**New directors for conference communications**

**Shawn Gilgore**
Director of Communications Ministry
Shawn has a Bachelor of Science in Communications with a focus on broadcasting from Millersville University (2011) and a Master of Science in Communication Studies, with a digital media focus, from Shippensburg University (2017). Shawn’s experience in communications includes news editor, news photography, and technical crew for WPMT-TV, York. In addition, he was an adjunct instructor at Shippensburg University in electronic media writing. In 2008 and 2009 he was a camera operator at the Susquehanna Annual Conference at Messiah College.

Shawn began his work as the Director of Communications Ministry on Monday, July 31. His areas of responsibility include:

- Work with the associate director to develop an effective, creative, and comprehensive communication strategy.
- Be the spokesperson for the annual conference with secular and church media outlets.
- Develop video needs and oversee video and production needs of the annual conference.
- In consultation with staff and Cabinet, develop training through videos, etc.
- Oversee the LINK and QuickLINK.
- Work with local churches to improve their media and message including newsletters, bulletins, and other new and innovative means of communicating.

**Janelle Walker**
Associate Director of Communications Ministry
Janelle has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Penn State University (2006) and she has a diploma from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh in Web design (2011). Janelle was formerly the social media and Web site content manager for the City of Harrisburg. Prior to working for the City of Harrisburg, Janelle worked in marketing for Evangelical Community Hospital, Lewisburg, and she served as the Web/print communications specialist for Living Water Community Church, a diverse, multi-cultural church in Harrisburg.

Janelle began her work as the Associate Director of Communications Ministry on Monday, August 7. Her areas of responsibility include:

- Work with the director to develop an effective, creative, and comprehensive communication strategy.
- Develop a marketing strategy for the annual conference and its entities including: Camping, Congregational Vitalization, Youth, and the Missional Board.

**Commission on a Way Forward meets in Chicago**

By Maidstone Mulenga

Chicago, Ill.: The Commission on a Way Forward held its fourth meeting on July 19-21 at the Wesley building in Chicago, Illinois. The Commission has been assigned by the Council of Bishops, in response to the action of the 2016 General Conference, to help the denomination to explore new ways of embodying unity that will move the church beyond its impasse around ministry and human sexuality. Moderators Bishop David Yemba, Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball and Bishop David Brown appointed the listening team, the Central Conference, the Connectional Table, the Standing Committee on Central Conference, and the Standing Committee on Polity and Strategy.

The meeting began with a time of encountering and deciding based on a biblical image of the vine and branches led by Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett. Following the devotional time, Bishop Bruce Ough, president of the Council of Bishops, met with the Commission. Bishop Ough, based on Ted Rallinger’s book Canoeing the Mountains, reflected on the journey of Lewis and Clark in finding a passageway through the North American west to the Pacific Ocean as a metaphor for the challenges of The United Methodist Church in the uncharted territory of the present. He described a core mission, a core proclamation of the gospel (“Jesus is Lord”) that allows for different missional expressions. In addition, he noted other bodies within the denomination that are working concurrently on related matters: the Standing Committee on Central Conferences, the Connectional Table, the Committee on Faith and Order and the General Board of Church and Society.

Progress reports were shared from the Listening Team, the Central Conference Team, and the Polity and Strategy Team. The information shared through these reports represented outreach to and feedback from a number of constituent bodies in the denomination, including youth, young adults, seminarians, advocacy and renewal groups, districts and annual conferences, general bodies in the denomination.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

**Hearts Strangely Warmed**

“While the leader was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.” — John Wesley, May 24, 1738

God calls us to tell our story so that others may come to know Jesus Christ. “Hearts Strangely Warmed” was created to share these stories about transformational encounters with the Living God.

Rev. Brent Stouffer

Before my initial call, I was simply a kid raised in the United Methodist Church. The first instance came when my pastor noted something in me when I was liturgist in a service. Despite my ups and downs through school and college, and even putting some distance between myself and God in the process, the call came again in my early 20s to youth ministry, where I ran a community drop-in center in Johnstown and later became the youth/young adult pastor for several churches in the area, and eventually a pulpit supply preacher. Following this I answered the call, still as laity, to chaplaincy at the Board of Child Care in the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the UMC. It was here that eventually I got the call to seminary and pastoral ministry. In 2011 I graduated and was appointed to therapist in a United Methodist Church in the Susquehanna Conference, where I served through the ordination process and was ordained at Annual Conference 2016.

Following this call has been the adventure of a lifetime. It’s taken me across the country and around the world. I have been blessed to meet people, make friends, and minister the gospel as near as my living room, back yard, and as far... CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
Genesis 12:1-2 CEB

The Lord said to Abram, “Leave your native country and your father’s household for I will make of you a great nation. I will make your name respected..."
God is still working miracles

I’d like to introduce myself. My name is Shawn Gilgore, and I am the new Director of Communications for the Susquehanna Conference. I was born in York, Pennsylvania, moved to Harrisburg for several years and then returned to York last year with my wife, Meghan, and our two cats, Zap and Manchego (named after a Spanish cheese).

I wanted you to know my journey and how I came to the conference office. I was born in York, but only spent a few hours there before being airlifted to Hershey Medical Center. I was premature. A collapsed right lung, a brain hemorrhage, and a condition called hydrocephalus meant that I was in and out of the hospital growing up — so far I have had eleven brain surgeries.

It’s a record I’m not too proud of; but nonetheless am so thankful that God brought me through all of that to be here today. During those hospital stays, I became involved with the Children’s Miracle Network charity — their funds helped pay for most of the equipment my doctors used to help me as an infant and all throughout my times in the hospital, so I wanted to help them too.

My family and I started having yearly “backyard carnivals” at our house with games, crafts, food, raffles, anything and everything to raise money for Children’s Miracle Network. We raised $250 the first year, steadily increasing as the years went on, our final year (thirteen years later) I presented CMN with a check for more than $4,500. Each year I would present the check as part of their yearly television on WGAL (channel 8), which steadily piqued my interest in television. As I grew up, I enrolled in journalism classes at school, joined the television production club, and applied to the broadcasting program at Millersville University.

During my time at Millersville, I took an internship at WGAL and worked with our campus television station. It’s safe to say that “TV” became my life. It continued into the start of my career, working for WPMT (FOX43) for the past six years. Working up through the ranks as a production assistant, then a newscast photographer, and finally as a video editor.

I love the idea of “telling people’s stories,” and I am so thankful that I was able to do that professionally.

But something was bothering me. I wasn’t ever able to treat people as their own story. Covering a house fire, the fire became the story. Covering an accident, it became the story, not the people.

I was ready to tell stories that I knew would benefit everyone involved. That’s why I’m so excited about this new opportunity. So, I hope you’ll join me in our journey together. I can’t wait to get started!

FROM WHERE I SIT

I’m writing this article having just returned from a meeting of the Commission on a Way Forward. Alfaido Zangendo is the Executive Secretary for Africa, General Board of Global Ministries, the call of the commission and led our devotions one morning of our setting.

He talked about “back home” in his village when in the evening the people gather and sit around the campfire. There they all gather to talk about the day and the future. The elders share their wisdom – it’s a time of community.

Alfaido gave us a glimpse of what it means for them to sit around the campfire. He said there were three important things about the campfire.

All are equal around the campfire.

When the day is finished and the evening shadows fall, the whole family gathers around the younger people – all together. Those who have important things to gather with those who don’t. Despite position, power, or the work a person does during the day, when they sit around the campfire in the evening they are all equal. One is not better or more important than another. All voices are accepted, can speak, and are heard.

All have a space around the campfire.

Alfaido painted a picture where there is always space for everyone around the campfire. None are excluded. There is always room and an open space for any and every one.

All get the right to choose whether they want to be closer to the fire or farther away. Places around the fire aren’t dictated by position or family status but only by where you want to sit.

What would it be like if all of our churches lived our lives as if we were always sitting around the campfire. What would it be like if all of our churches incorporated these three basics of the African campfire in our life, in our worship, in our meetings, and in our conversation in and out of the church.

What would your church, what would the annual conference, what would the United Methodist Church be like if all of us were treated equally around the campfire we call church? It would matter our vocation or if we didn’t have a vocation.

What would it be like if everyone despite their appearance, their profession, or their past, their present, their addictions, their sins, their life choices, those who had been lifelong members and those who have been there for only two weeks, sit around the campfire?

Imagine a church where there was space enough for all with their tattoos, piercings, their tattered clothes, their suits, and their pearls. A sacred space where all gather and share equally in the bounty of God’s love and experience God’s grace.

Imagine a church that gives the freedom and the invitation to come and sit close to the fire — but also says it’s OK to sit farther away. The issue is not the proximity to the fire, but that everyone can feel the warmth of the fire.

As I heard Alfaido talk, I had a vision of the campfire in heaven where all are gathered. If we practice this in our churches, we would indeed have a glimpse of heaven and God’s kingdom here on earth! May it be so. Blessings. Tom

COMMENTARY

A different path

When I was a little girl I wanted to be a cartoonist. I thought I could work for Disney or Nickelodeon creating those shows and movies that I loved. As I got older my passion shifted. I still loved art, but it became more realistic. My focus went from fantasy characters to life-like sketches, photography, and graphic design. When I decided to major in art at college, it was no surprise to my family. Getting accepted into Penn State’s Art program was one of the happiest days of my life. But I never thought about where that would lead me or if it would work with God’s will for my life. I didn’t grow up in church. I didn’t fully accept Christ into my life until I was 18 years old. I went into college refreshed by my newfound faith, but also naive that it could be easily maintained. But despite the pinch and pain, God remained by my side. I learned skills that have brought me to this point.

I never set out to be a communicator, I never even knew that was an option. It wasn’t until I started working

at Living Water Community Church (a multi-ethnic church in Harrisburg that welcomes 900 people every weekend) that I saw my potential to be in communications. I was able to take my talents in the visual arts and translate them into the written word. You know the saying, “God never calls the equipped, He equips the called?” That’s what happened.

He guided me into this creative world that enabled me to adapt and learn the field of marketing and communications.

I struggled those years immensely as a student trying to find work that made sense with what I had learned. But I eventually found work that made sense for His purpose. With the job changes I have had since that initial calling, I have tried to find His purpose in it all. “Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established” Proverbs 16:3 (ESV).

I am excited to see where God leads me with this new adventure at the Susquehanna Conference, and I am also excited to get to know you and tell your stories along the way.
Do you know about QuikLINK?

QuikLINK is a regular e-mail broadcast service for clergy and lay persons of the Susquehanna Conference that highlights breaking conference-related news, events, job and classified postings, and more.

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Correction

In the June issue of Susquehanna LINK, 2016 Shares of Ministry paid by SUSUMC churches at 100% and 90% on page 15, we mistakenly listed Salem Marysville instead of Salem Martinsville, Williamsport District, as paying 100% of their Shares of Ministry. We apologize for the error and recognize your hard work to pay your Shares of Ministry in full.

FYI

The Scranton Wilkes-Barre District Office has moved. You can now reach them at SWB District Office 40 Knob Hill Rd. Trucksville, PA 18708 New Phone # 570-901-1569 E-mail scrantonwilkesbarre@susumc.org Fax # Discontinued

Christian Education

Sunday is September 17

One hundred percent of the special offering collected provides funding for the Camper Scholarship Fund. In 2017 we provided 97 Scholarships for a total of $14,335.09.

Conference Advance #4015

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For the latest news and event information, visit the Susquehanna Conference Web site at www.susumc.org
Abundant Health: Our Promise to Children

In 2016 The United Methodist Church affirmed its commitment to positively impact the lives of children everywhere through the next phase of its global health work. Coordinated by the denomination’s General Board of Global Ministries, “Abundant Health: Our Promise to Children” aims to reach one million children with lifesaving interventions by 2020.

Abundant Health: Our Promise to Children will be The United Methodist Church’s primary global health initiative for the next four years. It will focus on four core areas impacting the health of children throughout the world. The initiative aims to ensure safe births, address nutritional challenges and promote breastfeeding, advance prevention and treatment of childhood diseases, and promote children’s health and wholeness.

According to Global Ministries leaders, the motivation to launch the initiative emerged in part from an extensive survey of people in 59 countries. Survey results showed that the top global health challenges are maternal and child health, water and sanitation, hunger and nutrition, and access to health care. The survey also indicated the top U.S. health challenges are mental health, non-communicable diseases, substance abuse, and aging and the elderly.

“As United Methodists, we find care and concern for children rooted in our social principles, where we talk about putting children and their families first,” said Thomas Kemper, general secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. “This year’s conference affirmed that children have the right to food, shelter, clothing, health care, and emotional well-being, as do adults, and these rights are theirs regardless of the actions or inactions of their parents or guardians.”

“Our goal for Abundant Health is to promote the physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional health of children worldwide,” Kemper continued. “The initiative’s name is derived from the Gospel of John 10:10: ‘I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.’ We are committed to living into our promise to children by imagining abundant health for every child in every place.”

“When The United Methodist Church began its work on malaria eight years ago, no one imagined the impact the Imagine No Malaria campaign would have,” stated Kemper. “We’ve imagined no malaria; now let us imagine abundant health!”

Abundant Health: Our Promise to Children will be led by Olusimbo Ige, MD, MS, MPH, executive director of the organization’s Global Health program, and her team. As a Nigerian, Dr. Ige has witnessed firsthand how limited or nonexistent access to medical services can impact a child. “Abundant Health is a way for us to combine the work we have done overseas, taking care of people who are facing chronic needs, and bring it back to the United States,” said Ige. “We are thinking about people in our own communities who lack the healthy qualities of life they need to sustain themselves.”

“Globally, we will address malaria, diarrhea, birth complications, and respiratory infections in developing countries where resources are scarce,” said Ige. “But even here, in the United States, there is work we can do as a church to respond to health challenges.”

“A lack of abundant health is not only when you are sick, it can also mean that your potential for good health is not fully realized,” Ige stated. “We want to connect with every child in every place, and we are calling on every church and every individual to join us in this effort.”

The Abundant Health program seeks to engage at least 10,000 churches in the United States to develop support systems for treatment, education, and prevention in their surrounding communities. Global Ministries will encourage churches to engage their neighboring communities by promoting physical activities, encouraging healthy diet and nutrition, providing education for tobacco- and drug-free living, and promoting mental health education.

“There are many simple things a church can do to make a difference,” stated Ige. “At their potluck dinners, churches can provide more fruits and vegetables. They can also provide opportunities for children to exercise or invite someone to come in and talk about substance abuse.”

“We want everyone to join in this effort and see what United Methodists are doing to affect their communities for the better,” Ige stated.

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Four Core Areas of Focus

Through the Abundant Health: Our Promise to Children initiative, Global Ministries and its partners will work to reach one million children with lifesaving interventions by 2020, through the following:

Ensure Safe Births

Many health facilities in underserved areas lack key infrastructure and equipment for childbirth. The United Methodist Church will provide assistance in places that lack the necessary resources to ensure safe conditions during childbirth. (Data source: The Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030)

Advancing Nutritional Challenges and Promoting Breastfeeding

Of all preventive interventions, optimal breastfeeding of infants under two years of age is the greatest potential impact on child survival, potentially preventing more than 800,000 deaths (13 percent of all deaths) in children under the age of five in the developing world. The United Methodist Church commits to promoting breastfeeding for infant nutrition and to responding to malnutrition and childhood obesity. (Data source: The Lancet, 2013)

Advancing Prevention and Treatment of Childhood Diseases

According to the World Health Organization, nearly half of child deaths are linked to malnutrition. Conditions such as pneumonia, diarrhea, and malaria are also leading causes of child deaths. The United Methodist Church is committed to promoting health education along with providing services that place the prevention of priority childhood illnesses at the forefront. (Data source: The Lancet, 2013)

Promote Children’s Health and Wholeness

Limited financial resources and inadequate access to health services often affect the willingness of people to seek treatment for children with illnesses. The United Methodist Church aims to eliminate barriers to health and medical services and encourage people around the world to seek proper medical treatment in these instances.

For more information about Abundant Health: Our Promise to Children, visit www.umcabundanthealth.org or www.umcmission.org.
Reorganization: change and more change

By Rev. Dr. Tom Salziger Director of Connectional Ministries

The Connectional Ministries office has been undergoing changes and reorganization in the past few months – and it will continue into the fall and winter.

In any organization or church, staffing changes will create some level of chaos. Leadership must decide whether new staff is to be hired as they ask, “Do we do the same thing we have always done or is this a chance to look at our mission and function and chart new territory?”

In the short term, it is much easier to simply do what we have always done. But doing that does not get the results.

In the past ten months, the Connectional Ministries staff have been taking a serious and critical look at where we are, where we are going, and where we should be going.

The staff began to look at our mission and vision – were we living out our mission and vision, or simply doing what we had always done? In staff meetings we looked anew at the vision of the annual conference and how we were, and were not, supporting local congregations in their mission.

The Annual Conference Vision is “Alive in Christ together, the Susquehanna Conference will embody the beloved community of disciple-making congregations.”

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Mission

Chaplain Provides Spiritual Care at Normandie Ridge

The Rev. David Brinker became the Chaplain at Normandie Ridge in April of 2012, after having served in parish ministry since 1976 when he was first licensed to preach. After graduating from Lebanon Valley College and Wesley Theological Seminary, he was ordained an Elder in 1983.

While in parish ministry, David became quite familiar with RiverWoods when his parents, the Rev. Luke and Mrs. Theda Brinker, moved into a cottage in 1985 soon after his in-laws, Rev. Dr. Robert and Mrs. Phyllis Close had moved there. After his father’s death, his mother moved to Normandie Ridge to be closer to David and his wife, Chris.

In his quest to continue learning how best to serve the residents and staff, David recently completed a professional development course for chaplains by enrolling in and completing a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) through the Spiritual Care Association. First developed in the 1930s, CPE was modeled after the clinical training of medical students receive. David received permission to use Normandie Ridge as his clinical setting, rather than the more traditional setting of a hospital, with the goal of learning the best practices of professional chaplaincy.

Begun in February and completed in June, David received over 100 hours of instructional time, along with 14 peers from across the country, often participating in online discussion and learning. This included two specific courses: “Values, Obligations and Rights: Health Care Ethics” and “When it’s Time to Say Goodbye: Introduction to Spiritual Care at the End of Life”, writing weekly reflection papers; submitting written verbatim conversations with residents/staff for feedback; and reviewing his work with his CPE supervisor. “I find being a chaplain very fulfilling as it provides the opportunity for me to use my years of experience and has helped me to grow in the specialized ministry of responding to the spiritual needs of the residents who are at various levels of care provided at Normandie Ridge,” says David. “This training has sharpened my skills by showing me practical ways to offer spiritual care to those from diverse backgrounds. I have particularly enjoyed learning how to share in the spiritual care of those who live in our Memory Care Residence and are challenged with differing stages of dementia.”

The tuition for this CPE unit was provided by The Sara K. Little Fund for Staff Education at the Chaplaincy, established by Albright Care Services in 1997 through a generous gift from Mrs. Little, who was a long-time resident of Normandie Ridge.

Chaplain David has chosen to continue his mission with residents and staff at Normandie Ridge and Albright Care Services is grateful for the spiritual care which he provides. Albright invites you to continue your mission by joining us in one of our locations. Visit www.albrightcare.org for information on senior living, day programs, giving or volunteering.

Commission on a Way Forward meets in Chicago

Gathering at Hershey Lodge January 15-17, the 2018 Bishop’s Retreat offers clergy and lay a time away from rest, renewal, and continuing education around the themes: Bearing Fruit: Ministry with Real Results. Pastor and author Tom Berlin will be the featured speaker.

Rev. Tom Berlin is a native of Winchester, Virginia, and a graduate of Virginia Tech and the Cumberland School of Theology at Emory University. In his current appointment, Berlin serves as the lead pastor of Floris United Methodist Church in Herndon, Virginia. Floris Church is known for its desire to share the love of Christ with the community and minister to its needs. An exciting part of Floris’ global outreach has been the establishment of the Child Rescue Centre for war-displaced children and Mercy Hospital in partnership with the Sierra Leone Annual Conference. Tom has authored and co-authored many books, including “Bearing Fruit: Ministry with Real Results,” with Lovett Weems, published by Abingdon Press.

The Bishop’s Retreat also features Rev. Tom Berlin:

Rev. Tom Berlin

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A new multi-cultural congregation is emerging in our midst. Wesley United Methodist Church in Mechanicsburg has Korean, English, and combined worship services. It’s Wesley’s way of creating community with its Korean brothers and sisters. The services came into existence through the leadership direction of Rev. Ho Kang, pastor of Wesley UMC. Kang started his appointment at Wesley in July 2016. A group of Korean worshippers followed Kang when he was appointed to Wesley, and they are all interested in becoming members.

Wesley holds separate weekly worship services in English at 9:30 a.m. and Korean at 11 a.m., and a joint Korean/English service on the first Sunday of each month at 10 a.m., followed by a luncheon. The fellowship time after the joint service is the opportunity to eat food together and share the fellowship of love. “It is like a festival,” said Kang.

On May 7, 2017, Harrisburg District Superintendent Rev. Barry Robison was invited to preach at the monthly combined Korean/English service. His sermon title was Starting Over.

“He [Robison] told us Wesley is being presented with an opportunity to be born again, or born anew,” said Kang. “We have the chance to start over in the way we fulfill our purpose to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Everything is a new beginning.”

“Though different in language, culture, and race, it was a gracious worship service that enabled the congregation to know that they are all one in Christ Jesus. The congregation was impressed by the sermon of the superintendent.”

Currently there are between 15-20 Koreans attending Wesley. “Beautiful church building and sanctuary. The atmosphere of worship was godly and good, and we were convinced that God is with us in worship,” replied Sun Hee Chon about why the decision to come to Wesley. Suki Gelbaugh stated, “The people of Wesley UMC warmly welcomed us, with their smiles and hugs, or a handshake. God has certainly given us in worship,” said Evelyn Ulery, Worship Chairperson. “The time of fellowship after the combined service gives us an opportunity to become better acquainted. The response to our congregational picture (above) indicates to me that we truly are united. Pastor Ho has been a blessing to us.”

Kang has high hopes for the rejuvenation of Wesley UMC. “God gave us something totally new and different,” said Kang. “The motivation to start over is the hope that this new thing will be better than the current. We are confident that, when all of us connect more with God and with each other, there will be mounting excitement about the results such an effort might produce for this new congregation, not only to survive but to become very effective in making disciples of Jesus Christ.”

“We have two worship services, but we are one church, one pastor, one God. Not two churches.” — Rev. Ho Kang

Susquehanna LINK - September 2017 7
Baer Receives 2017 Society of John Wesley Award

Wesley Theological Seminary reprinted with permission

During Wesley Theological Seminary’s commencement exercises May 8, President Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson presented the 2017 Society of John Wesley Award to the Rev. Dr. Timothy Baer.

“Tim represents what the Society of John Wesley Award was created for,” said McAllister-Wilson, in his congratulatory remarks May 8. “He stands out among the generations of Wesley graduates as one who is at heart a pastor. As a leader, he is a pastor’s pastor... and as his alumni colleagues share with me: ‘Tim’s professionalism as a leader and his passion for the gospel exemplify the values that Wesley seeks to instill in its graduates.’”

The pastor of Shepherdstown UMC in Mechanicsburg, Pa., Baer holds both a Master of Divinity degree (1980) and Doctor of Ministry degree (2003) from Wesley. He has also been a Trustee of the Wesley Alumni Council since 2009.

The Society of John Wesley Award recognizes an extraordinary number of significant contributions of alumni through sacrificial leadership to God, the church, and Wesley Theological Seminary. Any Wesley alumnus who graduated at least five years prior to the date of presentation is eligible for the award.

As a pastoral leader and member of the Susquehanna Annual Conference, Baer is known for leading every church he has served to significant numerical and spiritual growth. Baer has also served in important leadership roles at conference, jurisdictional, and general church levels including: serving as a district superintendent (Chambersburg); on the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (chairperson, registrar); on the Vision Team that birthed the Susquehanna Conference (co-chairperson); the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (chairperson); the Conference Board of Pensions; the Conference Crisis Intervention Team, and various other local, district, and conference boards. His experience includes serving as a delegate twice at General Conference and three times at Jurisdictional Conferences. In addition, he has served on the Northeastern Jurisdictional Vision Team and the Northeastern Jurisdictional Boundaries Committee (chairperson).

Baer indicated he was “humbled” upon learning that he was to be inducted into the Society of John Wesley, and felt he was simply being “faithful to the call.” For Baer, foundational to his ministry is an openness to, and an embracing of, the Spirit’s call and leading. “This fosters a deep and dynamic prayer life,” he said, “that engenders discernment involving actively seeking the Spirit’s nudging, recognizing gifts, abilities, and experiences, and carefully including the support and encouragement of colleagues.”

Because of that openness, God has taken him places on the journey he wouldn’t have chosen for himself. But, he added, “this has always proven to be where God has wanted me to be.”

Baer has contributed to Wesley not only through his work and leadership with the Alumni Council, but he has also taught United Methodist polity and church leadership at Wesley as Adjunct Faculty and for the Course of Study. His commitment to the next generation of seminarians extends to his faithful financial support of Wesley Seminary at the Seminary Leadership Circle ($5,000-$9,999) level.

“I simply pray God will use me where God wishes,” Baer said, “with an implicit trust that God will provide the resources internally and externally for leading with integrity and vision.”

For more information on the Society of John Wesley, visit https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/Alumni-society-of-john-wesley/. Other awards given to persons from the Susquehanna Conference include the Interpretation Award for Excellence in Biblical Studies - Hannah Pratt and Ethan Shearer; the Order of Saint Luke Hoyt Hickman Award in Liturgy - Bruce Gowe; and the Upper Fairmount Christ United Methodist Church Award (to a student who has one more year of study and who has exhibited proficiency for ministry in small churches) - Todd Christine.

New manager at Mount Asbury

We join the Camp and Retreat Ministry in welcoming Patty Weidman as Site Manager at Mount Asbury Retreat Center in Newville, Pa.

Weidman grew up in eastern Pennsylvania and was a member of St. Andrews United Methodist Church in Berlinkville. She went to Innaubah Camp and Retreat Center in Spring City as a camper for five summers, was a counselor-in-training for two summers, and then after graduating from Boyertown Area High School, Weidman joined the staff there. Her many camp roles included arts and crafts director, counselor, program coordinator, and she was dean for many camps. She also worked in the kitchen during the summer for retreat groups.

Weidman worked at Innaubah for five summers, and it was there she decided she wanted to one day be a camp director at a Methodist camp. She went to Lock Haven University and majored in recreation management.

“Many career roads led me to where I am now,” she said. Weidman was program coordinator at Pocono Environmental Education Center for two years where she was the liaison for visiting school groups and taught environmental educational classes. From there she moved on to be the recreation director at Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park in Woodridge, New York, where she planned and led the fun family activities and special events.

After five years, Weidman decided it was time to move back to Pennsylvania and obtained a position at Hotel Hershey as recreation coordinator, later promoted to assistant director of recreation overseeing the child care center, fitness center, aquatics, putting green, and other activities. During her six years at Hershey, Weidman met and married her husband, Bobby. They welcomed daughter Zula in January 2016. When Zula was six months old, Weidman began working at Ebenezer Christian Child Care Center at Ebenezer UMC in Middletown.

Finally, in 2017, Weidman landed her dream job as site manager at Mount Asbury. “It has been an amazing four months, and we absolutely love being here.” she said.

New manager at Mount Asbury

Weidman and her husband Bobby, and daughter Zula.

Baer Receives 2017 Society of John Wesley Award

Preaching with Power program returning this fall

P reaching with Power is a hands-on learning program for pastors and preachers at all levels to further improve their fruitfulness in one of their most important functions – proclaiming the Word to their congregations. To date, 64 pastors of the Susquehanna Conference have graduated from PwP.

The fall 2017 PwP program will consist of eleven weekly sessions on Wednesdays, 9 a.m. – noon, and a graduation luncheon noon – 3 p.m.

Dates: September 13, 20, 27 October 4, 11, 18, 25 November 1, 8, 15, 29 December 6 (graduation luncheon)

Location: Christ UMC, 145 Disciple Dr., Selingsgrove, PA 17870

Class size: Minimum: 6 - Maximum: 8 Fee: $750 (usually covered by educational funds from participant’s church and/or Board of Ordained Ministry and/or the district.)

Registration deadline: September 1.

If you are wondering whether Preaching with Power is for you, answer these questions:

• Do you regularly wrestle with the point of the message in your sermon and are they moved by it?
• Do your congregants regularly get encouragement from fellow preachers at all levels to further improve their fruitfulness in one of their most important functions – proclaiming the Word to their congregations.

Preaching with Power is a hands-on learning program for pastors and preachers at all levels to further improve their fruitfulness in one of their most important functions – proclaiming the Word to their congregations.

For more information about PwP, visit dillyp.com/spiritual_power.html

To register or for additional information, please contact Debbie Ackley, Lewisburg District Office, at Lewisburg@susumc.org or call 570-523-9592.

For the latest news and event information, visit the Susquehanna Conference Web site at www.susumc.org
Faith United Methodist Church, Montoursville, celebrated the groundbreaking for their building expansion project at their worship services Saturday, May 20, and Sunday, May 21. Members of the congregation brought a shovel to church, and kid's shovels and hard hats were handed out to children for the church to dig its way into new possibilities.

The largest celebration was at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 21, where representatives from the Susquehanna Conference, TurnKey Construction, and Montoursville Borough were in attendance, along with the pastors, staff, and members of the congregation. The expansion will include expanded children's facilities, a multi-purpose gym and contemporary worship center, and space for a Central PA Food Bank distribution site. It will happen in two phases.

The first phase, named “Children First,” will include a new children’s wing. The 8,500-square-foot building will hold a large group worship space for children, Sunday school classrooms, and classrooms for Faith United Methodist Preschool. Children First will also include renovation of the space for the food bank, a youth space, renovated offices, and the shell of a 13,200-square-foot contemporary worship space and gym.

Lead pastor Rev. Jake Waybright says, “The people of Faith Church have a heart to welcome children and their families, and to make a greater impact in our community by serving our neighbors. As they have claimed this vision, God has grown the ministry significantly. This expansion will allow us to multiply our impact and touch even more lives. The multi-year commitment of the congregation to this vision has been extraordinary.”

Phase two will include completing the contemporary worship space and gym, renovation of the existing lobbies and fellowship hall into a new welcome center, café area, and meeting space.

Faith UMC is located at 700 Fairview Dr., Montoursville, PA 17754. www.faithum.net

Prayground offers special place for kids to worship

In August, Beaver Memorial UMC in Lewisburg opened and consecrated their new prayground - a sacred space for children in their sanctuary.

“We offer a nursery, but church members expressed a desire to create a place where children could be in the worship services, but have a space of their own,” said Rev. Mark Reisinger.

The space includes comfy rocking chairs, a table and chairs, a play mat, books, puzzles, and other quiet children's activities.

Beaver Memorial UMC in Lewisburg created a special worship space for children in their sanctuary, appropriately named a “prayground.” Top right: Rev. Mark Reisinger consecrated the prayground before the children cut the ribbon on August 6.
Reorganization
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6
The mission of the annual conference is to help local churches in their task of making disciples for the transformation of the world by:
- Equipping and helping leaders (both clergy and laity) grow in leadership and discipleship
- Equipping local churches to grow and make new people
- Connect churches with the world and the larger church to fulfill their mission.

In recent months there have been very significant conference staff changes. Last winter Jerry Welzemoed announced that she had taken a new position in North Georgia to be closer to home (Alabamian) and family. Bishop Park announced that Rev. Dr. Dennis Otto was leaving the office of Growing Effective Churches to serve in a new role as the lead pastor. In addition to this announcement, it was decided that, administratively, the position that Dr. Otto held would be moved into the area of Connectional Ministries. While it would have been easier to simply replace each position under the same job description, we decided that now was the time to chart a new course for staff. We began by starting over in several areas. Thus, the reorganization began.

On July 1, Kay Kotan started as the Director of Congregational Development. While she will continue some of the excellent endeavors that Dr. Otto had started, Kay is asking new, adaptive questions about making disciples, and particularly the role of laity as well as clergy.

In looking at the camping position, it was decided to rewrite the job description to include working with the annual conference, the churches, and the Camp & Retreat Ministry to create significant disciple-making endeavors. It was also decided with three new staff positions starting in the summer, the camping/discipleship position would be pursued in the fall.

The most drastic changes thus far have been in the Communications Ministry Team. The team has assumed two new positions – Director and Associate Director of Communications Ministry, who will both work more closely with local churches and districts. It is expected that Shawn and Janelle will be able to help the annual conference and our churches move forward in new ways of communication.

It is important to know that these two new positions will not add any additional costs to the conference budget, as the changes were made with some attrition.

In the words of one of Robert Frant's poems, "and miles to go before I (i.e., we) sleep."
Reorganization is a continual process of moving in new directions. These are the beginning steps. It is with joyful expectation that we move into what we believe is God’s preferred future for the annual conference.

I n a matter of hours an empty field was transformed to stages, food vendors, 500 plus chairs, sound booth, and an army of volunteers waiting to welcome arriving guests. The morning’s lectionary energized all who were gathered to listen to God’s word and give pause to that we were doing.

*The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the field.*

Here we were, two small country churches about to host a free concert that would include David Dunn, Hannah Kerr, and Jordan Feliz.

On a typical Sunday you would find around 40 to 50 congregants in Lake Como and Shehawken UMCs; the Lake Como youth group is a force of 30 comprising preschooolers to high school seniors. Two years ago the fifteen or so older kids were asked by Brandon Flynn, their youth leader, to come up with a project that was larger than they could imagine: a free Christian concert that could showcase some of the biggest names in the industry.

After the previous year’s amazing success (I Am Who I Am) the youth were ready to spread the Gospel through music, testimony, and by raising funds to benefit a charity of their choosing.

This year their fervent faces. Our youth raised over $2,500!

As a church family dedicated to the Word of God, we know that these works in helping The Bishop’s Partners in Mission are outward expressions of our faithfulness to Christ that these events take place in churches large and small. Our family of believers realize that what we are doing to help with ‘Imag ine No Malaria’ is only possible because of God’s Son who made a once-and-for-all sacrifice for us that compels our church to reach beyond our walls, transforming an empty field into a mighty mustard seed.

The Bishop’s Partners in Mission continues to be an inspiring example to our congregations as they sow the seed in faraway corners of creation.

**Generation Transformation**
Global Mission Fellows

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Global Mission Fellows, a program of The United Methodist Church General Board of Global Ministries, is a 2-year mission opportunity for young adults ages 20-30. It is open to persons of every denominational background but fellows must be willing to represent The United Methodist Church and uphold its social principles. Young adults are invited to engage with local communities, connect the church in mission, and grow in personal and social holiness. This program allows for transformation and leadership development to take place while addressing roots of social injustices with other young people from around the world.

The Global Mission Fellows program has two tracks: US-2 and International. Both tracks offer candidates the opportunity to be part of a cohort of other Global Mission Fellows. Participants train and regroup with the same young adults throughout the two years of service and become a support group who walk the journey together.

Carmen Francesco, from Beach Lake UMC in Scranton/ Wilkes-Barre District, was recently commissioned as a Global Mission Fellow US-2. Carmen is serving as a Community Organizer and Grace Cafe Coordinator at Asbury United Methodist Church, Philadelphia, in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

Book review: The Church Guide for Making Decisions Together

By Rev. L. Fitzgerald Reitz II

Previous Secretary to the General Conference

I began to volunteer for the General Conference of The United Methodist Church in 1992, and I remember my shock and the look of pain and confusion on the face of a delegate from Africa who was ruled out of order with no explanation of why he was out of order. Robert’s Rules of Order were the standard. I saw similar events in subsequent General Conferences. In my first meeting with the Rules Committee of the General Conference in 2004, the question was asked, is there a better way for us to talk? The questioner said, referring to Robert’s Rules of Order, “We do not use these rules.” In the following twelve years, as I participated in preparations for this global meeting of people from various cultures, the desire for a better way of working together was frequently expressed.

In 2015, I had the privilege of attending the Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia and witnessed a different way of doing business—one was ruled out of order and people who disagreed with the majority were honored. There was an atmosphere of caring and mutual support and love that I had never experienced in a large legislative gathering like the United Methodist Church. Carmen Francesco, General Secretary of that Assembly, and Julia Kahn Wallace, a United Methodist Commission who has served on staff at the General Board of Discipleship, have written “The Church Guide for Making Decisions Together,” describing how, at the local and general church level, we can move our meetings into an experience of mutual support and love while practicing discernment and decision-making that honors all and listens to all.

The book opens with the question, “So what’s wrong with the way we make decisions?” In response, the first chapter describes “The Goal and Character of Christian Decision-Making” and in chapter two takes us “From Conflict to Consensus: Supporting Transformative Decision-Making.” Chapters three and four address values in decision-making and in community identity. The last four chapters lead us through a process for engaging with difficult decisions, concluding with the development of a plan for our process. There are practical appendices and a Web site (http://www.missioncentral.org) with additional resources.

As an ordained elder, elsewhere, this is not a book for those who want to control the outcome of church meetings, but where our decisions are rooted in truth and light to break forth in our meetings. I heartily commend this work to those who are willing to discover God’s presence in our community.
Helping young people use artistic witness to deepen their faith

Young people in The United Methodist Church are being encouraged to deepen their faith by using artistic witness in the same creative tradition as prolific hymn writer Charles Wesley.

The Conspiritor Collective, a new project of Young People’s Ministries (YPM), a unit of Discipleship Ministries, seeks to inspire new generations of artists to use the spiritual practice of artistic witness to share the Good News and craft faith community revivals.

“We do a lot of things in the church to train young people become good John Wesleys,” said Carl Gladstone, a regional Young People’s Ministries staff member and project lead for the Conspiritor Collective. “This project is an opportunity for us to help young people to become good Charles Wesleys, to live into the hymnody and the artistic heritage of our particular faith tradition as a means for artistic witness, evangelism and then all the good fruit that bears.

The Conspiritor Collective is not only a gathering of artists, but also a platform for sharing their work with the world and a strategy for translating artistic witness into resources, Gladstone said.

Young and emerging artists are invited to share their work with others online at http://conspiritor.co and find encouragement to explore new liturgical arts, prophetic words and missionary actions for the world together.

The website also includes a podcast featuring interviews with musicians, poets, visual artists and writers who live out their Christian discipleship through artistic witness. The podcast conversations allow young people to meet new artist friends, learn more about God’s call in their lives and hone our understanding of the craft of artistic Christian witness.

An online Worship Arts Incubator will help artists move toward perfection in their craft through workshops, creative partnerships and sessions which produce professional work from creators all along the spectrum of experience.

“With the Worship Arts Incubator, we will help artists speak boldly from their Wesleyan theological heritage,” Gladstone said. “We also encourage continual thoughtful awareness about art and the generative tension between artist as performer and artist as leader of congregational worship practices.”

The best of the creative work generated by the collective will be curated and shared by a missional “Record Label,” Gladstone said.

“Through existing and emerging Discipleship Ministries publication and distribution systems, we will connect grassroots creatives with connection-wide listeners,” he said. “The very content of the songs, poems and visual art shared will remind the church of its own scriptural call to mission and deep discipleship.”

The work of new artists will be shared digitally via Creative Commons licensing and will be accessible for direct use, remixing and sharing as churches see fit. As the collective grows, new options allowing unique ways to curate with these artists for the good of the church and the world will be developed.

“The Conspiritor Collective is an opportunity for us to lift up young people in Christian artistic witness to both inform their own faith development and to speak into the life of the church through the development of new worship arts,” Gladstone said.

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The mission of Discipleship Ministries is to support annual conference and local church leaders for their task of equipping world-changing disciples. An agency of The United Methodist Church, Discipleship Ministries is located at 1908 Grand Ave. in Nashville, Tenn. For more information, visit www.UMCdiscipleship.org, the Press Center at www.UMCdiscipleship.org/about/press-center or call the Communications Office at (877) 899-2780, Ext. 1726.

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Roseville UMC rises against hunger

Rooseville UMC in Mansfield, Pa., held a very exciting and spirit-filled event in May called Rise Against Hunger. They packed 14,000 meals for hungry people around the world to be distributed through Stop Hunger Now.

"Many other churches have done this project, but for a small rural congregation in the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania this was an inspiring event," said Pastor Tim Parker.

They had over 70 volunteers show up (almost 100 percent of their weekly attendance) and pack the meals in about 1.5 hours.

“We would like to share this wonderful news with other small, rural churches. I think the success of our event may be able to help empower them to do something similar.”

Since doing the event, the church has not only become more mission minded outside the community, but they have also become more unified.

“It was a great way for us to do community outreach, develop leaders, and promote ourselves to the surrounding community,” said Parker.

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Annual homecoming at historic Rock Chapel

The Annual Homecoming will be held at historic Rock Chapel, 4730 Oxford Rd., York Springs, Pa., at 2 p.m. on Sunday, September 16, 2017. Guest speaker is Rev. Brand Eaton.

Rock Chapel was the first Methodist meeting house, built in the attic of Rock Chapel to protect from Heikes' woolen mill were hidden in connection with the chapel after its cornerstone. A graveyard was established in 1773. In fact, it is now the oldest Methodist Episcopal Church in Adams County, the population centers shifted. In 1986, Rock Chapel was rebuilt in 1849 at a cost of $800. Dr. Peck, who later became bishop, preached at the laying of the new cornerstone. A graveyard was established in connection with the chapel after its rebuilding.

After the turn of the century, the work at Rock Chapel was split between two churches. In 1827 to 1844 Rock Chapel was part of the Gettysburg Circuit. During this time the congregation was quite large. They had frequent and extensive revival services. In 1842 Rock Chapel had more members than any other class of the Gettysburg Circuit with the exception of Gettysburg itself.

Rock Chapel was rebuilt in 1849 at a cost of $800. Dr. Peck, who later became bishop, preached at the laying of the new cornerstone. A graveyard was established in connection with the chapel after its rebuilding.

During the Civil War, woolen blankets from Heikes' woolen mill were hidden in the attic of Rock Chapel to protect them from confiscation by General Ewell's Confederate troops encamped at Starrytown (now Heidlersburg). After the turn of the century, the work at Rock Chapel eventually dwindled as population centers shifted. In 1949, Rock Chapel was recognized as the site of the first Methodist meeting house, built in 1773.

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The United Methodist Church is to support annual conference and local church leaders for their task of equipping world-changing disciples. An agency of The United Methodist Church, Discipleship Ministries is located at 1908 Grand Ave. in Nashville, Tenn. For more information, visit www.UMCdiscipleship.org, the Press Center at www.UMCdiscipleship.org/about/press-center or call the Communications Office at (877) 899-2780, Ext. 1726.
Hearts Strangely Warmed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

by loving one another in our common humility of our faith can do by staying tension to be an example to the world our church will find a way in our current forward. My most genuine hope is that reminds me that if we are those people witness of gracious, kind, open, and have our differences and conflicts, the and present, and the road behind, I am of the joy we should have in Christ. Bishop Park who is always an inspiration Woodruff who mentored me through UMC; and most recently Rev. Howard are people like Rev. Cletus Leisure poured their time into us. For me these martial arts we recognize that might not. I mention this only because ministry to reach children and adults combine them with has been to take my lifelong passion best and forgiven at my worst. have done so. I have been blessed at my to God has helped me become more and more aware that grace covers me when I ministry in a natural part of their own. If the Holy Spirit speaks through all of us, and if every interaction and relationship we have with others, then today I am (hopefully) the best product of those countless transformations through the years. Being human I have certainly missed many of those opportunities, but drawing closer to God has helped me become more and more aware that grace covers me when I have done so. I have been blessed at my best and forgiven at my worst. One of the gifts I have had in ministry has been to take my lifelong passion for martial arts and combine them with ministry to reach children and adults in ways more “conventional” ministry might not. I mention this only because in the martial arts we recognize that our accomplishments are not our own, but also to the credit of those who poured their time into us. For me these are people like Rev. Cetus Leisure who taught me the value of study and prayer; Rev. Jeff Miller who showed me the heart of Christian compassion and has taught me grace; Revs. Thomas Cartwright and Tom Jacobs who helped me find the path to candidacy in the UMC; and most recently Rev. Howard Woodruff who mentored me through ordination, Rev. Marian Hartman whose leadership has been such a help over my years at CGUMC, and of course our own Bishop, who she taught me the importance of the joy we should have in Christ. With these examples in my past and present, and the road behind, I am hopeful for the road ahead. Though we have our differences and conflicts, the witness of gracious, kind, open, and faithful people that have come before reminds me that if we are those people today, the gospel will continue to move forward. My most genuine hope is that our church will find a way in our current tension to be an example to the world of what the grace, understanding, and humility of our faith can do by staying tension to be an example to the world. Sometimes we need God’s will and plan together despite turbulent times. In doing so we run counter to the world by living in a rhythm that is our common ground with the essentials as we seek clarity in other things.

Sierra Leone Water and Development Ministry

By Sandii Peiffer

The Sierra Leone Water and Development Ministry, a General Board of Global Ministries Advance, began 24 years ago. Project manager Lee Weaver is from Mifflintown, Pa.

The goal of the ministry is to provide clean potable water, sanitation, medical care, education, and spiritual inspiration for the people of Sierra Leone.

In 2017 they purchased a piece of land in Sierra Leone for a future warehouse and office. When they relocate from their current location they will save an estimated cost of $2,400 per year in rent. In 2017 a new latrine was completed at Centenary UMC in Bo, Sierra Leone. Other scheduled projects for 2017 include restoring a well that requires a new pump, pipes, and cylinder; a well is needed in the village of Macungie, estimated cost is $6,500; a well needs to be repaired in Ndandahu, estimated cost is $1,600. They would also like to build a primary school in the village Moyaambawoo. This is the second year this project has been on the schedule, with an estimated cost is $24,000.

“The teaching of the Bible and God’s plan for their lives is the most important part of the Christian School,” said Weaver. “The students also learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. We build their foundation emotionally, physically, and most importantly, spiritually.”

An average of 150 children will attend the new school from surrounding villages. In ten years they will have impact, 1,500 children with the news of Jesus Christ.

“By this my Father is glorified, that you hear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples ... If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

John 15:8,10-11 ESV

Please consider giving toward these vital projects. To donate by check, please make your check payable to “Advance GCFA” with the Advance number #181000 on the memo line and mail to:

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For more information about this ministry visit tinyurl.com/SLWDM181000

Transforming the lives of refugees

By Amy Kuiken

“I contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.” Romans 12:13 (NRSV)

In the fall of 2016, some Congolese families came to Scranton from a refugee camp in Tanzania—after having fled war-torn Congo almost 20 years before—funded by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and recognized by the U.S. Government. They arrived with few possessions. Pastor Scott Miller and St. Paul’s United Methodist Church in Scranton have done all they can to welcome and support these resettled families since their arrival last fall, when some of the Congolese people walked almost two miles to join them at Sunday worship one morning.

Recently Trucksville United Methodist Church offered some prayers and help too. Prompted by a link posted on Facebook last fall, I met with some of the families to help with translation (from French) and learned that the Congolese children had started school around November. They were struggling to do their best to adjust, and expressed a need for computers. So back at Trucksville UMC, I asked the congregation to pray for some of these big-ticket needs, such as desktop computers for the new families. Pastor Dick Williams and Pastor Ian Hastings immediately suggested contacting Mission Central to order them from Computer Ministry. We hadn’t even gotten to praise time, and the Lord was already responding to the requests.

When I visited the Computer Ministry Web site (www.compmministry.org), I was really impressed. But I hesitated when I found that it was located over two hours away as Mechanicsburg, Pa. I mentioned this to Madelyn Roote in the church office, and once again received an immediate response from Pastor Dick: “Order them, and we’ll find someone to get them.” We requested three computers from Computer Ministry. Pastor Dick and his wife, Pam, made the long drive to pick them up — keyboards, monitors, wires, and other hardware — and delivered it safely to Trucksville. We brought the computers to the homes of the Congolese families in April, and Wilkes student Melissa Boob, volunteering with me, gave quick tutorials to each family on how to use them. Parents and children alike were thrilled when everything worked after plugging computers and cables in and turning them on.

That happy day is by no means the end of a story — the needs of the Congolese men, women, and children are great and their struggle is real. But they have been greatly encouraged by the kindness of strangers. I suggest that we would be blessed to make them our friends.

The children of Moyambawoo gather around their new well

Three Congolese families, recent immigrants, were very happy to receive computers with the help of Trucksville UMC and the Computer Ministry at Mission Central.

Below: Volunteer Melissa Boob (right) gave quick tutorials to each family on how to use the computers.
WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS

What happens when God is given an offering?

What happens when God is given an offering?

Five leaves and two fish feed five thousand.

Two pennies please Jesus. An ordinary tomb becomes the extraordinary place of resurrection.

But the blessings don’t stop there — just imagine the overwhelming joy and awe of seeing what God did with the gifts.

Picture the little boy astounded to see his small gift feed everyone.

See the widow smile and straighten as she is uplifted by the words, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

Hear Joseph of Arimathea’s amazed laughter as his burial gift becomes the site of new life.

What happens today when you give to God?

Ministries are multiplied, people are healed, and communities transformed through the miracle of God’s use of our gifts. The size of the gift is not as important as the heart in giving. “For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.” 2 Corinthians 8:12 NIV

Thank you for all you have given already to share in the incredible work of God’s plan for us. As you give today and as you plan your future giving to the church as a legacy, imagine the excitement of seeing what God does and will do with your gifts — we know more miracles are yet to come. Praise be to God for all he does with our offering and for all he does for us.

The United Methodist Stewardship Foundation

3901 Hartzdale Dr. Suite 110

Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

Phone 717-766-7968 Toll Free 800-272-0113

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“Make it a habit to give, so that your church can fully and flourish.”

Mission Possible: Structuring Your Church for Missional Effectiveness

- Does your church have enough committee positions to fill than people to fill them? Do you desire to structure your church so that it is more relevant and faithful in reaching new people? Kay provides practical, field-tested tools and processes to simplify your church structure, allowing more people to actually be in ministry.

Get Their Name: Grow Your Church by Building New Relationships

- This book is about helping people in our churches move past the fear of inviting or sharing their faith with others and move toward an active, passionate missionary lifestyle. Inwardly focused churches tend to define and practice evangelism as “reconnecting disconnected church folks.” Outwardly focused churches define and practice evangelism as reconnecting with the people of Jesus to and then to the church. The unchurched, never-connected population is rapidly growing, especially among the millennial generation. Get Their Name will help you find your own faith story and share it, so that you can become a twenty-first century missionary.

Grow an effective church with these resources

Discovery Place is proud to feature several books authored or co-authored by Kay Kotan, SUSUMC’s new Director of Congregational Development. All of these are available to borrow from Discovery Place, and we encourage you to make use of them as resources that will help your church grow.

Gear Up! Nine Essential Processes for the Optimized Church

- Nine gears (processes/systems) that Kay outlines in this book are required to be “in sync” for a church to achieve its mission. This book will help your church identify which gears are already in place and which gears need to be added or tuned up, so that your church can effectively live out its mission of making disciples.

10 Prescriptions for a Healthy Church

- Offers prescriptions for the top ten challenges facing churches today. Based on the Healthy Church Initiative developed for the Missouri Conference of the UMC, this book offers a helpful approach to fixing common problems and provides strategies to help congregations achieve success in specific areas of ministry.

Renew or Die: Ten Ways to Focus Your Church on Mission

- To change the world, we must first change our churches. Reranging the pews, painting the fellowship hall, or paving the parking lot are just not enough. With clear language and practical tips, this book will inspire and help you organize your church for new life. Learn how to grow your church and discover the commitments that leaders must make to guarantee the fruitfulness of local congregations.

Building Worship Bridges: Worship to Accelerate Neighborhood Connections

- Provides ideas, strategies and processes for making worship in your church a competitive, compelling invitation that new people want to attend. Worship and the worship experience have the potential to bridge the gap between the church and the neighborhood. All who follow Christ are called to reach out to new people through worship. We accelerate neighborhood connections when we plan and lead worship with the guest in mind. This book will show you how.

To borrow these books, please contact Joni Robison at Discovery Place – e-mail discovery@susumc.org, call 717-766-7968 or 800-682-2615, or browse our Web site at www.discovery-place.org (search the online catalog and even place an order). Or better yet, visit us in person at the Conference Center. Our hours are 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. weekdays; other times for a visit can be arranged by contacting us. Discovery Place is funded by your Shares of Ministry. The only cost to you is the postage to return resources to us.

Free resources for your local church can be found at www.discovery-place.org

Susquehanna Conference

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Susquehanna LINK - September 2017

August – 50 years ago

On Thursday, August 3, 1967, a surprisingly fierce downpour dropped a great amount of water in a very short time on Harrisburg’s west shore and the area around the Old Del Brook church. About 4 a.m. Friday morning the rains came again, this time bursting through the basement walls of the parsonage and church. The church took in over six feet of water and the parsonage almost three feet. Floors and furnaces — but not causing the even more severe damage inflicted on other neighborhood structures.

The Del Brook church was started in 1962 when the Central Conference of the UMC purchased land in Del Brook Manor. Twenty-eight charter members were gathered, a building was erected, and the first service was held in the new facility in 1964. Constant drainage problems were part of the reason that the property was sold and Del Brook (former EUB) and Salem (former Methodist) were merged into the present Hope UMC in Hampden Township, Cumberland County.

September – 100 years ago

A series of meetings September 23-30, 1917, celebrated the completion of the Newberry Methodist Episcopal church complex. The sanctuary had been dedicated in September 1899, the attached parsonage was occupied in November 1916, and now the dedication of the Sunday school wing completed the third and final stage of this ambitious vision. Bishop William F. McDowell preached Sunday morning to open the celebration. The extensive Sunday school addition included an auditorium, several classrooms, and a basketball court on the lower level.

The Newberry congregation united with its former EUB sister congregation St. John’s in 2004, and the complex is no longer used for regular worship — but it continues to minister to the community in the name of Jesus. St. John’s — Newberry UMC operates the building as the West End Christian Community Center, with meeting rooms and programs to serve the neighborhood. The basketball court has since been transformed into a kitchen and dining hall, and the sanctuary has recently been remodeled into a conference center.
Rev. Dr. Frank W. Bergstrom, Retired, of Sassafras Court, Mechanicsburg, Pa., died Wednesday, August 2, 2017, in Lehigh Valley Hospital, Allentown, Pa. He was currently an assistant pastor at Grace United Methodist Church, Lehomyne, Pa. Memorial services were held Saturday, August 19, 2017, in Grace United Methodist Church, Lehomyne, Pa.

Mrs. Emogene (Kennedy) Clouser of PG A Boulevard, Navairo, Fla., died Thursday, May 25, 2017, in Baptist Hospital, Pensacola, Fla. She was the widow of Rev. Elmer C. Clouser Sr. Memorial services were held Saturday, June 10, 2017, in Grove Memorial United Methodist Church, Lewistown, Pa. Interment was at the convenience of the family.

Rev. Larry D. Cole, Retired, of Madison Avenue, Montoursville, Pa., died Monday, August 7, 2017, at home. Among his survivors is his wife, Sharon A. Gensib. Memorial services were held Monday, August 14, 2017, in First United Methodist Church, Muncy, Pa. Interment was in Rest Haven Memorial Park, Lock Haven, Pa.

Rev. Charles A. Fitzgerald, Retired, of Tyrone, Pa., died Monday, July 31, 2017. Among his survivors is his wife, Jill Lynn Fitzgerald, and daughter, Rev. Chris Walker. Memorial services were held Friday, August 4, 2017, in Trinity United Church of Christ, Saxonburg, Pa. Interment was in Franklinville Cemetery, McKnight, Pa.

Pastor Anna M. Fysick, of Atlantic Avenue, Houtstade, Pa., on medical leave from West Decatur/Wallaceton Charge, died Saturday, July 22, 2017. Memorial services were held Sunday, July 30, 2017, in Madera United Methodist Church, Madera, Pa.

Rev. Donald E. Gosborn, of Colonial Park Care Center, Harrisburg, Pa., died July 26, 2017. Among his survivors is his wife, Elise (Rockey) Gosborn. Memorial services were held Monday, July 31, 2017, in Highspire United Methodist Church, Highspire, Pa. Interment was in Fort Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, Annville, Pa.

Mrs. Audrey M. (Smith) Hibbs, of Logan Avenue, Lewisburg, Pa., died Saturday, July 29, 2017. She was the wife of Rev. Ralph M. Hibbs. Funeral services were held Saturday, August 5, 2017, in Hummel's United Methodist Church, Middleburg, Pa.

Pastor William B. Patterson, of Donahue Manor Road, Bedford, Pa., retired local pastor, died Thursday, June 8, 2017. Among his survivors is his wife, Isabel J. (Eckes) Patterson. Memorial services were held Monday, June 12, 2017, in Louis Geisel Funeral Home, Bedford, Pa. Interment was in Bedford County Memorial Park, Bedford, Pa.

Pastor Marjorie B. Walker, Retired Local Pastor, of Chapel Hill Road, Huntingdon, Pa., died Sunday, August 6, 2017, at RiverWoods, Lewisburg, Pa. She was the widow of Rev. Kenneth Abraham Burkett, and widow of Rev. Chris Walker. Memorial services are being planned for the fall and will be announced at a later date.

Rev. John H. Witmer, Retired, of Fort Loudon, Pa., died Saturday, July 29, 2017, in Chambersburg Hospital, Chambersburg, Pa. Among his survivors is his wife, Betty Witmer. Memorial services were held Saturday, August 5, 2017, in Fort Loudon United Methodist Church, Fort Loudon, Pa. Interment was in Flohr's Cemetery, McKeight, Pa.

Schedule Mental Health First Aid training for your church and community

By Sharon Engdahl
Executive Director/Past President
Mental Wellness Awareness Association, Inc.

Since 2009 numerous churches throughout the Conference have hosted Mental Health First Aid classes. Participants:

• Learn mental health problems are medical conditions that need early medical treatment.
• Increase their knowledge of the signs, symptoms, and risk factors related to mental illnesses and substance use disorders.
• Can identify multiple types of professional and self-help resources for individuals with a mental health or addiction problem.
• Increase their confidence in and likelihood to help an individual in distress.
• Show increased mental wellness themselves.

This program is listed in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP). There are many audience-specific Mental Health First Aid courses, such as Youth; Older Adults; High Education; Law Enforcement, Corrections, and Public Safety; and Military Members, Veterans, and Their Families.

As the hands and feet of Christ, we are to tend to the broken and seek out the lost the same way Jesus tended to our wounds and sought us out. To do this, we must be willing to meet our brothers and sisters where they are, and use Jesus’ example of meeting the needs of our neighbors. We must remember effective churches don’t simply meet the spiritual needs of their congregants, but also the psychological, social, and physical needs.

If you’re interested in bringing this valuable training to your staff, volunteers, and community contact the Mental Wellness Awareness Association at their website, www.mentalwellnessawareness.org, or via email at mwa@mentalwellnessawareness.org or by phone at 717-957-3432 to schedule a training at your church.

The Mental Health Ministries of the Susquehanna Conference provides these trainings in Mental Health First Aid at no cost to United Methodist members through Mental Health Awareness Sunday (in May) offerings received under Advance #4050. The public’s cost is $50. Mental Health First Aid USA values this training at $170 per person.

“When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.” — Psalm 34:17-18 ESV

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Editor’s note: Sharon Engdahl is a United Methodist from Marysville, Pa., with a passion for making this vital training available to all United Methodists in the Susquehanna Conference for free. The training is also invaluable to law enforcement, emergency responders, teachers, parents, and other community leaders.

MOST MINNESOTA
SUSQUEHANNA LINK - September 2017

Better Together

Career opportunities at Albright Care

Albright Care has an excellent career ladder at all their facilities for people just starting out looking for work. The career ladder begins with entry-level jobs and offers scholarships for effective employees who choose to advance.

Albright Care Services has facilities in Williamsport, Lewisburg, York, Lancaster, and Lebanon. If any churches are sponsoring immigrants/refugees, or know of others who might benefit from these opportunities, please contact Shaun T. Smith, President/CEO; Albright Care, 90 Maplewood Drive, Lewisburg, PA 17837 phone 570-522-3889 Shaun-Smith@albrightcare.org

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Sunday October 1, 2017

“My desire is to sow seeds into the lives of others, hoping that at least one will also be inspired to sow a seed into another individual.” — LINK KUFFERT AFFORD, ETHIC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

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your land, your family, the land that I will show you. You shall go in and will bless you. And, and you will be a blessing.”
Prayer connects the people of faith to God’s way and God’s future. Prayer is an unequivocal expression of faith that, no matter what we go through, we put our trust in God and we know that God is in charge. As we face the unprecedented challenge of the unity of our church, we are to rely on God for a breakthrough by the gift and power of prayer more than anything else.

In sync with the ardent prayer of Jesus for oneness, each year we will lift up a prayer that we offer at the Lord’s Table as a theme:

- **2017** - “Better Together: Make Us One”
- **2018** - “Better Together: One with Christ”
- **2019** - “Better Together: One with Each Other”
- **2020** - “Better Together: One in Ministry to All the World”

I believe that God has plans to give our church hope and a future. I excitingly anticipate what God has in store for the Susquehanna Annual Conference. May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace as we trust in God, so that we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)

With You in Christ’s Ministry,
Bishop Jeremiah J. Park