INDIANAPOLIS – More than 2,000 Hoosier United Methodist conference members and guests from across Indiana established a new annual conference by uniting the two former conferences during a joint special session of both conferences at the Indiana State Fairgrounds on Saturday afternoon, Oct. 4.

Indiana Area Bishop Michael J. Coyner convened the North and South Indiana Annual Conferences in the Toy-ota Blue Ribbon Pavilion.

“We gather as sheep following our shepherd in the sheep barn,” he commented.

The session conducted its business in an atmosphere of worship led by Chuck Scott of Fort Wayne. More than 30 singers and musicians led the session in song.

Coyner shared several greetings from both Indiana U.S. Senators Richard Lugar, who is a United Methodist, and Evan Bayh, as well as greetings from other bishops and annual conferences.

Ike Randolph, executive director of the Indiana State Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, extended greetings from Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels on behalf of the State of Indiana. Randolph said Hoosiers are thankful for the rich contributions made by United Methodists.

“You were here before the State of Indiana was chartered and have been an active partner with state and local governments in all 92 counties,” he said.

Randolph thanked United Methodists for their involvement with disaster relief, legislation for the betterment of governments in all 92 counties, “I just want to remember people. It’s their faces and faithfulness who brought us here today,” he commented.

Rev. Phil Klinger, a retired North Indiana pastor, said, “We are all heirs of a tradition that we did not make.”

“The people of the United Methodist Church,” said Hamilton. “I just want to remember people. It’s their faces and faithfulness who brought us here today.”

Klinger shared thoughts on those who have been leaders in various conferences and joint ministries throughout the churches 200 years in Indiana.

“The vote

By Matthew Oates and Daniel R. Gangler

The Rev. Richard Hamilton, a retired South Indiana pastor, recalled 200-plus years of Indiana Methodism, as well as some famous Hoo- siers and their links to the church, beginning with Abraham Lin- coln, who lived in Indiana during the early 1800s.

“All of these people were nourished in the pews of the Method- ist Church,” said Hamilton.

The vote

The Rev. Cindy Reynolds, chair of the 13-member Transition Team and superintendent of the Warsaw District, introduced six recom- mendations and a series of resolutions which brought the two conferences together.

Coyners asked for separate votes on the resolutions from each of the two conferences by a show-of-cards process. The resolutions were overwhelmingly approved at 2:22 p.m. establishing the new conference. Afterwards, members and guests stood and applauded the formation of the new Indiana Conference.

The votes concluded more than two years by various task forces and commit- tees studying the possibility of creating a new conference.

Features of the new annual conference include:

♦ Forming clergy into covenant groups and all 1,200 congregations into ministry clusters of four to nine congregations for support, outreach to their communities and accountability to the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world;

♦ Dissolving the current 18 districts across Indiana and establishing five resource centers to support the work of 10 districts; and

♦ Creating a new conference structure including a Con- ference Leaders Team and establishing a new confer- ence center in Indianapolis. The team will be chaired by the bishop and includes representatives from all aspects of the conference at the same table.

The inaugural Indiana Annual Conference will officially convene its first annual conference session at Ball State University in Muncie, June 25-29, 2009.

Can these bones live?

In his first sermon to the new conference, Coyner asked members, “Can these bones live?” based on Ezekiel 37:1-14.

“That’s not an organizational question, it’s a spiritual question. Can this new Indiana Annual Conference be alive? The answer is found in the question of Ezekiel,” said Coyner. “The answer is yes, by God’s spirit. That’s our answer today.”

Coyners emphasized the two aspects of the new conference. He encouraged congregations to join a ministry cluster to work together, as well as continue development of clergy and congregations which already are springing up across the state.

Other goals he emphasized included streamlining lead- ership and transforming members and congregations to re-
Now the work begins

The Special Session of the North and South Indiana Conferences to create the new Indiana Conference on the fourth of October was a great and memorable day in the history of United Methodism in Indiana. The day was filled with a sense of worship, commitment, and a blessing by God's Spirit. I personally felt a sense of satisfaction and joy as I participated in that session.

Now what? Now the real work begins. Like any good plan or any important goal, the real work comes after the adoption of the Imagine Indiana plan. We are not finished becoming a new Indiana Conference, we are just getting started.

During this whole process of North and South Indiana Conferences considering becoming a new conference, we have often used the imagery of a marriage. Like any good marriage, the wedding ceremony does not finish the process; it just blesses and initiates the process. This is the work of blessing by the pastor, and even the spoken vows by the bride and groom do not complete the marriage, they only begin the marriage. So it is with this new Indiana Conference. We have formally agreed to become a new conference; and now we need to make it happen.

What will happen in the next few months? Here is a brief list of where we will go from here:

1. The newly selected and elected Directors will work together as a leadership team and begin selecting the rest of the conference staff to lead our new conference. I am hopeful that this process can be completed by this coming July 1 although I am sure we will continue to need the additional work of many of our current staffs throughout much of 2009.

2. The two Cabinets will continue working to develop the Ministry Clusters of congregations, and we have plans for a series of “Tip Offs” for these Clusters in February and March 2009. I will be coming to all of the districts to meet with the pastors and lay leaders to guide the process of each congregation selecting other congregations with whom they wish to form a Ministry Cluster.

3. The chairpersons of our Clergy Orders are already working to launch the Clergy Covenant Groups in spring 2009. They want to begin by surveying our clergy to find out which covenant groups are already working well, and then to help the rest of our clergy to form their covenant groups. The “Our Life Together” retreat for all clergy April 20-21 will be held once again at St. Luke’s UMC in Indianapolis. It will be a time of special focus on Clergy Covenant groups.

4. The new Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) and the new Trustees will be working to incorporate the new Indiana Conference and to move forward with the legal, property and financial issues that will be needed to implement the Imagine Indiana plan. Part of their work will be focused upon securing a new conference office – either leased or purchased – in the greater Indianapolis area.

5. The other interim committees (Human Resources, Nominations, Rules and Sessions) will be working between now and the first Annual Conference session of the new Indiana Conference next year to make plans for the new conference.

6. The Cabinets and I will continue to work on finalizing district lines, using the currently proposed 10 District map and tweaking that map by Ministry Cluster choices made by all of our congregations. That final map will be prepared for the Annual Conference Session in June 2009. The new districts will be launched by July 1, 2010.

7. We will hold our first session of the new Indiana Conference next June 25-28 at Ball State University. We plan to begin Thursday with a “Teaching Day” led by the Rev. Adam Hamilton, the dynamic pastor of Church of the Resurrection in suburban Kansas City, one of the largest United Methodist congregations in the United States. The Annual Conference will include many important business sessions and also will include times of worship, a Saturday afternoon of outreach and mission to the Muncie area, and our Ordination Service on Sunday morning to commission and ordain new clergy, and to appoint all clergy for the coming year. Transition Team members will continue to monitor and supervise all of these processes of transitioning from two conferences into one new conference. I am grateful for our faithful commitment to this task.

There is much to be done. We have only just begun. And it was a great beginning. Let us all pray that God will continue to bless and guide our efforts as the new Indiana Conference to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Bishop Michael J. Coyner
Indiana Area of The United Methodist Church

“Making a Difference in Indiana and around the world”

MISSION STATEMENT: To reflect the teachings of Christ through stories and pictures, thereby sharing key moments and concerns in the life of his Indiana church and its people. To share joy, to share personal faith, to share challenges, and to refresh the spirit.

October 2008 Vol. 38 No.8

Printed by: HNE Printers, Columbus with soy-based inks on recycled/recyclable paper

Hoosier United Methodists Together is a monthly publication of the Indiana Area of the United Methodist Church.

Copyright 2008 Indiana Area of the United Methodist Church.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Hoosier United Methodists Together, 1100 W. 42nd St., Suite 210, Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

Change of Address: Send the mailing label with your new address to: Erma Metzler, Together, Indiana Area UMC, 1100 W. 42nd St., Suite 210, Indianapolis, Indiana 46208 or e-mail: metzler@inareaumc.org

Comments and letters provided by Indiana Area Unitd Methodist Communications do not necessarily represent the opinions or policies of Bishop Michael Coyner, the Indiana Area or The United Methodist Church.

Members of the Indiana Area Communications Commission and Editorial Advisory Group:

Steve Bahrt, chairman

Char Harris Allen
Bushfield
Bishop Michael J. Coyner
Ida Easley
Mark Eursler
Chip Gast

Mark Gough
Jack Howey
David V.W. Owen
Bruce Palmer
Matthew Stultz
Bert Talbott

Permission is hereby granted to United Methodist congregations to reprint stories, pictures, and copyrighted church newsletters. Together is supported by your church tithe.

www.inareaumc.org

Continued from Page 1

Hoosier UMs establish new Indiana Conference

focus more clearly to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of Indiana and the world.

“You, God wants this new conference to be an effective tool for God’s ministry. It’s up to us – but it’s not all up to us. The answer is yes, by God’s spirit,” said Coyner. “The gentle spirit of God will make us into the United Methodist Church.”

Following his sermon, Coyner led in the ritual of Holy Communion, which concluded the session.

New officers

Members of the new conference approved these officers:


• Human Resources: Sam Odle (chair),

Youth from both the former North and South Indiana Conferences lead a dance for joy during the establishment of the new Indiana Conference Oct. 4 in Indianapolis.

Continued on Page 3
Being nice isn’t good enough for God

Bishop Reuben P. Job’s best-selling little book Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living outlines John Wesley’s practices of faithful Christian living. Job calls these three simple rules a radical change in direction. Those rules are:

1. Do no harm.
2. Do good.
3. Stay in love with God.

We know from recent experiences that Wall Street will fail, Washington will fail. Politicians’ promises will fail. Even new conference structures may fail. Most things in life, in one way or another, will fail. Why? I believe these failures may occur because the three simple rules are NOT being followed. Greed, corruption and power are the world’s rules, and these actions will eventually topple any system. So what do we do? What do we expect?

As the church, the new United Methodist Indiana Annual Conference, we can never let our possibility for failure prevent us from moving forward in faith that God may be glorified in all we do. Yes, we will fail, but when we fail we need to ask God’s forgiveness and begin anew—over and over and over.

The first Saturday of this month, the lay and clergy leaders of Indiana took a bold move to put into motion a new way of doing church with a restructure of the Indiana Area and the establishment of the new Indiana Conference. Much work went into that historic session. Much work awaits, as plans on paper supported by prayer become plans in the lives of people in order to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world through our commitment to do no harm, do good and stay in love with God.

We cannot move forward to meet our goals by merely being nice people. Being nice isn’t good enough for God. If we are going to be the people that God has imagined, we need to walk in new ways by faith, knowing God goes before us (read I Peter 4:7-11). We need to live beyond niceness. We need to be prophetic and strong advocates of the poor and outcast. We need to be compassionate and work diligently for the equal distribution of food, the fair distribution of wealth and to lend our gifts and talents to those who fall on bad times, whether caused by natural or human disasters.

As faithful United Methodist congregations, we must grow in relationships to all people through worship, study of Scripture, prayer, stewardship and witness. That’s a tall order for people who for practical purposes just want to be nice. However, if the reign of God is to be realized, being nice isn’t good enough. Do harm. Do good. Stay in love with God. Sounds simple, but we cannot accomplish such practices on our own. We need the strength and compassion of Christian community through congregations, districts and our new emerging conference.

Welcome to a new age and chapter of United Methodism in Indiana, not for our own gain, but for the gain of God through Jesus Christ.

– Daniel R. Gallagher

Letters to the Editor

Hope for New Hope

In-1958 I attended my first Annual Conference at City Church in Gary. It was then the cathedral church of the Northwestern Indiana Conference of The Methodist Church. Ten years later we gave it away to the city for one dollar. This unfortunate development was documented this past year in the Hoosier United Methodists Together including a report on the service of confession held at that time.

Despite the good intentions of sincere people, we were unable to make the transition to changing neighborhoods. Today, we are facing a similar situation in Anderson, Ind. This time the outcome will be different. The forward-looking people of New Hope UMC in Anderson have relocated their congregation and have developed numerous outreach ministries to the community of Anderson, especially the Hope Academy for helping children succeed in education, and Re-Entry giving formerly incarcerated citizens a Second Chance.

The members of New Hope have taken the support of the North Indiana Annual Conference in this effort, including a grant from the Church Development Committee. However, they will need to raise $400,000 to repay the building loan and use their other funds for new and existing ministries.

A pastor once commented to me, “Why should we help New Hope when we have our own building program?” I responded, “It’s biblical.” Paul entreated his congregations, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” That is what we are asking. We cannot and must not fail this time.

Please consider sending a gift to this important ministry project. All gifts are tax-deductible and should be made payable to the North Indiana Conference Foundation for the New Hope UMC. Send it to the North Indiana Conference Foundation, 1001 N. Western Avenue, Suite D. Place on the memo line – New Hope CAS #030102. I am contributing to this ministry project and encourage you to do the same. Remember, “Do it for the children.”

J. Philip Klingler, Retired Elder West Lafayette, Ind.

Web cast

Thank you for the live video of the uniting conference. As a retired member of the former North and too old to attend for a long time, it was a treat to have the live video – almost just like being there. Also thanks for all the regular news. Perhaps you can have live video of the new Conference session next June.

Rev. R. Edwin Green Plano, Texas

NOTE: The Web cast was seen on 149 computers, ten of which were beyond the U.S.

Concerned about hurricane survivors in Cuba

We are writing to share our deep concern for the people of Cuba who have suffered a tremendous blow from three storms in rapid succession – Hurricane Gustav, Tropical Storm Hanna, and Hurricane Ike. Aldo Gonzalez, US Coordinator of Volunteers to Cuba, reports that at least 40 percent of the Methodist churches and parsonages in Cuba have been destroyed or damaged. Throughout the island, people have lost their homes and their crops.

Because our General Board of Global Ministries is not able to send financial, if you feel led to help our Methodist brothers and sisters in Cuba, you can send your contribution to the Florida Conference. Make checks to Florida Conference Treasurer, designating them for “Disaster Relief, Methodist Church in Cuba,” and send them to: Conference Center, 1140 McDonald St., Lakeland, FL 33801.

And, most important of all, please be in prayer for everyone in Cuba during this incredibly difficult time. As you pray, please ask God to guide you regarding any other action to take. We think it might be helpful to urge our U.S. Senators and Representatives to waive the embargo against Cuba for at least a specified period of time in order to allow aid to reach the Cuban people in their time of need.

– Anonymous as requested

Continued from Page 2

Hoosier UM’s establish new Indiana Conference

Jacqueline Blackwell, Jerry Moore, Greg Morgan, Amber Morley, Rev. David Schrader, Penelope Smith, Charles Young and Joseph Easley.

Other persons elected and appointed by the special session included:

♦ Director of Financial Services and Conference Treasurer: Jennifer Gallagher
♦ Director of Administrative Services and Conference Statistician: Brent Williams
♦ Director of Connectional Ministries: Rev. Jim Bushfield
♦ Director of Communication: Rev. Dan Gangler
♦ Director of Church Development: Rev. Mark Gough
♦ Conference secretary: Carolyn Johnson

Other business

Representatives of the North Indiana, South Indiana and Indiana Area foundations provided an update on the process of merging all of the various foundations’ resources into one foundation. A report will be provided at the next annual conference, June 2009.

The Rev. Russ Abel of Fort Wayne appealed to members to support the Central Conference Pension Initiative. “How will we be known? I offer you this challenge today and I pray that we will be known as people who live beyond ourselves as members of the Indiana Annual Conference.”

The Rev. Mary Hubbard and the Rev. Karen Devaisher, co-chairs of the newly elected session committee, announced the dates of annual conference June 25-28. Sessions will be Thursday and Friday; Saturday will be a mission outreach day to the Muncie community. Sunday will be the day of the annual worship service and prayer and worship service. (See hotel reservations on page 6.)

Matthew Oates is correspondent for Indiana United Methodist Communications and is a member of Trinity UMC in Lafayette, Ind.
When United Methodists place money or a check into Special Sunday offering envelopes on United Methodist Student Day, this year on Nov. 30, or an alternate date, they actually put people in places where God has called them. They may be helping a seminary student who has been called to be a pastor or missionary.

Gifts may be used to help a student complete nursing school or get an education to become a teacher. Whatever their calling, students bolstered by the generous gifts of their fellow United Methodists eventually will bring their faith to the world’s neighborhoods.

Contributions on United Methodist Student Day fuel both career ambitions and spiritual aspirations of future church, community and world leaders.

Here are Hoosier recipients of United Methodist scholarships or loans. These students are attending universities and seminaries to qualify, they must be members of The United Methodist Church but do not need to attend a UM-related institution.

South Indiana Conference’s 34 recipients include: Monica Bouw- ware of Columbus, Carri Britt of Otisso, Jenna Buschkoetter of Jasper, Eron Cavanaugh of Plainfield, Tess Czervinski of Indianapol is, Cassandra Ernst of Charles ton, Boyd Gelarden of Carmelton, Dwight Graper of Fort Branch, Randa Harbison of Georgetown, Laura Harden of Greenwood, Jessica Hawkins of Indianapolis, Brendan Hock of Plainfield, Thomas Hoffmeyer of Avon, Shaw na Hubbard of Greensburg, Jess ica Huddleston of Chandler (Ariz.), Anthony Hunley of Indiana polis, Jill Johnson of Jasper, Stephanie Jones of Terre Haute, Jacob Juarez of Westfield, Kris tin Lucero of Indianapolis, Con or Mather-Licht of Indianapolis, Zachary Mennier of Bloom ingwood and the need for Scripture, Hannah Miller of Vincennes, Ten dal Noyat of Evansville, Jos huah Oldest of Columbus, Chelsey Outcall of Brownsburg, Amy Pritchard of Lebanon, Nadia Robin son of Indianapolis, Kintre t Sprinkle of Camby, Jacob Stidham of Westfield, Amanda Tying of Indianapolis, Cait lit White of Bloomington, Ian White of Columbus. These students received scholarships ranging from $500 to $2,000. As a group, they received a total of $25,900 in scholarships and one loan for $5,500.


For more information and applications for UM student loans and scholarships, call the Office of Loans and Scholarships at the General Board of Higher Education and Mission at 615-340-7342 or log on to www.glbhe.org/loans2.html.

When United Methodist Student Day is celebrated, it not only raises funds, but demonstrates a commitment to nursing education. UE’s nursing program and the creation of these new scholarships are proactive attempts at creating a larger pool of qualified nurses for the Evansville area, for Indiana and for the nation as a whole. For more information, call 812-488-2468, or e-mail admission@ue.evansville.edu.

“Through recent investments in our nursing program, including the construction of a new, state-of-the-art simulation lab, the University of Evansville has demonstrated a commitment to educating quality nurses,” said Lynn Penland, dean of UE’s College of Education and Health Sciences.

“The decision to expand our student body and scholarship availability is our attempt to make that quality education both accessible and affordable to a larger population – and, in doing so, to bring more quality nurses into the health care system,” she said.

In preparation for the special session, Hoosier United Methodists and United Methodist Student Day teams were encouraged to bring flood bucket clean-up and health (personal hygiene) kits to contribute to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center near Springfield, Ill., a ministry of the Illinois Great Rivers Conferences. According to Gary Peterson, of Fort Wayne and disaster response coordinator of the North Indiana Conference, the ingathering was overwhelming. Members brought 430 flood buckets, more than 1,000 health kits, and more than 13,000 new school items to the Indiana Area-based Operation Classroom for schools in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Hoosier United Methodists completed filled a 35-foot truck from the Illinois center. Flood buckets which could not fit into the truck were divided among the United Way Volunteer Response Center in Munster and Portage in northwest Indiana, to assist flood survivors recovering from mid-September flood damage.

55 Hoosiers receive UM scholarships or loans totaling $43,500

Student Sunday gifts help people in their callings

In Munster, Ind., United Methodist Student Day participants gathered a large number of school items to the Indiana Area-based Operation Classroom near Springfield, Ill., during the special session of the Indiana North and South Conferences in Indianapolis. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has approved Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties for individual assistance. Donations to assist flood relief in the Calumet District can be sent to the North Indiana Conference Student Sunday gifts help place people in their callings.
North Indiana Conference’s Oakwood Park Inn closes its doors

The Oakwood Christian Retreat and Conference Center in Syracuse, Ind., on Lake Wawasee, closed its doors on Aug. 31. According to the North Indiana Conference, which now owns the property, the Oakwood Foundation and staff prepared for the closing for weeks and completed their work by month’s end. The conference’s hope is to find a buyer who will continue a ministry in the future at Oakwood. The conference advanced significant funds to keep the facility open through Aug. 31.

The North Indiana Conference will continue to employ a small staff to manage and maintain the property. The Oakwood Property Owners Association also has made arrangements with the Syracuse Police and Kosciusko County Sheriff for continued security, including the establishment of a Neighborhood Watch Program to keep the area safe.

The North Indiana Conference has had contact from more than a dozen individuals and groups, some religious ones, who display interest in the property. A marketing package is being developed by a national firm that specializes in hotel and property sales. Meanwhile, North Indiana Conference leaders have met with and will continue to work with the Oakwood Property Owners’ Association Board to address their concerns and needs.

A commentary and invitation

Experiences of God’s Spirit in prison

By Mary Z. Longstreth

The Indiana Plainfield Reentry Education Facility (PREF) is a short term prison residence of nearly 400 criminally convicted adult men outside of Indianapolis. The prison’s primary purpose is to get persons for their return to societal community life.

This experimental transition facility is surrounded only by a high wire fence and coiled barbed wire, not a high stone wall. Its residents will return to neighbor and hood life in a few months. It’s a pattern of choice for me to frequently share in Sunday morning worship in order to stretch my life and faith boundaries on this spacious campus.

It may be a dramatic change for some to worship in the prison chapel. There, without ornate faith symbols, an organ, formal liturgy, and robed choir, one perceives the Holy Spirit and God’s family differently. Inside the prison chapel there’s little to focus on, but the presentation of the Word through a simple worship setting and the small gathered group sharing God’s glory and life struggles as persons banned from family and “normal” society.

I’m humbled to participate in this community. It’s a faith stretching experience I’ve appreciated, although it’s not my accustomed style. In prison, there is no personally spoken confessions, the telling of God’s blessings found throughout the week, and the shared hopes of heart yearnings that brings that community members closer together. Shared worship socially equalizes the congregation “insiders” and “outsiders” non-judgmentally.

Although PREF residents in the sanctuary sit scattered from one another—a defensive behavior learned in traditional prisons—worshippers arriving from the outside are gratefully received either by the welcoming words of greeters or in quiet shyness. The guest worshippers represent what’s real about life outside of prison.

Outside prison’s wall, in many congregations with which I am familiar, those socially similar, familiar, good and comfortable people. We who worship outside prison walls don’t readily reveal amid the fellowship fears or judgments. More of us so-called “outsiders” should go into prison. There one can challenge interior walls that divide one from the self, one’s neighbors and God. Stereotypes of those incarcerated will fall as God welcomes all with love and peace here can become our friends. When God meets us in prison, what is there to fear?

As a Church & Community Worker of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, it has been my joy to nurture this ministry for worship. The idea, sparked by few prison residents requesting a weekly Christian Sunday morning worship service, found a PREF volunteer beginning as student at Christological Seminary in Indianapolis willing to assist us. This CTS intern, North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis and the staff at the Correction collaborated together to begin this ministry. Now in its third year, this worship service at PREF attracts from 30 to 40 residents each Sunday. PREF and Faith in Community Ministry invites people from any community to share this prison-site worship opportunity.

This ministry hopes to develop a sustainable structure for this weekly worship as prison and outside community worshippers flow in and out of this congregation’s life. The open hearts, open minds, open doors at PREF invite you to worship here.

Contact me if you are interested in worshipping a Sunday at the PREF chapel.

Mary Z. Longstreth serves as Church and Community Worker and director of Faith in Community Ministry in Indianapolis, Ind.
Gambling Recovery Ministries: a faith-based approach for society

Because of GRM, we have been helped, to a great degree, in our understanding of compulsive gambling ... This support and prayer was a great value for the spiritual and emotional well being of our family.

-- from Loved Ones of a Problem Gambler

GRM provides a safe testing-of-the-waters-for-help setting. To these individuals, Jacobs introduces the concept of a continuum of care, including treatment, support groups, plus spiritual support and encouragement. Always available are prayer, spiritually oriented therapeutic literature and pastoral counseling. Sincere expressions of gratitude and of experiencing extraordinary peace have been spoken following prayers that were offered.

In addition, GRM serves as an unofficial advocate for Gamblers Anonymous, Gam-Anon, and treatment providers. “When both the counselor and I recommend GA, it is more likely that a person will seek support group meetings,” Jacobs observes.

GRM’s avenues of outreach also include community information events, classroom teaching, pulpit presentations and providing continuing education (CEU) events for mental and public health professionals, social workers and clergy. Most recently, the Rev. Carol Wiley, GRM board member, presented “Coping and Gambling Recovery Issues” as continuing education for Stephen Ministry. Both Jacobs and Wiley also have completed the 60-hour state training on compulsive gambling treatment. Taught by an international expert, this training is free and open to clergy wanting to increase their counseling skills with problem gamblers.

GRM contact information:
- E-mail jiacobs@grmumc.org or phone 812-926-1052
- Web site www.grmumc.org
- Gambling Recovery Ministries Resource Center is located at Mt. Tabor UMC, US Highway 50 in Aurora, Ind.

Hotel reservations now available for 2009 annual conference in Muncie

Housing will be sufficient for the 2009 United Methodist Indiana Annual Conference session at Ball State University in Muncie June 25-28, according to Ruth Ellen Needler of the North Indiana Conference staff. Ball State will have 700 residence hall rooms available, plus Muncie has another 282 hotel rooms available within two miles of campus and several other hotels across the city. On-campus housing reservations will be available in the spring. Hotel/motel information is now available online at www.inareuamc.org for making reservations.

Butler University intern joins communication staff at area office

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana Area United Methodist Communications has added Chris Goff, a Butler University freshman intern, to its staff through December. According to Dan Gangler, Indiana Area director of communication, most interns in the past have been juniors or seniors.

Goff, 18, of Goshen, Ind., attends the Goshen College United Methodist Church at home. He majors in journalism and history at Butler and graduated twelfth in his class this past spring at Germantown High School.

He works in the Indiana Area office each Friday. His primary responsibilities include editing and proofing content for Hoosier United Methodists Together and weekly e-HUM news publications.

Goff’s internship is coordinated by Butler’s Center for Faith and Vocation directed by Judith Cebula and is funded through a Lilly Endowment grant. Cebula meets bi-week to mark his progress.

In response to his internship, Goff said, “I am thankful for Ms. Cebula’s generosity to a freshman and an intern. Rev. Gangler has taken me on allowing me the experience to work on a publication read by thousands, and to allocate his time to show me the ropes. It means a great deal to me, and I’m enjoying the experience.”
United Methodist leaders tour hard-hit Texas areas

United Methodist leaders in Texas feared the worst was yet to be discovered as they began touring churches and communities battered by Hurricane Ike.

Bishop Janice Riggle Huie, who leads the church’s Texas UM Conference, traveled Sept. 15-16 to areas south and east of Houston, but authorities blocked her group from reaching Galveston, a city of 57,000 residents with five United Methodist churches.

Another 20 of the denomination’s churches dot nearby areas in and around Freeport, Texas City, La Porte and Baytown. Huie reflected on her tour of damage in a Sept. 16 message posted on the Texas Conference Web site www.tscumc.org.

Despite an inability to pinpoint specific needs, the Texas Conference and United Methodist Committee on Relief have mobilized to provide flood buckets, ice and other supplies to affected areas. Three UMCOR distribution sites have been established at United Methodist churches in Vidor, La Porte and League City.

The Rev. Clay Whitaker, disaster response coordinator for the conference, said providing the trailers and essential tools for recovery zone work was a vital step in equipping Texas Conference volunteers. The conference has nearly 300 trained and certified early responders.

To aid Ike recovery work, send financial donations to UMCOR Advance No. 3019695, “Hurricanes 2008, Hurricane Ike.” United Methodists can drop a check in any local UMC offering plate. Individuals also can mail checks to UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, N.Y. 10087, and write the Advance number and name on the memo line of the check.

Credit-card donations can be made online at www.gbgm-umc.org.

Church treasurers are encouraged to forward Hurricane 2008, Hurricane Ike funds to their conference treasurers.

Clergywomen break new ground in large churches

By Linda Green

A UMNS Report

On her first Sunday as lead pastor of one of three large churches and communities Unit ed Methodist congregation in Hyattsville, Md., the Rev. Joan Carter-Rimbach stood before a packed congregation where “everyone had come to see the woman pastor.”

Carter-Rimbach told the congregation that she realized it “never had somebody in the pulpit who dressed like me or looks like me.”

Four years later, she acknowledged, that between staffing issues and team challenges, “it has been hard serving the church where the norm has been a male as the senior pastor.” However, she has earned the respect of the staff and congregation through her nurturing leadership style.

More than 50 years after receiving full clergy rights in The United Methodist Church, more and more women like Carter-Rimbach are breaking through the stained glass ceiling that, for the most part, has kept clergywomen in small-membership churches or as assistants in larger congregations.

Today, there are 85 United Methodist clergywomen serving as lead pastors in one of the denomination’s 1,172 U.S. churches with 1,000 or more members. In all, there are 7,073 active clergywomen serving one of the 34,398 United Methodist congregations in the United States and another 1,199 clergywomen serving in other settings across the country.

In the North Indiana Conference, there are 88 clergywomen (12 deacons, 76 elders) serving appointments. In the South Indiana Conference there are 104 clergywomen (12 deacons, 92 elders) serving appointments. Of the 26 largest worship attendance (500+) congregations in Indiana, two have females as senior pastors—the Rev. Karen Davashier at Avon and the Rev. Ann Glass at Plainfield. One of the state’s oldest congregations, Meridian Street in Indianapolis, received its first female senior pastor—Rev. Anne Rosebrock, this past year.

Lead women pastors

Forty clergywomen leading large-membership churches were gathered in September in Nashville, Tenn., as part of the Lead Women Pastors Project, initiated by the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry to begin a conversation and study about how clergywomen are redefining leadership expectations.

The research project seeks data about women serving large-membership churches, their career paths, if there is a distinct call to serve larger churches and what gifts and leadership qualities are needed. Clergywomen who lead churches of 1,000 or more members are engaged in the study through April.

The difficulties of leading a large church vary from day to day, said the Rev. Julia Price, pastor of the 1,020-member Wenatchee (Wash.) First UMC.

“I think it brings with it many of the same struggles that any size church does,” she said. “There are days when the woundedness and brokenness of the people that I deal with leaves a very heavy mark on my heart, but there are other days that I go home filled with great joy because I’ve been able to offer some grace and peace to someone.”

Leadership expectations

A clergywoman leading a large members congregation in any denomination is “fairly rare,” said the Rev. Susan Willhauck, a faculty member of United Methodist-related Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., and leader of the study project.

Women lead only six percent of churches with 1,000 members or more, she said, adding that The United Methodist Church is “ahead of the game in some ways compared to other denominations.”

A recent report points out, though, that although the number of female clergy has increased significantly in recent years, they are less likely than their male counterparts to be appointed as senior pastor of a large-membership congregation, according to Michelle Fugate, director of research and data management for the Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Twenty-eight percent of male clergy lead large-membership churches, compared with 15 percent of female clergy. Twenty-four percent of male clergy serve in small-membership churches, compared with 27-30 percent of female clergy.

Carter-Rimbach says the disparity is disturbing, even though strides are being made. “We have the skills. We have the knowledge. We have the dedication. We have the commitment. We have the passion. We have the love. Why has it taken so long?” she asked.

One explanation is that “people are afraid of change because the power will shift and those who have the power now are afraid,” she said.

Stop Hunger in Haiti

School children in Ibo Beach, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, eat food provided by Stop Hunger Now and funded by the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Founded in 1998 by the Rev. Ray Buchanan, a United Methodist minister in Virginia, the organization has provided more than $44 million in direct aid to more than 60 countries, including more than 5 million meals for the poor.

For 2008, Stop Hunger Now has set a goal of packaging 5.5 million meals. On Aug. 23, its “University Million Meal Event” brought together 4,000 volunteers from nine colleges and universities to assemble 1 million meals in one day.

A UMNS photo, Rony Perry

The Rev. Joan Carter-Rimbach, pastor of First UMC in Hyattsville, Md., addresses fellow clergywomen attending the Lead Women Pastors Project in Nashville, Tenn.

A different approach

The Rev. Martha Ward, co-pastor of 2,500-member Ankeny (Iowa) UMC, said many churches have traditionally had a chief executive officer approach to leadership and a top-down direction. Nevertheless, women pastors offer something different.

“I think women offer a more grassroots style of leadership,” she said. “We’ve used to helping people make connections, helping people use their own strengths, building up the laity in how they can be in ministry—not to say that men don’t do that. But I think women do a little more naturally perhaps.”

Collectively, the clergywomen noted that the most important part of their job is to love, guide and help people move toward transforming themselves and the world.

Linda Green serves as a United Methodist News Service news writer based in Nashville, Tenn.
Africa University issues urgent plea for funding

MUTARE, Zimbabwe (UMNS) – Operating amid economic and political turmoil in Zimbabwe, Africa University has issued an urgent plea for United Methodist congregations to fulfill their 2008 financial obligations to the school.

Fanuel Tagwira, interim vice chancellor of the United Methodist-related university, made the plea Sept. 3 in a letter addressed to United Methodist leaders across the U.S.

“As I write you, our 1,300 students are on the campus of Africa University for the 2008/2009 academic year. … While Africa University has not missed a day of classes during this difficult time, we are now facing a crisis,” Tagwira wrote.

The core of the university’s worsening financial situation is Zimbabwe’s hyperinflation, tagged by the government at a rate of 11 million percent in June. The country’s currency loses value by the hour on many days.

One key source of financial support comes from a special United Methodist church-wide fund that levies an apportionment rate of 2.5 million. Tagwira urges congregations to pay their entire Africa University apportionment early to help the university through the crisis.

“As our reserve accounts dwindle as a result of the nation’s dire economic situation, we need your immediate financial support through the apportionments that come from the Africa University fund,” Tagwira wrote.

Beacon of hope

Since opening in 1992, Africa University has produced more than 2,700 graduates who now work as agriculturalists, pastors, educators, businesspeople, health workers and other professionals in communities across sub-Saharan Africa. Students this year come from 22 African countries, with about 70 percent on financial aid or full scholarships.

The private school has been the only one of Zimbabwe’s 12 institutions of higher education to stay open throughout the nation’s crisis. It also partners in an off-campus daily feeding program, providing meals for 5,000 vulnerable children including many AIDS orphans.

Tagwira said the university has altered its billing practices because of out-of-control inflation. In a separate letter sent in July, he told students, parents and guardians they would have to make monthly payments for tuition and room and board instead of paying once a semester.

“We know this creates a hardship for our Zimbabwean students and their parents, but in the current environment, we believe this is the best way to move forward,” Tagwira wrote in his Sept. 3 letter to supporters.

“We are conserving financial resources in every possible way. We have continued to meet our payroll, pay our bills and serve our community and continent. Nonetheless, we have been forced to deplete our reserve funds to meet day-to-day obligations.”

No reserves

At one time, the school had $1.7 million in reserves, but that money had to be tapped, according to James Salley, associate vice chancellor of institutional advancement for the Africa University Development Office in Nashville, Tenn.

“Essentially speaking, we don’t have reserves — nothing to fall back on other than the apportionments,” Salley told United Methodist News Service.

The school’s operating budget is $4 million annually in U.S. dollars, with about half coming from apportionments. Apportionments are contributions of 29 cents per member requested from each United Methodist church in the United States. Student fees, other contributions and earnings from a $43 million U.S.-based endowment make up most of the remaining budget.

Financial support and prayers

Despite Zimbabwe’s struggles, Tagwira told supporters that Africa University is navigating the difficulties “exceedingly well.”

“During this extraordinary time in Zimbabwe, we are committed to do everything we can to meet our mission to provide a quality education within a Pan-African context. Our campus is safe. Our faculty is well qualified and respected around the world. Our students are dedicated to learning and excited to be in school,” Tagwira wrote in his letter.

“Along with your financial support, we ask for your prayers, for our university, and for our nation as it struggles to find its way during this season of uncease.”

To contribute to Africa University, visit the www.supportafricauniversity.org Web site or call its Nashville office at 615-340-7348.

This story was based in part on a news release by the United Methodist Office of Public Information.

Messer elected chairperson of Global AIDS Fund Committee

By UMNS

Dr. Donald E. Messer, executive director of the Center for the Church and Global AIDS of Centennial, Colo., has been elected by the United Methodist Global AIDS Fund Committee to serve as chairperson.

Messer succeeds Bishop Fritz Mutti and his wife Eta Mae Mutti, who have served as co-chairs of the committee since its inception in 2005. Under their leadership, more than $1.8 million has been raised to help fight the global HIV and AIDS pandemic internationally. The Global AIDS Fund has provided grants to nearly 70 HIV/AIDS projects in more than 20 countries and all seven continents.

The Global AIDS Fund Committee is charged with overseeing the promotion, use, supervision and distribution of the fund. Messer wrote the original legislation adopted by the 2004 General Conference that established the United Methodist Global AIDS Fund to be used to support programs offering HIV and AIDS education, prevention, treatment and care services in the U.S. and around the world. The goal is to raise at least $8 million for HIV/AIDS.

“Those who are infected with HIV/AIDS experience not only the effects of this devastating disease, but also the negative stigmatization and discrimination. As disciples of Jesus Christ, United Methodists are called to continue his healing ministry to the most marginalized in the world,” Messer said.

“United Methodists are called to continue his healing ministry to the most marginalized in the world.”

— Donald Messer

The United Methodist Global AIDS Fund to be used to support programs offering HIV and AIDS education, prevention, treatment and care services in the U.S. and around the world. The goal is to raise at least $8 million for HIV/AIDS.

Baha’un Methods launch storm response

The President of the Bahamas Conference of the Methodist Church, the Rev. Bill Higgs, recently announced that Methodists on the island are ready to launch their response to the recent disasters caused by Tropical Storm Hanna and Hurricane Ike in their neighboring countries of Haiti and Turks and Caicos.

The Bahamas Conference of the Methodist Church has a very vibrant church and school life. In the Bahamas we have approximately 1,300 students. Since opening in 1992 led to the establishing of a United Methodist Habitat, a full time outreach program of the BCMC based at Camp Symonette in James’ Cistern, Eleuthera. Methodist Habitat also did a lot of work in Grand Bahama following Hurricane Francis and Jean in 2005.

In 2008 alone, through Methodist Habitats, more than 500 volunteers came to The Bahamas to work on rebuilding and repairing houses in Cat Island, Andros and Eleuthera.

Reginald Eldon is the Coordinator of the BCMC Disaster Relief Program. He said, “The fruitful partnerships which we have formed with various organizations to assist with our disaster relief efforts have been tremendous. We have had incredible support from The United Methodist Church through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and The United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM). Our partnership with the Bahamas Government, NEMA and the Department of Social Services has worked extremely well. We will continue to work hard and faithfully to assist all people of The Bahamas who suffered loss and disaster from the recent hurricanes.”

— Bahamas Conference of the Methodist Church.
**Touching the cross of Jesus Christ**

By Jean Brindel

Summer is the high season for kids to go to church camp. Camp is not only about the campers, but it is about those who invest their time and money so that the kids can have an experience of a lifetime that changes their lives for all time.

She was a busy woman and didn’t have a lot of time for things like camp counseling, but her pastor had told her she would be blessed by this experience in the lives of kids. So she dug out her sleeping bag, bug spray and flashlight, and off she went for a week of bunk beds and camp food. She would bridge the week at camp with Bible study and a hope to grow in faith, just a little. After all, there must be some pay back for such an investment and time.

There was this one young man, who was brash, distant and uninterested. But he was in her group, so she smiled and welcomed him. All week, he was happy to go swimming, play games and be at the front of the line for slacks, but when it came time to worship or talk about faith, he sat with his head down—brash, distant and uninterested.

On decision night, when the kids were given the opportunity to make a commitment to Christ, the kids came to the circle with the tall cross in the middle. As they listened to the pastor talk about the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ for all who call upon his name, they came forward to put their hands on the cross. It was a way of touching and being touched by faith in Jesus Christ.

The young man sat with his head in his hands, broken, alone and separated. The counselor came over to him and asked if she could pray with him. He told her that it wouldn’t do any good. He was no good; he came from a family with lots of problems. God would not want him—Christ could never forgive him—grace did not include him. She invited him to simply come and put his hand on the cross, just to touch it and see that God’s love and grace did include him. He simply shook his head; he didn’t believe he could be forgiven.

The counselor said these words to him: “Let me be your bridge. Hold my hand and I’ll touch the cross, and you can see how it feels. Just come.”

He got up, taking a few steps to grasp her hand as she touched the cross. Her arm span stretched to reach from the child to the cross. Then he moved closer to her, then he stepped past her and put a simple finger on the cross—then his whole hand—until soon his whole body was wrapped around the cross as he wept with joy. Jesus did love him. He was forgiven, and the salvation of Jesus Christ was for even him.

Next morning, with a distant and indifferent—he now had hope, a relationship and a belonging to Christ.

Being at camp was for her more than she had ever hoped. She had become the bridge. And as the bridge to faith, she had not only touched the cross, but it had touched her. She had invested a week of her life in camp and gotten a lifetime of blessings in return.

Right here, right now, right future—as we do whatever it takes to reach the next generation for Jesus Christ.

*Jean Brindel, CFRE, AFP, serves as Development Officer of the North Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church. She lives in Carmel, Ind.*

---

**Church must be ‘place of hope amid rising U.S. violence’**

By Bishop Hye-Soo Jung

The three simple rules of the United Methodist Church—**‘Do no harm, do good and stay in love with God.’**—quickly that we cannot keep the statistics up to date. This epidemic of violent death is growing so quickly that we cannot keep the statistics up to date. We should not stay on the sidelines and silently witness the devastation. Now is the time for our congregations to be in dialogue—discerning ways in which we might offer safe space for children and teens, nonviolent models for conflict resolution and alternative channels for anger. As individuals and as churches, we must witness to the need for peace—praying for our children and our own conflicts and offer support for struggling and single-parent families. We must extend a word of hope.

**Church must be ‘place of hope amid rising U.S. violence’**

By Bishop Hye-Soo Jung

The three simple rules of the United Methodist Church—**‘Do no harm, do good and stay in love with God.’**—quickly that we cannot keep the statistics up to date. This epidemic of violent death is growing so quickly that we cannot keep the statistics up to date. We should not stay on the sidelines and silently witness the devastation. Now is the time for our congregations to be in dialogue—discerning ways in which we might offer safe space for children and teens, nonviolent models for conflict resolution and alternative channels for anger. As individuals and as churches, we must witness to the need for peace—praying for our children and our own conflicts and offer support for struggling and single-parent families. We must extend a word of hope—praying for our children and our own conflicts.

**Church must be ‘place of hope amid rising U.S. violence’**

By Bishop Hye-Soo Jung

The three simple rules of the United Methodist Church—**‘Do no harm, do good and stay in love with God.’**—quickly that we cannot keep the statistics up to date. This epidemic of violent death is growing so quickly that we cannot keep the statistics up to date. We should not stay on the sidelines and silently witness the devastation. Now is the time for our congregations to be in dialogue—discerning ways in which we might offer safe space for children and teens, nonviolent models for conflict resolution and alternative channels for anger. As individuals and as churches, we must witness to the need for peace—praying for our children and our own conflicts and offer support for struggling and single-parent families. We must extend a word of hope—praying for our children and our own conflicts.

**Church must be ‘place of hope amid rising U.S. violence’**

By Bishop Hye-Soo Jung

The three simple rules of the United Methodist Church—**‘Do no harm, do good and stay in love with God.’**—quickly that we cannot keep the statistics up to date. This epidemic of violent death is growing so quickly that we cannot keep the statistics up to date. We should not stay on the sidelines and silently witness the devastation. Now is the time for our congregations to be in dialogue—discerning ways in which we might offer safe space for children and teens, nonviolent models for conflict resolution and alternative channels for anger. As individuals and as churches, we must witness to the need for peace—praying for our children and our own conflicts and offer support for struggling and single-parent families. We must extend a word of hope—praying for our children and our own conflicts.
Plainfield group hikes the Appalachian Trail

By Andrea Hirsch

A group of Plainfield United Methodist Church members recently put aside the conveniences of the modern world to hike a portion of the Appalachian Trail. The seven-person group spent a week hiking a 50-mile section of the trail in the mountains of Virginia.

The group, led by Associate Pastor Kevin Wrighley, carried only the necessities: water, food and shelter on their backs.

This was Wrighley’s 15th trip on the trail and his group this year included two father-and-son teams, his wife and a retired teacher.

Jan Shaffer, a retired Plainfield school teacher, said she had a great experience and added that it was the most physically-challenging thing she has ever done in her life.

“The weather was perfect,” she said. “The scenery was spectacular. I have been in the Colorado mountains before, but I never got tired of the view. It’s truly amazing to be up that high.”

Shaffer said one of her most memorable moments was interacting with Ben Meyer, a 26 year-old medical student in the group.

“Ben usually reached the summit ahead of most of us,” she said. “One particular long uphill climb, Ben put his pack on the top of the mountain and hiked back down a half mile or so to find me. He told me my lucky number had been drawn to have my pack carried up the hill. He took the 30-pound pack off my back and went back to the top; he was waiting for me when I got there.”

Although Shaffer had an amazing time, she said she doesn’t know if she would make a return trip to hike for a full week. She said she would love to go back and complete shorter trips.

“It’s just nature, you, and surviving,” Shaffer said.

Andrea Hirsch serves as a reporter for the Hendricks County Flyer, where this story first appeared. (Copyright © 1999-2008 cnhi, inc.)

Hoosier elected secretary of denomination’s Discipleship Board

A Hooser will continue to lead the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) directors for the next four years based on Cabinet reports received by Indiana Area Communication the month of September 2008.

South Indiana Conference

ABBOTT, Chad Robert from Volunteer Leave of Absence to Discontinued, 8/1
AHLEMAN, Clayton from no appointment to New Market/New Market: Wavefield, Indianapolis West, 9/1
BLACKBURN, Thomas E. from Terre Haute: Memorial, Terre Haute to North Indiana Conference, 3/31
BLOSSER, Theodore Ray from Ziemsville, Indianapolis West to Plainfield, Indianapolis West, 10/1
BOARDMAN, Michael T. from no appointment to Retirement, 9/5
DUNBAR, Deanna L. from Napoleon, Columbus to Napoleon/Delaware, Columbus, 9/1
GLASS, Ann L. from Plainfield, Indianapolis West to Retirement, 9/30
HAMM, Saundra from Incapacity Leave to Retirement, 8/1
HILL, Jacqueline A. from no appointment to Metamora, Rushville, 9/1
HOCK, Brendan from no appointment to Plainfield, Indianapolis West, 9/1
LELAND, David L. from West Madison/Zooar, Columbus, 9/1
LOW, David S. from Extension Ministry: Chaplain, St. Clare Medical Center, Evansville/Madison and Waynetown, Indianapolis West to Waynetown, Indianapolis West, 7/1
MORGAN, Mary Beth from Bloomington: First, Bloomington to Bloomington: St. Marks, Bloomington, 9/15
STINSON, Nancy E. from Volunteer Leave of Absence, to Retirement, 8/1

Virginia Bishop Charlene P. Kammerer, president; newly elected bishop of the Denver Area, Bishop Elaine Styrsky, vice president; and GBOD’s chief administrative officer/treasurer, the Rev. Charles Carnahan, treasurer. The board is comprised of 58 members from the five jurisdictions and central conferences outside the United States, plus one liaison representative from the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico, and one member without vote from among the member churches of Church- es United in Christ. For more information, log on to www.gbod.org. Indiana Bishop Mike Coyner, who led the GBOD these past four years (2004-2008) as president, will be serving the General Commission on Finance and Administration during this quadrennial term.

Ohio semianna offers UM students full tuition plus stipend

Methodist Theological School in Ohio has opened its competition for the Rev. and Mrs. James P. Alford Scholarships, offering full tuition plus a $2,000 annual stipend to United Methodist students entering MTSoS’s Master of Divinity program in the fall of 2009. The Alford Scholarships are renewable for a total of up to three years per student.

Each student competing for an Alford Scholarship must have an undergraduate or graduate grade point average of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, letters of reference from pastors and judiciary leaders, membership in a United Methodist church, and a record of active involvement in the community.

Detailed information and scholarship applications are available by contacting MTSoS at 800-333-6876 or admit@mtso.edu. The application deadline is March 1, 2009. For more information about MTSoS, visit www.mtso.edu.
DEATHS

ESTHER MARY CROCK-ER, widow of the late Rev. Floyd Joseph Crockier (NIC), died Sept. 18, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 20 at Wesley Manor in the Amanda Reid Chapel. Burial was Sunday, Sept. 21 at St. John’s Cemetery in Napolean. Survivors include: children, Joe Crocker of Churubusco, Paul, Galen, and Ann McCammon of Virginia Beach, Va.; four grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and a brother and sister, Fred Bodenberg of Aspers, Pa. and Naomi Fox of Yardley, Pa. Memorials can be made to your church or favorite missionary.

EDNA GEIST, mother of Susan Smith and mother-in-law of Pastor Lawrence Smith of Calvary UMC in Elkhart, Ind., died Sept. 26, 2008. Condolences can be sent to the Rev. & Mrs. Lawrence L. Smith, 2006-2 Ireland Road, Mishawaka, IN 46544-1214.

ROBERT E. LOUGHEED, retired part-time local pastor (NIC), died on Sept. 5, 2008. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Condolences can be sent to Mrs. Nelle Lougheed, 325 Highway 89A, Cottonwood, For.陲．

ROBERTALUNDA, widow of the late Rev. Robert Lundy (NIC), died Sept. 15, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 19 in Frankfort, Ind. Survivors include: daughter, Jean (Nelson) Mootz; son, Robert Lundy; and three grandsons, Ken Moore, Craig Munday and Derek Lundy. Condolences can be sent to Jean Mootz, 826 Helms Rd., Grants Pass, OR 97527. Memorial contributions can be made to Wesley Manor, Good Samaritan Fund, 1555 N. Main St., Frankfort, IN 46041; Guardian Angel Hospice, 513 W. Lincoln Rd, Kokomo, IN 46902; or an organization of your choice.

CARLYL E. MASON, retired pastor (NIC), died Sept. 1, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 5 in Bloomington. Survivors include: wife, Mildred; son, Jon Mason; daughters, Marianne Mason, Marna Andrew; six great-grandchildren; and six great-great-grandchildren. Condolences can be sent to Mildred Mason, 711 N. Bell Trace Circle, Bloomington, IN 47408. Memorial contributions can be made to the Monroe County United Ministries, 827 W 14th Ct., Bloomington, IN 47404 or to Hospice, P.O. Box 1149, Bloomington, IN 47402.

BARBARA MAXWELL, widow of the late Rev. Loren Maxwell (SIC), died Sept. 23, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 25 in Franklin, Ind. Survivors include: son, Ray Maxwell; daughter, Patricia Ashworth.

GALEN MILLER, father of the Rev. David “Mick” Miller, pastor of Trinity Church (UMC), died Sept. 14, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 18 in Richmond, Ind. Survivors include: son, David; three grandchildren, Mick, Becky and Jim and four great-grandchildren. Condolences can be sent to the Rev. David Miller, 5519 E. Velopede Pike, W. College Corner, IN 47003. Memorial contributions can be given to Achieva Resources Corp., Inc., 800 Mendelson Drive, P. O. Box 1252, Richmond, IN 47374; St. Mary’s Catholic Church c/o Richmond Catholic Catechical Office, 240 S. Sixth St., Richmond, IN 47374; or the Galen Miller Scholarship Fund of the Wayne County Foundation, 33 S. Seventh St., Richmond, IN 47374. For more information call 765-482-1092.

INEZ DAIZY HEBER MUR-ERS, mother of Jon Leon Myers, lay pastor of Lineberger Chapel UMC in the Terre Haute District (SIC), died Sept. 2, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 4 in Clinton, Ind. Survivors include: sons, Jon Leon Myers and Karl Willis Myers; daughter, Orthanna Yager, all of Clinton; four great-grandchildren; and eight great-great-grandchildren. Condolences can be sent to Pa L. Myers, 110 S. 25 E., Clinton, IN 47842. Memorial contributions can be made to the Wayside United Methodist Church, 14895 South 200 East; Clinton, IN 47852.

JOHN PENDLETON, father-in-law of Pastor Jeff Stedge (Lima/ Scott UMC – NIC), died Aug. 29, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 3 at the Liberty Chapel Church, 3942 W. 500 N, Crawfordsville. Condolences can be sent to Jeff and Kari Stedge at 7020 N 675 W, Shipshewana, IN 46575. Memorial contributions can be made to the First Christian Church, 500 N Hig St., Hartford City, IN 47548.

JEWELL RITTENHOUSE, widow of the late Rev. H. Lloyd Lanhansen (NIC), died Aug. 3, 2008. Services were held Aug. 6 at the Rozelle-Johnson Funeral Service in Anderson, Ind., with the Rev. Dr. Charles W. Johnson officiating. Burial was in the East Maplewood Cemetery. Survivors include: husband, Ellsworth K. Rittenhouse, 1070 W. Jefferson St., Franklin, IN 46131. Memorial contributions can be made to Grace UMC, 1300 E. Adams Dr., Franklin, IN 46131-1940.

DOUGLAS OLIVET SHOAF, pastor of the Rev. Scott Shoaff, pastor of Garrett UMC (Fort Wayne District, NIC), died Sept. 24, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 29 in Fort Wayne. Condolences can be sent to the Rev. Scott D. Shoaff, 2006 Shady Lane, Garrett, IN 46738.

SHOAFF, husband of the late Rev. Scott Shoaff, pastor of Garrett UMC (Fort Wayne District, NIC), died Sept. 24, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 29 in Fort Wayne. Condolences can be sent to the Rev. Scott D. Shoaff, 2006 Shady Lane, Garrett, IN 46738.

DOARL F. TAGGART, re- tiree (NIC), died Sept. 20, 2008. A memorial service was held Sept. 30 in Fort Wayne. Ind. Survivors include: wife, Pauline, and sons, John of Chippenburg, Pa., James of Indianapolis, Ind., and Dean of Dullah, Minn. Memorials can be made to the First Christian Church, 500 N Hig. St., Hartford City, IN 47548.

This issue also features reports of recent meetings and a planning schedule, as well as worship ideas, offering as an act of worship, church programs, and stewardship articles, which can be found on the web at www.niumf.org.

Stewardship through Advent theme featured in Giving magazine

INDIANAPOLIS – The Ecumenical Stewardship Center recently released this year’s edition of Advent Ing: Growing Joyful Stewards in Your Congregation, a magazine to encourage and foster stewardship in congregations.

This year’s publication, “Blessed Be the Lord God,” draws from Luke 1:68 – “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.” The magazine features articles focusing on the dynamic sense of stewardship that moves across age groups.

“Blessed Be the Lord God” emphasizes the backdrop for the annual stewardship campaign emphasis printed as the center section of Giving.

“We encourage congregations to meditate on the biblical songs of Advent as they discern their individual and household giving for 2009.”

This edition includes all the elements needed for a local church stewardship campaign including: A planning schedule, a worship idea, an original song, “Mary, My First Steward,” a Christian composer Ken Medema, a sample letter of invitation, a stewardship doodle, a weekly giving guide and a commitment card.

“Blessed Be the Lord God” features the conversation about raising funds as Christian people. Are we merely trying to attract money or are we in the business of transforming people?

Barbara Fullerton, a long-time friend and board member of the Ecumenical Stewardship Center, does a splendid job in showing us how to celebrate the offering in line with lectionary texts in her article “The Offering as an Act of Worship.”

Look too, for Kamilla Blessing’s article “TheLogic of Giving: Blessing the Lord,” which provides biblical background for the annual stewardship emphasis.

This issue also features resources on estate planning and the power of story, as well as a host of resource reviews.

Giving, $9 a copy plus shipping and handling, also includes several Giving magazines from previous years with other campaign themes, web site addresses and descriptions of other Christian resources. Giving is published by the Ecumenical Stewardship Center, a shared ministry of 24 denominations in Canada and the United States, based in Indianapolis. The Rev. Stephen Johnson, an Elder of the South Indiana Conference UMC serves as executive director.

For more information, log on to www.stewardshipresources.org, call 800-835-5671 or write to Ecumenical Stewardship Center, 1100 W. 42nd St., Suite 225, Indianapolis IN 46208.

Prominent educator, ecumenist Bishop Ault dies at age 90

Retired Bishop James M. Ault, a prominent educator, ecumenical advocate and episcopal leader in The United Methodist Church in both the United States and South Africa, died at the age of 90 on Sunday, Sept. 21, 2008, at the Midcontinent Senior Health Center in Brunswic, Maine.

An active bishop from 1972 until his retirement in 1988, he served as president of the Council of Bishops from 1986-87 and president of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries from 1985-89.

Prior to his election as bishop, he taught at Union Theological Seminary in New York and served as professor and dean at the School of Theology of Drew University, Madison, N.J.

The bishop was a leader in ecumenical affairs, representing The United Methodist Church in both National and World Councils of Churches. A member of the World Council of Churches Central Committee, he was active in promoting economic sanctions to oppose apartheid in South Africa.

He was born on Aug. 24, 1918, in Sayre, Pa. – UMNS

Loan fund names Babcock as field representative

The Indiana United Methodist Loan Fund recently announced that Bob Babcock, of Danville, Ind., and a member of the Danville University Methodist Church, will be joining the Loan Fund staff as a Field Representative. Babcock now serves the Indianapolis West and Terral Seminary in New York and served as professor and dean at the School of Theology of Drew University, Madison, N.J.

The bishop was a leader in ecumenical affairs, representing The United Methodist Church in both National and World Councils of Churches. A member of the World Council of Churches Central Committee, he was active in promoting economic sanctions to oppose apartheid in South Africa.

He was born on Aug. 24, 1918, in Sayre, Pa. – UMNS

Loan fund names Babcock as field representative
Bikes for Pastors

Bikes are $110 each. Talk to your mission team about sponsoring a bicycle for a Pastor in the Congo.

Church contributions can be sent with your tithe!
Send your donation marked “bicycles for pastors in North Katanga Advance #127025” and mail with your tithe to SICUMC, Department 6089, Carol Stream, IL 60122

Individual donations can be sent to Bikes for Pastors - SIC, 1520 S. Liberty Dr., Bloomington, IN 47403

Let us help you!

- Coaches – Provide guidance for your church’s revitalization team
- Sending of the Saints – Resource packets
- The latest demographic information available at no charge
- Free on-site consultation for churches exploring building projects

On-line workshops, assessments, and more!

Contact Ed Fenstermacher at 800-783-5138 or visit www.nicumc.org and click on the Church Development tab.

Sign up for Ed’s bi-weekly e-newsletter by e-mailing him at ed@nicumc.org, or visit his blog-site at www.nicumc.org/cd/blog.

The South Indiana Conference treasurer has just sent the first $15,000 of contributions for bicycles for pastors in North Katanga, DR of Congo to the Advance.

Pictured are bicycles being distributed at the North Katanga Conference session in Kamina this July. These bikes were purchased by Center United Methodist Church (Indy West) and personally delivered by the Rev. Dan Rasmussen and family.

www.kaminaproject.org

(c) Stephanie Matthews Photography 2008