By Rev. Ryan Krauss

Procession of robed clergy into the Hershey Lodge’s Blue and White Room marked the beginning of the 2019 Service of Commissioning and Ordination. Dan Stokes, Madisyn Bennett and Rev. Randall Bennett, Jr. offered a piano-trumpet prelude, followed by the anthem “Thine is the Kingdom” by the Chi Rho Singers. Following the hymn “All Hail the Power of Jesus Name,” during which the bishop, Cabinet, commissioners, ordinands, and worship leaders processed, resident bishop Jeremiah Park greeted the assembly in the “power, presence, and direction” of the Holy Spirit. The Annual Conference theme Better Together: One with Each Other was highlighted through recognition of the common ministry of all God’s people. The following persons were presented to the body for commission as provisional elders: David Laysor, David McElwess, Beth Pyles, and Daniel Wilt. The following persons presented for ordination into the Order of Elders: Joshua Devinsizer, Joseph Hopkins, Stephanie Rupert, and Joshua Wargo.

By Pastor Richard DeMarte

Rev. Dr. J.C. Park, President of World Methodist Council, begin his bible study on Romans with an admission that “As a humble servant of Jesus Christ, I may be of value to you not because of something I am, but because of what I am not.” He went on to explain that just as Paul was a citizen of different groups, he (Park) is a multiple level individual as well. He repeatedly emphasized that righteousness is revealed in the Gospel and faith exists from the beginning to the end, from the first to the last. He alluded to Jeremiah 31:34 as one of the prophetic texts Paul may have used as a basis for Romans 1:14-17. Paul was eager to proclaim the Gospel to the Christians in Rome just as we are to carry to Gospel to the ends of the world. Paul ended up in prison but felt that was a necessary step to preach the word.

Park quoted Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s letter and poem to his family from his prison emphasizing his beliefs in the truth of the Gospel. He also related our witness and journey to holding fast to the covenant of Abraham with people on the move to spread the Gospel. Citing John Wesley’s focus on justification which relates to his writings based on Romans 8, Park highlighted Wesley’s view “Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ’s saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit...” Park referenced Charles Wesley’s hymn, “Worthy Shepherds Held in God’s Hands.”

Bishop Park asked the worshipping body for its assent and trust in God’s grace over all who are being ordained and commissioned. Bishop Park proceeded with the historic general examination of the ordination and commissioning candidates.

Proclaiming God’s Word
The Scriptures of focus for the 2019 Ordination Service were Ezekiel 34:1-31, Psalm 23 (both read by Rev. Mira Hewlett), and John 10:11-18 (read by Pastor Robert Henry).

Bishop Park introduced Bishop Ivan Abrahams as this year’s ordination preacher. Bishop Abrahams was ordained in 1972 in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. He Bishop Ivan Abrahams is the first South African General Secretary of the World Methodist Council. He began his service in 2012. From 2003 to 2012, Bishop Abrahams presided over the Methodist Church of South Africa. He helped form and complete the Seth Moktini Methodist Seminary. Bishop Abrahams is active in the All Africa Conference of Churches and the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.

“The Scriptures for the 2019 Ordination Service were Ezekiel 34:1-31, Psalm 23 (both read by Rev. Mira Hewlett), and John 10:11-18 (read by Pastor Robert Henry). Bishop Park introduced Bishop Ivan Abrahams as this year’s ordination preacher. Bishop Abrahams was ordained in 1972 in the Methodist Church of South Africa. Bishop Abrahams is the first South African General Secretary of the World Methodist Council. He began his service in 2012. From 2003 to 2012, Bishop Abrahams presided over the Methodist Church of South Africa. He helped form and complete the Seth Moktini Methodist Seminary. Bishop Abrahams is active in the All Africa Conference of Churches and the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. He alluded to Jeremiah 31:34 as one of the prophetic texts Paul may have used as a basis for Romans 1:14-17. Paul was eager to proclaim the Gospel to the Christians in Rome just as we are to carry to Gospel to the ends of the world. Paul ended up in prison but felt that was a necessary step to preach the word. Park quoted Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s letter and poem to his family from his prison emphasizing his beliefs in the truth of the Gospel. He also related our witness and journey to holding fast to the covenant of Abraham with people on the move to spread the Gospel. Citing John Wesley’s focus on justification which relates to his writings based on Romans 8, Park highlighted Wesley’s view “Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ’s saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit...” Park referenced Charles Wesley’s hymn, “Worthy Shepherds Held in God’s Hands.” Bishop Abrahams reminded the conference that the waters of baptism make us children of God who loves and us cares for us. “We are one family,” he said.

Bishop Abrahams identified that the people we serve are searching for more than what money and materialism can bring. “The people who we serve are sick and tired of empty calorie spirituality.” In this light, Ezekiel 34 is the “emphatic divine promise” by God that “you are my sheep and the flock of my pastures, and I am your God.” To those of us in ministry, he continued, Ezekiel’s prophecy is a judicial sentence against false prophets who stated that baptism in the common ordination shared by lay and clergy persons alike. “Whether you are a prince or a pauper, whether you are black or white, male or female, gay or straight, through the waters of baptism we are one family. We are children of God, who loves us and cares for us.” Bishop Abrahams gave thanks that the event was bathed in prayer. He also reminded the assembly that they already granted the commissioners and ordinands their assent. “Yes, you are worthy!”

“Worthy Shepherds Held in God’s Hands”

Bishop Park asked the worshipping body for its assent and trust in God’s grace over all who are being ordained and commissioned. Bishop Park proceeded with the historic general examination of the ordination and commissioning candidates.

Proclaiming God’s Word
The Scriptures of focus for the 2019 Ordination Service were Ezekiel 34:1-31, Psalm 23 (both read by Rev. Mira Hewlett), and John 10:11-18 (read by Pastor Robert Henry). Bishop Park introduced Bishop Ivan Abrahams as this year’s ordination preacher. Bishop Abrahams was ordained in 1972 in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. He Bishop Ivan Abrahams is the first South African General Secretary of the World Methodist Council. He began his service in 2012. From 2003 to 2012, Bishop Abrahams presided over the Methodist Church of South Africa. He helped form and complete the Seth Moktini Methodist Seminary. Bishop Abrahams is active in the All Africa Conference of Churches and the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. Bishop Abrahams identified that the people we serve are searching for more than what money and materialism can bring. “The people who we serve are sick and tired of empty calorie spirituality.” In this light, Ezekiel 34 is the “emphatic divine promise” by God that “you are my sheep and the flock of my pastures, and I am your God.” To those of us in ministry, he continued, Ezekiel’s prophecy is a judicial sentence against false prophets who
Service of Commissioning & Ordination

PHOTOS BY SANDII PEIFFER

Ordained Elders
Left to right: Joseph Samuel Hopkins, Stephanie P. Rupert, Joshua W. Davinsizer, and Joshua Stephen Wargo

Ordained Elders
Left to right: Beth A. Pyles, David Neal Layser, Daniel L. Wilt, and David R.A. McElwee,

Worthy Shepherds
CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

"only serve their own appetites." Jesus, by contrast, lays down his life for his sheep (John 10).

Bishop Abrahams lifted up the “good, old story” of the Good Shepherd in Psalm 23, a story he confessed we have read and heard, and will read and hear, many more times. “The most important thing is that we insert ourselves in the story so that it becomes our story... My friends you can only do this if you have met the Shepherd and He has touched your life.” As a shepherd in the UMC, Abrahams continued, you too must guard the proverbial door.

Are You Ready?
Bishop Abrahams recalled the deeds of Moses, David, and Samson, all who undertook mighty deeds in the power of God using ordinary implements. "Today you are asked whether you believe the scriptures contain all things necessary for your journey. Today as your weapon we will give you the holy scriptures which is sharper than a two-edged sword." Bishop Abrahams offered the encouragement that these same Scriptures have been heard by and nourished billions of believers up until now. The Word of God, he claimed, must touch the lives of ordinary people. “You are commissioned with and entrusted with the Word of God. Remember that God’s word will never return to God void.”

"You will have the privilege of entering homes," Bishop Abrahams continued, “of sharing in hopes and dreams, doubts despair and distress, births baptism weddings, graduations and special milestones.” Likewise, he reminded of the privilege of sharing in tears, loss, sickness, sadness, and anxiety. “People will share with you their dark secrets.” The bishop bid the commissioners and ordinands never to take the position lightly or betray trust. The ministry of presence is simply too sacred.

I Pray That You Will Not Disappoint
In conclusion, Bishop Abrahams issued a broad challenge: “We need to restore a healthy image of what it means to be a pastor today. Nothing other than the love of Jesus Christ can be the driving point of our ministry rooted in service.” Bishop Abrahams asked all to be aware of their own inadequacies knowing that God equips, sends, and challenges. “Go in the power of the holy spirit to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Live the vision of healing and transformation in God’s world.”

The Ordination and Commissioning
The gathered body witnessed, with great joy and excitement, the commissioning of four and the ordaining of four servants of God in the Susquehanna Annual Conference.

As worship reached its conclusion, the congregation was invited to bless the Bishop’s Partners in Mission Advanced Special #7090 with an offering. After a prayer of dedication, Bishop Park opened a time for an Altar Call. He invited any who were experiencing the Spirit’s call to ministry to gather by the stage for prayer and blessing; many came forward by the grace of God as the congregation sang “The Voice of God Is Calling.” The service ended with these words, declared by all present: “We are sent in Christ’s name. Thanks be to God!”

Connect with the Susquehanna Conference through Social Media
**YOUNG PEOPLE’S MINISTRY**

Total money raised at Annual Conference for YSF was Over $6,600

Total money raised at Annual Conference for Youth Scholarships was Over $2,000

---

**Candy Change Challenge**

vs.

Hershey Kisses

and the winner is ...

Hershey Kisses

---

**Togethe Towards Life**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

“And Can It Be that I Should Gain,” stating that it stirs a celestial ecstasy in relating to the witness and power of the Holy Spirit.

Park cited a Korean book and folk legend about a girl named Bari who searched for living water to heal her dying father. He related that she had been recognized as the first divine shaman for healing and exorcism, but that the true Living Water and eternal healing is through Jesus Christ.

Park then set up Roundtable Talks for “Together towards Life” noting that our pilgrimage might consist of three different dimensions in a dynamic, interdependent understanding: First, Celebrating the Gifts; Second, Visiting the Wounds; and finally, Third, Transforming the Injustices.

The gathering then discussed these three dimensions in quick discussions and the study ended with a unified voicing of the Lord’s Prayer.

Rev. Dr. J. C. Park, President of World Methodist Council, began his bible study on Romans with an admission that “As a humble servant of Jesus Christ, I may be of value to you not because of something I am, but because of what I am not.” He went on to explain that just as Paul was a citizen of different groups, he (Park) is a multiple level individual as well. He repeatedly emphasized that righteousness is revealed in the Gospel and faith exists from the beginning to the end, from the first to the last.

He alluded to Jeremiah 31:34 as one of the prophetic texts Paul may have used as a basis for Romans 1:14-17. Paul was eager to proclaim the Gospel to the Christians in Rome just as we are to carry to Gospel to the ends of the world. Paul ended up in prison but felt that was a necessary step to preach the word.

Park quoted Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s letter and poem to his family from his prison emphasizing his beliefs in the truth of the Gospel. He also related our witness and journey to holding fast to the covenant of Abraham with people on the move to spread the Gospel. Citing John Wesley’s focus on justification which relates to his writings based on Romans 8, Park highlighted Wesley’s view “Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ’s saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit…” Park referenced Charles Wesley’s hymn, “And Can It Be that I Should Gain,” stating that it stirs a celestial ecstasy in relating to the witness and power of the Holy Spirit.

Park cited a Korean book and folk legend about a girl named Bari who searched for living water to heal her dying father. He related that she had been recognized as the first divine shaman for healing and exorcism, but that the true Living Water and eternal healing is through Jesus Christ.

Park then set up Roundtable Talks for “Together towards Life” noting that our pilgrimage might consist of three different dimensions in a dynamic, interdependent understanding: First, Celebrating the Gifts; Second, Visiting the Wounds; and finally, Third, Transforming the Injustices.

The gathering then discussed these three dimensions in quick discussions and the study ended with a unified voicing of the Lord’s Prayer.
United Methodist Women Celebrate 150 Years’ In Mission

By Rev. Bethany Wood

Kathy Berkey, Conference President of the United Methodist Women, began her presentation by asking persons who are members of United Methodist Women to stand. Looking around the room, she commented that all the pastors should be standing, giving that clergy are ex-officio members of the group. She celebrated the fact that United Methodist Women turned 150 years of age in March. A movement supporting women, children, and youth in mission, United Methodist Women had its seedling moment when it became known that women in India had no or little access to health care given that women were unable to be treated culturally by male doctors. A group of American women banded together to send a female doctor and a female teacher to India to help address that issue. That was in 1869. The movement which eventually became United Methodist Women was galvanized to respond in mission and service.

United Methodist Women currently supports over 100 mission initiatives throughout the country and reaches out in a similar way to over 100 countries. The take? Simply this: women’s lives matter, and when women’s lives improve, so do the nations and communities they live in. Berkey went on to illustrate the various issues that women still face. She also outlined some of the programs initiated by United Methodist Women, including God’s Gathering for Girls, the Charter for racial justice, and he postcard campaign — which encouraged Wendy’s to provide a livable wage for its employees.

She also shared information about Mission u, Mission eXpress, and Annual Day. Bishop Park gave testimony of his experience with United Methodist Women and led the conference in singing of “Happy Birthday” as a celebration of 150 years of mission.

Bishop’s Partners in Mission

By Rev. Ed Preston

The Bishops Partners in Mission “shows a powerful force” in its effort to eliminate building debt at Mission Central and overcome the threat of Malaria on the African continent. The effort has so far raised $888,613.56 towards its goal of $1,000,000.00. All gifts given to the Bishop’s Partners in Mission arrive 100% with no administrative costs removed and are divided 50% to each of the two efforts.

Making reference to the exciting Mission Central report shared yesterday, Rev. Salsgiver then gave us a reminder of the seriousness of the malaria problem in Africa. Today, 90% of all deaths are malaria-related. The United Methodist Church has been involved since 2001, first partnering with the “Nothing But Net” program, then beginning the “Imagine No Malaria initiative.” In that time, global mortality rates from malaria are down by 60%. It is calculated that 6.8 million malaria deaths have been averted since 2001. At that time, a child died of malaria every 30 seconds. With the efforts of 49 Annual Conferences, 4 million bed nets have been donated, 61 health centers have been built or improved, 2.7 million people have been treated and 175,000 structures have been protected by spraying.

Rev. Salsgiver then shared that while great strides have been made, a child still dies of malaria every 2 minutes. That means that in the 2.5 hours it took the clergy to complete their voting last evening, 75 children died of malaria. Unfortunately, support for the Bishop’s Partners in Mission project has plateaued over the past couple of years. We were asked to go home and tell the story fresh, sharing what has been done and what remains to be accomplished so that we can reach the $1,000,000.00 goal to which we are so close. When we give to Mission Central we help reduce the burden of debt and allow resources to used more effectively in ministry. When we Imagine No Malaria we reduce the threat of a dread disease. But in both efforts, we give the gifts of longer lives, and abundant lives in the name of Jesus.
Dear Sisters and Brothers of the Susquehanna Annual Conference,

Grace to you in the name of Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, Healer of our Brokenness, and Hope of the World!

It is with great joy that I announce the appointment of Rev. Gary Shockley as the new Director of Equipping Vital Congregations. Gary brings to the Susquehanna Conference significant and valuable experience in the many areas of Equipping Vital Congregations.

Gary’s ministry experience equips him to continue the work of the Susquehanna Conference in working with congregations and their leaders. Gary served as Director of Congregational Vitality for Western North Carolina Conference. There he was a member extended cabinet. In his position with Western North Carolina he created and led a new conference-wide initiative to consult with many of their 1,100 congregations for increased vitality and new congregation development.

From 2009-2012, Gary was on the staff of the former General Board of Discipleship, Path 1. While being in ministry at the GBOD, Gary was appointed as the Associate General Secretary of Path 1. During those years, Path 1 exceeded their goal of creating 700 new UM communities of faith in the US. Gary’s vast experience also includes the starting of two new faith communities. Gary along with his wife Kim and their two young sons started the Cornerstone UMC, now a satellite campus of Crossroads UMC in the Western PA Conference. He also established a new faith community in Western Orlando as part of the Florida Annual Conference.

Gary is the author of seven books with focus on leadership, spirituality and vital living. He is a painter and has written and illustrated children’s books. Gary is married to his wife, Kim. Together they have two grown sons and 2 grandchildren.

Gary served in the former Central PA Conference from 1976-1990. While in the CPC, Gary was ordained Deacon in 1982 and Elder in 1984. He is currently a member of the Florida Annual Conference.

The Rev. Gary Shockley’s appointment will begin July 1, 2019. For now, Gary will be on loan to the Susquehanna Conference and his appointment will be to Extension Ministries. Gary earned a BA from Messiah College and an M.Div from Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, OH. As Gary begins his ministry in the Susquehanna Conference, I know you will join me in thanking God for God’s leading in this appointment.

In Christ’s Ministry with You,
Jeremiah J. Park
Bishop
One with Each Other

PHOTOS BY SANDII PEIFFER