rev. Dr. Gary George is completing his 31st year under appointment in the East Ohio Annual Conference. His ministry has included serving as a youth director, associate pastor, pastor, district superintendent, and since July 1, 2006 assistant to the bishop.

He graduated from Clyde (OH) High School, Asbury College (Bachelor of Science in Education), Ashland Theological Seminary (Master of Divinity), and Asbury Theological Seminary (Doctor of Ministry). George serves on a wide variety of conference, jurisdictional, and general church committees, commissions, and boards including Board of Directors of The East Ohio Area Foundation, Wesleyan Senior Living, and The United Methodist Church's General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits .

Bishop's Challenge

Once again Bishop Hopkins is issuing the challenge for each member of annual conference to bring an offering of \$100 for the **3Cs Mission** projects.

Over the past two years this challenge offering has been able to help the conference begin work in **Liberia** with the Camphor Mission and the building of the Judy Olin Memorial House, to begin building a school in **Zimbabwe** at Emsizini, to provide medical training

and health care in both **Sierra Leone** and Liberia, and to work with the Lipetsk U.M.C. and pastor Yuri Kopaev in **Russia** along with work at orphanages in the Black Soil District near Kursk.

The Bishop's 3Cs Mission Challenge offering will allow the great work to continue. Bishop Hopkins issues this challenge to each member of annual conference (both clergy and lay) to work within their local church to bring \$100 per annual confer-

ence member to conference for a significant offering that will support the Bishop's 3Cs Mission. This challenge is per member of annual conference; if your church has 2 members it would need to raise \$200 to meet the challenge, \$300 for 3 members, etc. Your church may decide how to meet this challenge – whether it is from individual donations, a church fundraiser, etc. This would be a great way to involve children, youth and adults in a major mission initiative.

Peace with Justice

“Until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream”—words of the prophet Amos (5: 24), as quoted by Dr. Martin Luther King in his “I Have a Dream” speech, that fill the curved black granite wall of the Civil Rights Memorial Center in Montgomery, Alabama. It was my privilege to visit the Memorial Center in late April while traveling with friends. We were all unprepared by the profound reaction we had in the presence of the memorial.

Designed by Maya Lin, the designer of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., a large circular black granite table honors those who died during the Civil Rights Movement. It records the names of 40 martyrs, while chronicling the history of the movement from 1954-68, in lines that radiate like the hands of a clock. Water flows from the table's center, and continues evenly across the top, Water also flows down the black granite wall bearing Amos'



words. And you can't help but get your hands in the water. Like the Vietnam Memorial, we were drawn to touch the names, famous activists and random victims of vigilantes alike, to pause and reflect on where we were at these dates, and why we, growing up in N.J. at the time, didn't know more about what was

going on in the South. As we touched the names of persons we knew of—Emmett Till, Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King Jr., and persons we'd never heard of—Mack Parker, William Moore, Oneal Moore, and touched such dates as December 1, 1955: Rosa Parks arrested, December 5, 1960: Supreme Court outlaws segregation in bus terminals, as we got our hands wet in the waters of the memorial, I felt like I was touching waters of baptism—the baptism of death and rebirth—dying to self that a more just world could be born. It was Lin's intention that each visitor would touch the waters of justice and righteousness, and her design simply draws you do it—you can't help it.

Inside the Center, we found the Wall of Tolerance, a 20 by 40 foot wall that digitally displays the names of more than half a million people who have made a commitment to work in their daily lives for justice, and human rights. The promise we took as we added our names read, in part, “By placing my name on the Wall of Tolerance, I pledge to take a stand against hate, injustice and intolerance.” The names flow down the display in a timeless scroll, like the waters flowing over Amos' words outside on the granite wall. The Wall makes you see, very clearly, that it is individuals who are responsible for continuing the march of social justice. It is up to us.

“The March Continues” proclaim banners at the Center. So it does. Blessings on you as you continue the March in your daily life and in the life of your local church. And if you find yourself going through Montgomery, do stop at the Memorial Center. It will give you new eyes with which to see.

*Barbara Stephens-Rich,
Peace With Justice Advocate*

For Your Information

BISHOP HOPKINS EXPECTS TO APPOINT EFFECTIVE JULY 1:

Armando Arellano, Garfield Heights UMC to Henrietta UMC

Brian Amstutz, certified candidate to Lafayette as PL.

Ben Black III, Akron Christ UMC to New London UMC

Georgette Gaston, Greenwich/Delphi UMCs to Fitchville UMC.

Donald Kuntz, North Olmsted UMC to Lodi UMC

Supply Laity assignments:

Steve Rice, certified lay speaker, to Greenwich (Greenwich/Delphi Charge)

Walter James Westerman Jr., certified lay speaker to Delphi (Greenwich/Delphi Charge)

Tim Morrison received his dMIN.

Paul Bennett will be commissioned as a PE at Annual Conference

FALL CONFERENCE MATERIALS:

All the Church/Charge Conference Materials are available at the Firelands District Webpage: <http://Firelandsdistrictumc.org> Click on "Links, Forms, Downloads"



The materials will not be handed-out at annual conference this year. *You saved the district the cost of 2,765 pages of copied materials!* You may, however, request a "hard copy" and/or CD of the forms by contacting the district office at ph. 419.668.6115 email: FirelandsDist@rrbiznet.com

DISTRICT LAITY ENDORSED NOMINATEES FOR DELEGATES TO GENERAL / JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE:

Mr. Paul Capelle
Mr. Doug Gildenmeister
Mrs. Carol Nelson-Burns

Sawmill Creek RESORT

LAY LEADERS RETREAT "The Transforming Path of Prayer"

Come join us for a time of prayer and through prayer have a closer and deeper walk with Lord Jesus.

August 19 & 20, 2011

6:00—9:00 pm on Friday

8:00 am to 5:00 pm on Saturday

Registration deadline July 15

Cost: \$122 based on double occupancy; \$189 based on single occupancy; \$49 based on communing daily. All include breakfast, lunch and meeting rooms. (see insert brochure)

Not limited to "lay leaders", open to anyone interested in attending.

More info: contact Jim Westermann at 440.926.9064 email: wjw127@aol.com

Bring your family with you to this great lakeside resort, nearby Cedar Point and Lake Erie. They can enjoy the surrounding attractions while you experience the retreat.

Did You Know?

June Birthdays:

Bruce Batchelor-Glader	6/6	Don & Nancy Young	6/16
Chris Cottrel	6/8	Dan & Judy Reinke	6/19
Tom Matus	6/12	Jeff & carol Lanzer	6/21
Jack Gessic	6/17	Paul & Lynda Atkinson	6/23
Paula Marbury	6/18	Kevin & Theresa Coleman	6/24
Pat Allen-Lintela	6/19		
Doug Beggs	6/24		
Joan Skelley-Watts	6/17		

June Anniversaries:

Bob & Janet Machovec	6/2		
Eric & Roseann Martin	6/7		
Bruce & Sue Batchelor-Glader	6/9		
Gary & Peggy Streiff	6/9		
Richard & Lorna Kretchmar	6/14		

Deaths:

Herbert Bundy, Retired, died May 1. Condolences may be sent to his daughter; Rachael Shelley, 1943 Adams St., Coshoc-ton, OH 43812-1802.

Evelyn Althouse, spouse of Jay Althouse, died May 10. Condolences may be sent to Rev. Jay Althouse, 213 Turnberry Circle SW, n Canton OH 44709.

Stanley Cote, retired, died May 17. Condolences may be sent to his wife, Beatrice Cote, 308 East Ave., New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Frank McMillen, Jr., retired, died May 19. Condolences may be sent to his wife, Adelee, 452 Hillcrest Dr., Ashland OH 44805

Dalana Oplinger, spouse of Rev. Chuck Oplinger, died May 20. Condolences may be sent to Rev. Oplinger, 1415 Clay St., Jefferson OH 44047

Rev. Eric Martin's brother, **Samuel Martin Jr.**, died May 26. Our prayers to their families.

June 2011

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WE'RE ON THE WEB
FIRELANDSDISTRICTUMC.ORG

DISTRICT CALENDAR



June 1-2
Cabinet

June 10-12
YOUTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
LAKESIDE

June 12-16
ANNUAL CONFERENCE. LAKESIDE
FIRELANDS DISTRICT OFFICE
CLOSED DURING CONFERENCE


June 13
DISTRICT GATHERING AT LAKESIDE, 5:30 PM, LAKESIDE UMC FELLOWSHIP HALL (SEE PG 1)

June 15
UM MEN'S ANNUAL BREAKFAST
NORTH SHORE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY 6:30 AM

June 15
CLERGY SPOUSE COFFEE AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST WESLEY LODGE
9:30—11:30 AM

June 16-17
NEW CLERGY ORIENTATION, FOUNTAIN INN

June 23
POST CONFERENCE REVIEW

Summer Hours 
FIRELANDS DISTRICT
OFFICE WILL BE OPEN MONDAY—
THURSDAY 9:00 AM—3:30 PM.
CLOSED ON FRIDAYS JUNE—AUGUST.

BETTY WILL BE ON VACATION JUNE 6-17. NANCY HOFFECKER WILL BE COVERING THE OFFICE JUNE 6-9