VIM teams minister to needs of citizens in Sierra Leone

By Phileas Jusu
psjusu2002@yahoo.co.uk

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone — Two United Methodist Volunteers-In-Mission work teams from Indiana and Minnesota were in Sierra Leone in November 2007 as part of the Operation Classroom ministry’s work in the West African country.

The Indiana team painted six classrooms at the United Methodist Preparatory School on the Kissy Hospital grounds in eastern Freetown making the classrooms a pleasant environment for students.

Rick Chandler, the team leader, gave pastoral services by assisting the local pastors at the Mango Brown Memorial United Methodist Church.

“We also made a ten-year commitment to add a second floor to the pre-school building,” said Patti Paynter, another pastor in the group.

The seven-volunteer Minnesotan team, including a medical doctor, nurses, a pastor and other support staff, spent a week in Manonkoh village in northern Sierra Leone delivering medical services to more than 500 patients, some of whom walked as far as 15 miles. Manonkoh is 120 miles from Freetown, the country’s capital.

The Minnesota Conference established the clinic in 2006. It serves the Manonkoh community in the village hall. The November team was the second medical team to visit Manonkoh clinic in 2007. Doris Acton, RN, was in the 2006 team that made the decision to establish a community clinic in Manonkoh.

She said, “We wanted to find a village that had no access to health care. We interviewed a number of villages and chose Manonkoh because it was off the main road. There is no clinic here. There is no health care here and there is a United Methodist church and school here. So we saw that Rev. Edward Kamara already had established a presence here.”

Manonkoh is strategically located. Other surrounding villages also come to Manonkoh on Friday to receive treatment. When there is no work team visiting the village, the clinic is run on Fridays by nurses hired by the Minnesota Conference.

Reported illnesses

Among the most frequently reported cases of illness during the visit were malaria, upper respiratory infections, diarrhea, malnutrition, worms and other parasitic- type infections. Pregnant women and nursing mothers ranked high on the daily attendance sheet.

“We encourage mothers to continue breastfeeding. We also give medical education that keeps them healthier and we enjoy a lot of good relationship with them,” Ac-ton said.

The Manonkoh community elders expressed delight for what Chief Abu Sesay described as “a blessing that we would not want to lose.” Chief Abu said the clinic has created a positive impact on the community, and his people are much healthier and happier now than before.

Christopher Koroma, head teacher of UMC Primary School at Manonkoh, said patients come from even Makeni, the provincial headquarters town, because of the good quality of medication delivered at the clinic.

Need for permanent structure

Members of the Manonkoh community said they need a permanent structure for the clinic. They are apprehensive that the clinic might be discontinued at any time since the beneficiaries have not constructed any building and basically run the clinic from the community center. The elders say a clinic building will provide a better health care environment and security for the drugs while at the same time minimizing the need to transport drugs and equipment on clinic days. They therefore are appealing to the Minnesota Conference to construct a health center for the clinic.

The community is prepared to contribute labor, local materials and land should the Minnesota Conference decide to erect a structure for the clinic.

Limited health care facilities are among the key challenges with which the post-conflict Sierra Leone government is grappling. Sierra Leone is ranked second highest in infant mortality in a recent Central Intelligence Agency report.

Phileas Jusu serves as director of communications for the Sierra Leone Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Nine districts proposed

By Daniel R. Gangler
dgangler@inareaumc.org

INDIANAPOLIS — The Imagine Indiana Design Team members are in the process of writing a 50-page proposal to enact the unifying of both the North Indiana and South Indiana conferences later this spring.

The team’s two-day retreat led by Bishop Mike Coyner was Dec. 14-15 in Indianapolis. The team heard a summary report of his 18

District Day events, discussed for hours the structure of the new conference beginning at the local church, heard reports from several task forces and gave final approval to a proposed pension and health care benefits package.

The team continued its work on Jan. 4 and will meet again on Jan. 15 to finish its first draft of a plan to unite the two conferences.

The proposal begins with the congregation and proceeds organizationally to clusters, districts and the conference.

According to the district days reports, the most popular and affirmed part of the proposal is the clustering of congregations to add support and accountability to all congregations. Also under this proposal, all pastors will be required to be part of a covenant group which may or may not include the same churches that are in the congregation’s cluster.

Conference structure will be proposed to place three service centers across the state instead of centralizing services in Indianapolis. A separate Indiana Conference Center will contain conference administration, communication and the bishop’s office in greater Indianapolis.

Nine districts

Taking into consideration a marketing study done in partnership with the University of Indianapolis, the team will propose nine districts for the new Indiana Conference — three in northern Indiana, three in central Indiana and three in southern Indiana. District boundaries are still being consid-

ered. Each district will have a district superintendent that lives in the district and will be supported by a regional service center.

The team will propose three regional district centers, one to be placed in northern Indiana, one in central Indiana and one in southern Indiana. Each of these centers will serve three districts and will include three district superintendents, a district ministries director and program staff, administrative assistants and a receptionist/communicator.

Commenting on the 12-member team’s work, Coyner said, “I am excited about the work of the Imagine Indiana Design Team as it prepares a final recommendation to be considered by the two

Continued on Page 2
A fresh start in a new year

The New Year always seems to bring a fresh start. We make New Year’s resolutions (reports say more than 80 percent of all American adults make such resolutions); we write on a fresh calendar; we make plans; and we focus on the future. While there is nothing magical about the flip of the calendar to a new year – especially with electronic calendars that don’t actually flip a page – this time of year seems to invite us to make a fresh start.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about such fresh starts. The Good News is that our past sins and failures are forgiven, and a new life in Christ is possible for us.

Years ago I saw a play done by a youth group in which God was portrayed as One who had a bad memory. People on the stage kept talking about and worrying about their past mistakes and their regrets, and yet when they finally prayed to God about those worries and regrets, God would respond “I don’t remember that.” It was an odd play, but it made an important point. From God’s perspective as best we can understand it, God’s forgiveness of our past is so complete that God does not even remember our forgiven sins.

In fact, the Letter to the Hebrews, reflecting Exodus 25:40 and Jeremiah 31:34, says it this way: “The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” – Hebrews 10:8-12

In Christ that time has come, and that New Covenant has been revealed. God is indeed a God who forgives, forgets and offers us a fresh start.

May this New Year be a time when we accept this gift of a fresh start, and may it also be a time when we offer that gift to another one. It is a time to let go of old hurts, regrets and pains. It is a time to forgive and forget. It is a time to accept the fresh start we have in Jesus Christ. May it be so in 2008.

Bishop Michael J. Coyner
Indiana Area of The United Methodist Church
“Making a Difference in Indiana and around the world”

Imagine Indiana from Page 1

Annual Conferences. They are being imaginative, creative and yet faithfully focused upon creating a new Indiana to fulfill our mission of “making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

Upcoming reviews

A task force from the design team is writing a report that will be reviewed by the team during a two-hour session on Jan. 4.

Imagining Indiana

Imagine Indiana Design Team members discuss the proposals being written by the team during a two-hour session on Jan. 4.

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Imagine Indiana Design Team members discuss the proposals being written by the team during a two-hour session on Jan. 4.
The Imagine Indiana Design Team will soon bring to the North Indiana and South Indiana Conferences of The United Methodist Church a proposed plan for uniting the two conferences who voted unity this past spring. Part of the Design Team’s report proposes a clustering of churches and the formation of clergy covenant groups, as two important aspects of the new Indiana Conference, to meet the church’s goal of “making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Both of these proposals are designed for congregational support and accountability to meet the church’s goal.

Reflection on City Church

I was present at the service on Sunday, Oct. 7 (Nov.–Dec. 2007 Together) at the site of City Church in Gary. I remember when the congregation closed. I also remember when we closed both First UMC and Indian Harbor in East Chicago, when we closed Ambridge, Glen Park, and Mar- shalltown in Gary, and when we closed Canonbury and Christ UMC in Hammond.

We apologized to the community for failing to continue in vital ministry at City Church. Are we also prepared to apologize to these other communities for failing in our ministry to them as well? It appears that we simply do not know how to be in ministry in the urban community. Obviously, other churches are carrying on effective ministry in these neighborhoods. Is there not something we can learn from them? What is God calling the UMC to do in these communities? Probably not plant flowers.

--- Bill Kaster

Plymouth, Ind. Trinity UMC

LEADERS OF THE EVENT Feb. 29-March 1

Kimberly Reisman

The Rev. Kimberly D. Reisman serves as the North Indiana Evangelist of The United Methodist Church and as the Executive Director of Next Step Evangelism Ministries, which under her leadership, empowers local churches to take the next step of faith on their spiritual journey. Reisman provides faith shaping ministries through her writing and in the context of retreats, seminars, workshops and revivals both nationally and internationally. Reisman is a native of Gulfport, Mississippi, and has lived in California, Tennessee, Georgia and Connecticut before moving to Indiana in 1993 with her husband, John and three children.

Eddie Fox

The Rev. Dr. H. Eddie Fox is the World Director of Evangelism of The World Methodist Council. He is responsible for leading 16 Regional Secretaries of World Evangelism in developing indigenous evangelism on every continent. The World Methodist Council, an association of churches belonging to The Methodist–Wesleyan tradition and representing more than 76 million members in 138 countries, through its Division of World Evangelism is challenging members of the church to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Hoosier United Methodists together

www.inareaumc.org

SPECIAL ISSUE... Covariance groups, clusters concepts worth developing

Hospitality needs to be coupled with support and accountability of our congregations and their pastors.

Both are proven concepts used in other United Methodist conferences within the church, but for these ideas to be fruitful and strengthen the church in Indiana, they need to be introduced through gracious invitations for participation, not mandated with punitive actions if congregation or clergy decide not to participate out of fear or previous unpleasant experiences. Hospitality needs to be coupled with support and accountability of our congregations and their pastors.

Personally, I look forward to clergy covenant groups. As an ordained elder serving the church in an extension ministry, I have not been part of such a group of four or more clergy and have felt the lack of such support in my own ministry. Yes, I have fear of being betrayed from past experiences, but being accepted in a group of peers makes such a group inviting despite my fears. I need the spiritual discipline that such a group can offer and I feel my ministry will be better with participation.

I also have heard fears expressed for the clustering of several congregations to work together on community ministry as well. Pastors have expressed an overload anxiety with another meeting to attend in addition to covenant groups. If the clustering of churches is only seen as “another meeting to attend,” then it may be nothing more than an anxiety producing event.

On the other hand, clustering to serve the greater community in which we are placed will be a sharing of ministry of the transformation of that community, county and state. Some clusters may very well be a bust, but those clusters of congregations that think with like minds and hearts will be more able to face an even more secularized society giving witness to the world that God is love.

The genius of John Wesley, founder of The United Methodist Church and Wesleyan denominations, was his insistence that the world was truly his parish, not the bounds of the parish, the church or its membership. All people are members of God’s family. Clusters of congregations working together will give witness that United Methodists are organized and connected to transform the world with God’s love in Jesus Christ.

The Imagine Indiana Design Team proposal won’t be the end-all plan for bringing the new Indiana Conference into a complete and whole being. If approved, the proposal will physically bring the two conferences into one, however it can only usher in a new conference whose mission, ministry, witness and outreach will be shaped into a reality by those who are nominated to serve as the leaders of that new conference. In Wesleyan terminology, the new conference will continue to be made perfect or whole. Even at its best, the Design Team proposal is only a plan on paper until it is lived out and reshaped in the lives of those who claim the plan as their own.

-- Daniel R. Gangler
dgangler@inareaumc.org

To assist both United Methodist laity and clergy in sharing their faith stories with others, the lay leaders of both the Indiana North and Indiana South conferences are sponsoring an Indiana Area Convocation to be held in Indianapolis.

Kayc Mykrantz, lay leader of the North Indiana Conference, and Ike Williams, lay leader of the South Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church, invite both laity and clergy to a unique LEAP Year Event: Let’s Establish A Priority to Tell Our Story — the weekend of Feb. 29–March 1 at United Methodist-related University of Indianapolis.

They will be joined by Dr. Eddie Fox of The World Methodist Council and nationally known editor Kim Reisman.

LEAP Registration Form

To register for the LEAP to Tell Our Story event, please complete this registration form and send it with a check for $50 per person to the Indiana Area of The United Methodist Church, attn: Lisa Timmerman, 1100 W. 42nd Street, Suite 210, Indianapolis, IN 46208. Thank you.

Deadline: February 14, 2008

Name(s)

Address

City State ZIP

Phone number (AC______) ________

Cell phone (AC______) ________

e-mail address ____________

Local church ____________ of ____________ District
New venture builds on principles of senator’s symposium for Indiana teens

The University of Indianapolis and the office of U.S. Sen. Richard G. Lugar recently announced the formation of a center dedicated to inspiring and developing new generations of leaders for Indiana, the nation and the world.

The Richard G. Lugar Center for Tomorrow’s Leaders will build on the principles of the annual Lugar Symposium for Tomorrow’s Leaders, a one-day event that gathers Indiana’s top high school juniors for expert-led discussions on public issues and world events. The university has hosted the symposium since it was founded in 1977.

The new center will be a permanent home for the annual symposium and will provide extended experiences for high school and college students that expose them to leadership opportunities, the valid responsibilities of strong leaders. Building on the university’s core values, the center will reinforce the value of a liberal arts education in preparing young people to be tomorrow’s leaders.

“We started the Lugar Symposium for Tomorrow’s Leaders during my first year in the Senate, and the University of Indianapolis has been an extraordinary partner for the past 30 years,” Lugar said. “More than 15,000 young Hoosiers have come to this campus for the symposium to debate, learn and expand their thoughts and horizons about how to lead Indiana’s future. I am deeply honored by the permanent establishment of the Richard G. Lugar Center for Tomorrow’s Leaders and excited about the possibilities for public service and leadership in our state that will be inspired in new generations of Hoosiers.”

The center will have a director and a nonpartisan external advisory committee.

“We in the Lugar community are delighted to be building on our long and trusted relationship with Senator Lugar,” university President Beverley J. Pitts said. “The qualities he represents—leadership, community service, integrity, ethics and global perspective—reflect the values we try to instill in our students.”

Extending the goals of the Lugar symposium, the center will develop:

- Leadership academies for high school students at their schools and on the UIndy campus, with instruction by university faculty.
- A weekend retreat for high school students focused on the attributes of the Rhodes Scholarship, which Lugar himself was awarded as a student in the 1950s.
- Annual recognition of an Indiana high school student who exemplifies leadership in public service.
- A Lugar is a Distinguished Trustee of the United Methodist-related University of Indianapolis, having served on the board from 1970 to 2002. He was awarded an honorary degree in 1970 and taught political science as a visiting professor in 1976, between his last term as mayor of Indianapolis and his first term as a senator. He is a member of St. Luke’s UMC in Indianapolis.

**New venture builds on principles of senator’s symposium for Indiana teens**

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South Bend Clay Church expands to new building

SOUTH BEND, Ind. – Clay Church, a “United Methodist Community of God’s Love” in South Bend, expanded its ministry in November and moved into a new second facility.

The church’s original seven-acre south campus at 17464 Cleveland Road had no room to grow. The 1,300-member congregation expanded its facilities with a 20-acre north campus at 52866 North Ironwood located one-tenth of a mile north of its new south campus.

The new 35,000-square-foot north campus building doubled the church’s space and is completely handicapped accessible. You built a raked floor sanctuary for better visibility and placed two projection screens on either side of the front. The choir loft is larger than the one at the older facility. The church also installed a theater lighting system, upgraded its sound system and installed pews to comfortably seat 600 participants.

Near the new building’s front entrance, the church created a space for people to connect. It contains several small parlors with couches and a cafe that serves coffee, hot chocolate, juice and baked goods on Sunday mornings.

Clay’s children’s ministry has its own wing in the new building. The wing resembles the Main Street in downtown town. Each room has a different storefront. Names of the stores include Gabriel’s Daily News, Noah’s Boat Rental and Jonah’s Fish Market. The largest room is for the group worship and contains a stage.

The church plans to develop its campus grounds by putting in a garden, walking paths and two pavilions, as well as an outdoor picnic area for the community to use.

The original south campus houses Clay’s Firehouse Youth Center for youth (grades 6-12). It contains a gym, fellowship hall and large kitchen, spaces the new facility does not have.

Other plans for the youth center include a computer lab for homework, a coffee shop, a sand volleyball court and an athletic area. The church also plans to provide a couple of rooms at the youth center for outside community groups.

Clay’s lead pastor is Dr. Herb Buwalda. The Rev. Kim Bloom serves as associate pastor. The church also has 12 program and 11 staff members.

For more information about Clay Church, log on to www.claychurch.com.

This story was based on a longer story that appeared in The South Bend Tribune.

Haitian women artisans find support in new for-profit business

North Indiana United Methodists can be proud they are supporting a new way of doing missions. HAPI, a brand new for-profit business was started in March 2007 with seed-money grants from the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries and its Women’s Division.

A group of women artisans with no other means of income have been trained and are being guided through the process of developing their business in the mountain village of Mizik, Haiti. They are making hand-embroidered products through their own Web site, www.HaitianArts.com.

In order to assist them in a very tangible way, volunteer groups in Indiana are assembling the embroiideries into greeting cards that are sent to customers across the United States. Several UM churches have made the once-a-month commitment to assemble, including in Fort Wayne, First Wayne UMC, Saint Joseph UMC, Covenant UMC and 1st UMC; in Warsaw, Warsaw UMC; in Mari, On, Herbst UMC, Mier Community and several others are coming on board.

There are several ways to be involved including: product assembly, secretarial help, research, development and individual volunteers to work at the co-op site in Mizik to help eliminate poverty in the poorest country of the Western Hemisphere.

Please pray for HAPI and contact Lorelei Verlee at GodsDesign@gmail.com for further information.

South Indiana Conference adds administrator for VIM, disaster response volunteers

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. – Dr. James Bushfield, director of Connectional Ministries of the South Indiana Conference, recently announced the addition of Jenni Walker to the conference staff.

Walker will be the resource administrator for volunteers-inmission work teams and disaster response volunteers. According to Bushfield, “this new staff position was created in response to the overwhelming number of work teams from congregations all over the South Indiana Conference responding to the needs of the Gulf Coast and Baker Chapel and our need to grow our connectional capacity to respond to disasters and other community and global needs.

“In experimenting with new staffing models for a new conference, Jenni will be working from the Turning Point United Methodist Church in Evansville, with frequent visits to the conference center in Bloomington for staff team building.”

To contact Walker for help with VIM and disaster response forms before you go, forms after you’ve gone, VIM trip insurance, questions on where to go: email her at jwalker@sicumc.org or call at 812-893-1760.

Gulfport housing recovery program ends after rebuilding 640 homes

GULFPORT, Miss. – Volunteers from Tennessee and Virginia spent the past few days helping with the finishing touches on a storm-damaged house on Second Street. They were among 6,500 volunteers, including hundreds of Hoosier United Methodists, who have been part of the Katriana Rebuilding Program at Trinity United Methodist Church in Gulfport.

“It’s been overwhelming,” said Carol Kawa, a volunteer from Kingsport, Tenn. “To go into homes that have been devastated, to help rebuild, to meet the home owners, to see the gratitude on their faces, has just been a real moving experience.”

“It has been an incredible opportunity for Trinity to be involved in the community, to open their hearts and doors and to truly make a difference in people’s lives,” said Courtney Allen, Rebuilding Program Coordinator for Trinity.

The rebuilding program at Trinity actually began days after Katrina, when the church fed more than 35,000 people in three weeks. After that, volunteers came to clean-up 700 homes and rebuild more than 640 houses.

On Dec. 5, almost two and a half years later, that extraordinary mission came to an end.

“This is the last official mission trip down here through Trinity Church,” Kawa said. “It’s very, very sad. It’s been a very emotional time.”

Story courtesy of WLOX, Channel 13, Biloxi-Gulfport.

Representing months of work by volunteers from all over the country, Southport UMC participated in one of the last house blessings from Trinity UMC Gulfport recovery station, November 2007. Courtney Allen, Recovery Coordinator at Trinity gave a candle to a hurricane survivor to be lit as remembrance of God’s shining light during trials in life.
North Indiana Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences

**General Conference Clergy Delegates**
- Frank Beard: 2936 Bagley Dr. W.
- Kim Reisman: 3072 Hamilton St.
- Brian Sieffert: 1007 Arundel Drive
- Cindy Reynolds: 3201 E Center St
- Mike Dominick: 4130 S. Albright Rd

**General Conference Lay Delegates**
- Kaye Mykrantz: 2105 E. Broadway
- Carolyn Johnson: 2550 Yeager Road Apt 19-2
- Jim Ottjes: P O Box 483
- Paula Shrock: 8420 E 100 N
- Ed Fenstermacher: P O Box 869

**Clergy Jurisdictional Delegates**
- Mark Fenstermacher: 2708 E Jackson Blvd
- Michelle Cobb: 650 E 4th Street
- Mary Eileen Spence: 720 W Jeffras Ave
- Chris Nunley: 665 Winda Oak Ct
- Gregg Pariss: 5991 E. Woodside Road

**Jurisdictional Lay Delegates**
- Pat Weeks: 12038 Clubhouse Drive
- Charles Heffley: 4839 N Parkway Dr
- Ashlee Loomis: 131 El Dorado Tr
- Ken Adams: 3619 Albright Rd
- Ruth Ellen Stone: 4121 Woodview Dr

**Reserve Clergy Delegates to Jurisdictional Conference**
- Bob Dexter: 5681 Meadowood Dr.
- Jean Brindel: 656 Maple Drive

**Three Additional Reserve Lay Delegates**
- Toni Carmer: 13519 Leo Road

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**General Conference basics explored in online course**

**By United Methodist News Service**

How are delegates elected to the United Methodist General Conference? How many votes are required for the assembly to approve a petition? What is the role of bishops in the once-every-four-years gathering? And why is it important to keep a copy of the Daily Christian Advocate handy throughout the proceedings?

These and many other questions are answered in “Exploring General Conference,” a five-session online course offered by United Methodist Communications for anyone wanting to learn more about the denomination’s top legislative body and how it works.

The course is free and being offered to give people a basic working knowledge of the church’s legislative process in advance of the 2008 General Conference. About 1,000 delegates will gather next April 23-May 2 in Fort Worth, Texas, to set church policy, approve a budget and speak on behalf of the denomination regarding social and moral issues.

“The course is ideal for anyone attending the 2008 General Conference, including communicators and delegates, as well as United Methodists interested in learning more about how the denomination makes decisions,” said Moderator Cheryl A. Hemmerle.

Participants can begin the course anytime between Nov. 15 and Dec. 26 and move through the sessions at their own pace. Additional sessions will be offered from January through next May.

Launched Nov. 15, the course garnered more than 150 participants in its first three days and is expected gain momentum as General Conference approaches, Hemmerle said.

Betty Jackson signed up because she will serve as a volunteer marshal at the 2008 meeting. “I’m really excited about going,” said Jackson, a member of Ebenezer United Methodist Church in New Johnsonville, Tenn. “I’m taking this course in hope it will give me an idea of what will be going on.”

Arthur Sponagel is participating in “Exploring General Conference” because he wants to learn more about United Methodism. After spending most of his life in two other denominations, he has been a United Methodist since 1986.

“One thing I like about Methodism is you are expected to continue studying. I hope to learn more about how the church operates,” said Sponagel of St. Paul’s United Methodist Church in Las Cruces, N.M.

In addition to interactive features such as videos and quizzes, participants can participate in forums to ask questions and share ideas.

Among other things, the course includes information about:
- The history, role and purpose of General Conference;
- How delegates are elected, their role and responsibilities;
- How petitions, the general church budget and other important matters are decided through General Conference;
- Social issues facing The United Methodist Church and the denomination’s stance on those issues; and

To register, visit http://training.umcom.org. For more information, call 888-278-4862 or e-mail training@umcom.org.

This story is based in part on research by Barbara Dunlap-Berg, an editor with United Methodist Communications.
South Indiana Conference served 1,475 during 2007 camping season

Dramatic arts, adventure camps best attended in South Indiana

During the 2007 summer camp season the South Indiana Conference Outdoor Ministries served approximately 1,475 guests, that includes 710 summer campers and 765 retreat guests. This represents a small increase in participation compared to the 2006 summer camping season.

According to Ian Hall, director of the conference’s Outdoor Ministries, the dramatic arts camp and adventure programming were probably the best attended programs this past summer. “Dramatic arts camp provides participants with both on and off stage experience which they can then take back to their local congregation. On Monday morning campers choose one act to play to perform. During the week they are equipped with the skills to realize all aspects of the dramatic performance. Dramatic arts camp culminates with a Friday night performance attend by friends and family of campers,” explained Hall.

Unique camps

The most unique camp experiences this summer was the Adult Backpacking camp. This past fall Outdoor Ministries returned to Northern Virginia to hike the Appalachian Trail. “Within a supportive Christian atmosphere, participants experienced the beautiful mountain vistas the trail has to offer. This seven-day, on-trail hiking experience cover more than 50 miles. Evening fireside worship included time for group discussion and personal reflection,” said Hall. Outdoor Ministries provided backpacks, tents, cooking equipment and food.

Another unique camp was the Junior High Extreme Adventure. This summer, campers joined Outdoor Ministries to explore Kentucky’s Red River Gorge. “Campers experienced three days of backpacking. While on the trail, they had the opportunity to cook their own food, sleep in tents in primitive campsites and build new friendships with fellow campers,” said Hall.

During the evening, campers enjoy Bible study, discussion, and fireside worship. On the fourth day, campers explored another side of the Red River Gorge where they climbed on natural rock formations. The camp culminated with a 12-mile introduction to kayaking.

Accepted for who they are

“As with each Outdoor Ministries program, campers are accepted for who they are and provided with a nurturing environment where they can truly experience Christ’s unconditional love,” said Hall. The key to a quality summer camping staff is the volunteer directors who recruit volunteer counseling staff. Hall said, “Opportunities are always available for individuals who wish to get involved with Outdoor Ministries’ summer camping program. We accept a team of four full-time workers.”

Outdoor Ministries employs 45 seasonal employees including 10 summer camp counselors and 35 support staff. “Outdoor Ministries also was blessed to have in excess of 200 volunteer participate in programs during the eight-week summer camping season,” said Hall. Those interested in volunteering can contact the Outdoor Ministries office for more information at toll-free 800-919-8160 ext. 217 or by e-mail at ihall@sicumc.org.

What about 2008?

Outdoor Ministries is establishing 2008 summer camping schedules, with new adventure programming, mission opportunities and district camping options are in the works. For 2008 Hall said Outdoor Ministries is planning a series of weekend volunteer opportunities designed to provide congregations with an opportunity to retreat while giving something back to the community as a whole. Spring dates will be announced in January.

For the record, the SIC Outdoor Ministries has an operating budget of $613,000. The Conference Council on Ministries tithes $85,000 or 13.9 percent of its income to Outdoor Ministries, the additional 532.100 or 86.1 percent is funded through user fees.

Outdoor Ministries is committed to living within it funded budget. In 2008 CCOM will fund 25 percent of the Outdoor Ministries operating budget.

“Equipped with a generous grant of $131,000 for CCOM and the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, Outdoor Ministries is currently conducting part of a facility recovery process. Phase two includes site-wide basic infrastructure improvements as well as combating delayed cosmetic maintenance to year round retreat facilities,” according to Hall.

Congregations are encouraged to utilize the three camping and retreat centers within the South Indiana Conference. Camp Indi-Co-So, Camp Mone’to and Camp Rivervale provide ideal locations for local church retreats. Contact the Outdoor Ministries office for more information 800-919-8160.

South Indiana Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences

Clergy General Conference

Ann Glass 600 Simmons St. Plainfield IN 46168
Greg McGarvey 11879 Silverado Dr. Fishers IN 46038
David Penalva 2801 W. Washington St. Indianapolis IN 46222
Darren Cushman Wood 5065 West 16th Street Indianapolis IN 46224
James Bushfield 1520 South Liberty Dr. Lincoln IN 46150
Beth Ann Cook 2816 N. Pennsylvania St. Indianapolis IN 46208
Ike Williams 1515 Cool Creek Dr. Indianapolis IN 46220
Patricia Miller 1041 Muesing Road Indianapolis IN 46222
Rita Gaither-Gant 4102 North DeQuincy St. Indianapolis IN 46226
Vicki Newkirk 2870 South 700 West Indianapolis IN 46240
John Lawson 7124 Gregory Creek Ln. Indianapolis IN 46226
David Crane P.O. Box 797 Indianapolis IN 46228
Clergy Jurisdictional Conference

Judith Purvis 1601 Old Orchard Road Bloomington IN 47403
Kent Millard 100 West 86th Street Evansville IN 47714
Rosa Harris 4602 East 34th Street Carmel IN 46032
Kevin Armstrong 3808 North Meridian St. Indianapolis IN 46226
John Abbott 7995 East 21st Street Indianapolis IN 46219
Marie Lang 3530 S. Keystone Ave., Suite 300 Indianapolis IN 46222
Carolyn Marshall 204 North Newlin Street Veedersburg IN 47987
Luke Robbins 8512 Springfield Road Indianapolis IN 46220
Dan Evans P.O. Box 1367 Indianapolis IN 46218
Benjamin Boruff 6120 Thrushwood Drive Indianapolis IN 46228
Sandra Ruby 707 West Pike Street Indianapolis IN 46212
Bert Talbot 2004 East 91st Street Indianapolis IN 46240
Clergy Reserve delegates to Jurisdictional Conference

Jean Wilson 1201 Locust Street Jeffersonville IN 47130
David V.W. Owen 1100 W. 42nd St., Suite 210 Indianapolis IN 46208
Raymond Wilkins 2153 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave. Indianapolis IN 46202
Beckie Minglin 2155 Canvasback Drive Indianapolis IN 46234

Members of the South Indiana Conference 2008 General and Jurisdictional delegations met Dec. 8 at Plainfield UMC.
Africa University acts to keep staff in face of weak economy

By Linda Green

MUTARE, Zimbabwe (UMNS) — Africa University officials are taking steps to keep teachers and other staff at a time when many professionals are leaving Zimbabwe because of the country’s struggling economy.

The Africa University Board of Directors approved a policy for staff retention during its Nov. 28-Dec. 1 meeting. The policy is aimed at keeping professional and skilled staff.

In the past three years, nearly 20 experienced staffers have left Africa University for jobs outside the country. The school has a faculty and staff of 250 people, serving nearly 1,400 students from around the continent.

News media have reported that some 25,000 teachers of primary, secondary and higher education have left Zimbabwe for greener pastures.

The devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar, shortages of commodities and continuous power outages and water shortages are contributing to the exodus of staff across the country.

The official hyperinflation rate is 8,000 percent, and news media report the current inflation of food and fuel at 14,841 percent.

“With the combined impact of these and other related factors has made it extremely difficult for the university to recruit and retain critical professional staff,” said Zimbabwe Bishop Edward J. Del Pino, chairman of the finance committee.

Former vice chancellor Rudakozuko Murapa cited experts as saying the best coping strategies are those that address working conditions and include “an incentive and motivation system” as the most effective way to pay staff.

“They maintain that attractive salaries and better working conditions are the key to retaining skilled professionals in their home countries.”

Africa University has received support from numerous foundations and agencies. However, compensation of staff and staff career development are critical issues that need solutions, Murapa said.

Time of transition

During the meeting, the board appointed a new interim vice chancellor to take the United Methodist-related university through a period of transition following Murapa’s decision to step down after almost 10 years.

“Times of intensive transition are both a blessing and a burden. They offer time to anticipate and plan for new beginnings, a fresh start on a journey that continuously unfolds new possibilities and challenges.

“They also afford us an opportunity, retrospectively, to take stock of the big picture,” he said.

Pan-Methodist commission urges ‘full communion’

By Linda Green

A UMNS Report

Members of the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation and Union want to affirm their Wesleyan heritage and mutual covenant as churches in full communion with one another.

The commission adopted a resolution to that effect during its Nov. 15–17 meeting in Chicago. The body includes representatives of The United Methodist Church and three historic African-American Methodist churches - the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the 2010 meeting of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the 2010 meeting of The United Methodist Church.

The resolution reflects uncertainty about whether commission members are in full communion with one another.

Full communion, Jarrett explained, means that each of the Methodist bodies recognize and accept their common Wesleyan tradition, recognize and honor various orders of ministry, agree on the basic tenets and doctrines, and acknowledge that there are ministries “we are fully called to and obligated to share in.

“We are one people, yet diverse, yet one,” he said.

To take effect, the resolution must be affirmed by the 2008 general conferences of The United Methodist Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the 2010 meeting of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Two other churches, the African Methodist Episcopal Protestant Church and the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church, were earlier approved as new members of the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation and Union. The 2008 and 2010 general conferences are expected to approve the full membership of these two churches into the commission.

The general conferences also will vote on a proposal to change the name of the commission to the Pan-Methodist Commission. The proposal stems from conversation among Methodist bishops last March about the lack of clarity about the word “union.”

“We are one people, yet diverse, yet one.”

Nathaniel Jarrett

No more than 700,000 nets distributed in 2007

Nothing But Nets distributes 133,000 nets to families in Mali

WASHINGTON – The people of The United Methodist Church and Nothing But Nets – a global, grassroots campaign to prevent malaria – announced in December that the Rev. Gary Henderson, executive director of the Global Health Initiative, traveled to Mali, Africa as part of a United Nations Foundation and Nothing But Nets delegation to observe the distribution of more than two million long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets to children and their families.

Nothing But Nets, a project of United Nations Children’s Fund, is a global, grassroots campaign to save lives by delivering long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets to those most in need. A $10 donation covers the cost to purchase and distribute a bed net and educate the recipient on its proper use.

Nothing But Nets was organized and implemented by the Malian Ministry of Health, in collaboration with Measles Initiative and other international partners. As part of this integrated health campaign, more than 2.8 million children under the age of five also receive vaccinations against polio and measles, Vitamin A supplementation and de-worming medication.

Nothing But Nets, a project of the United Nations Foundation, is a global, grassroots campaign to save lives by delivering long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets to those most in need. A $10 donation covers the cost to purchase and distribute a bed net and educate the recipient on its proper use.

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**Why is it with gambling, logic is set aside?**

**By Lorin L. Clemenz**  
iclemenz@sbcglobal.net

When dealing with those involved in gambling, logic is set aside.

**Why is it that enough is never enough?** The owners of the rivers offer up the license granted to a Gary location to be transferred to a northeastern country. State of Indiana to allow more people can gamble. State legislators want to find more ways of increasing gambling revenues. State Senator Robert Meeks of LaGrange wants the State of Indiana to allow more people can gamble. State legislators want to find more ways of increasing gambling revenues. State Senator Robert Meeks of LaGrange wants the State of Indiana to allow more people can gamble. State legislators want to find more ways of increasing gambling revenues. State Senator Robert Meeks of LaGrange wants the State of Indiana to allow more people can gamble. State legislators want to find more ways of increasing gambling revenues. State Senator Robert Meeks of LaGrange wants the State of Indiana to allow more people can gamble. State legislators want to find more ways of increasing gambling revenues. State Senator Robert Meeks of LaGrange wants the State of Indiana to allow more people can
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**We now have our ducks in a row**

**By Jean Brindel,**  
Captain Fund Team  
North Indiana Outdoor Ministry Project  
jbribndel@sbcglobal.net

During the North Indiana Annual Conference session in June 2006, the North Indiana Outdoor Ministry Project to upgrade four camp sites was set into motion. The way I like to say it, “we were asked to get out ducks in a row to do the projects.” Thus, our first task was to get our ducks – develop engineering plans, estimate costs and hire a consulting firm to determine the level of economic support. In other words, plan for success.

We now have ducks. The project is divided into phases to allow the building and funding to be manageable. The Epworth Forest Campus projects will be phase one. The engineers have completed the initial drawings. The costs estimates for the project have been made. Now, for the final ducks to get in line – awareness meetings. Awareness meetings are opportunities for a few folks to gather from across the conference to hear about the specifics of the project and to determine the possible level of support for the plan. This support includes feedback, faith and financial support – head, heart and wallet.

Here are some folks to be thanked for helping to gather the ducks. They include Mark Warsco, an attorney from Ft. Wayne, and Mark Westerhausen of Dunlap Ward, a CPA firm in Fort Wayne, who graciously developed the down payment for the Outdoor Ministry project. The family foundation of Victor and Kristine Porter, Formula Thunderbird Boat Company of Decatur, Ind., made a generous donation of seed money for the Epworth Forest Project. Also thanks are in order to members of St. Mark UMC of Decatur for their gift of seed money. Seed monies are funds used for start-up costs for the capital campaign.

The last piece of “getting our ducks in a row” before the capital campaign can really be launched is the task of getting feedback and information through awareness meetings.

**United Methodists will be asked to hear the plan, look at projects costs and finally to pray about their possible level of support.**

About ten Outdoor Ministry Project awareness meetings will take place across the North Indiana. At these meetings, United Methodists will be asked to hear the plan, look at projects costs and finally to pray about their possible level of support. This is not a time to ask for money, so if you are invited to one of the awareness meetings, leave your checkbook at home. This is the time and place to measure and determine if the right ducks and are lining up.

Continue to pray for North Indiana Outdoor Ministry Project as we finish lining up our ducks.

For more information, log onto www.nicumc.org.

Jean Brindel, CFRE, AFP, serves as senior pastor of Saint Matthew United Methodist Church in Framont, Ind.

**Body, Mind & Spirit**

**The least of these**

**By Todd Outcall**  
toutcall@calvaryumc.com

This past month my family attended the final regular-season Colts football game at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis, courtesy of some church members who were kind enough to give us their tickets. That evening, I was hustled toward the dome, we scurried past several men who were stationed at various street corners, each jostling a plastic cup filled with coins. Seeing these homeless men brought back memories of an old friend – Jerald – who, for several years, seemed woven into the fabric of my life and ministry.

I first met Jerald when he came into my office demanding money for bus fare. He was, at first glance, a guy who seemed more than a little down on his luck. After some conversation, it was apparent that he suffered from mental illness, was a danger to no one but himself and had a dry sense of humor. Over time, we came to know him, he often surprised us with his depth of knowledge, science and religion. Much of my time with Jerald was spent trying to find him shelter, food or medical help, but in between these weekly or monthly adventures, we would often talk about life. Jerald died about a year ago and I, along with three or four other pastors, made up his funeral entourage as we laid him to rest in a pauper’s grave north of Lebanon. Each of us said a few words and tried to recollect a life lived on the streets, but also a life we had known by name and each tried to help in tangible ways. We were amazed at the ways God had used Jerald to touch our lives and to bring joy into the lives of others.

I thought of Jerald again when walking to the Colts game and I wondered how, in 2008, our collective expressions of love might touch even the least of God’s children. We are most often at home and often feel that we are at our best as a church, when we are ministering to those who are approachable, loveable, clean and financially secure. But in God’s eyes, we are fulfilling Christ’s love when we minister to the least of these.

I hope 2008 will help us to see the least and the lost in our communities and be able to find new friends in people like Jerald.

Todd Outcall serves as senior pastor of Calvary UMC in Brownsburg, Ind. His new blog is toddoutcall.blogspot.com and some of his latest writing can be found in digital form on www.Amazon.com.
By Daniel R. Gangler

The Book of Hard Choices: How to Make the Right Decisions at Work and Keep Your Self-Respect by James A. Autry and Peter Roy (Morgan Road Books, 2006) reads as a practical primer on the process of making good and lasting decisions rather than another how-to book on making decisions. Even though it’s a book based on business decisions, the over riding theme is good management based on ethics, a must for the management of the church. Its strength becomes evident within the first few pages. Each chapter is based on a true-life story told mostly by those in business of how managers, CEOs and other leaders took the more difficult higher road of integrity rather than the fast-fix road to an immediate short-term solution.

Autry and Roy define the five most important aspects of integrity as doing what you say you’re going to do, putting other people’s needs first, behaving courageously, ensuring the common good above all, and maintaining focus on respect, honesty, trust and fairness. The book is divided into twenty-two chapters. Each chapter is based upon a principle written in the form of a question, such as: “Look the other way or face down the corruption?” The question is then answered by a true-life story told from the viewpoint of a manager usually in relationship to employees and other managers including presidents and CEOs.

With this literary device, the authors tell twenty-two stories interweaving their own comments. In these commentaries, why becomes more important than what. Doing is secondary to being and the personal integrity of the storyteller.

Two stories deal directly with stories about Christian belief. One is in chapter seven about the story of a woman senior pastor who “fires” an associate pastor. Another is in chapter twenty-one about the CEO of an amusement park in Missouri who made moral decisions about gambling and alcoholic beverages which cost his company millions of dollars in revenue. Like the Gospel stories, there is a moral or practical dimension woven into each story that is worth repeating and applying to real life. Like real life, the higher road usually takes longer, is risky but often results in a major change in the climate or culture of the workplace.

I found chapters three and five particularly as important as the North and South Issues in chapter two of the church make decisions on being a new conference. In chapter three the authors write, “It is critical that leaders understand the long-term and short-term implications of their possible choices, and to understand that the implications are not just about money but also about vision and values.”

In chapter five, they comment: “You’ve got to get decision-making as close to the customer as possible. That requires trust.”

Another strength is a summary following each chapter “Lessons to remember” – that give advice considered in the chapter just read. The book is a fast four-three-four-hour read, but one that would be more easily digested chapter-by-chapter to give time for reflection.

Like previous books in the Book of Hard Choices series, a blog is available to those who would like to comment or read comments by others about this book at www.bookofhardchoices.blogspot.com. This book is available from www.Cokesbury.com (both in hardback edition or as an e-book) and from www.Amazon.com (new, used and electronic).

Bring joy and make them smile

By Cindy Stump

For the past four years, the members at First United Methodist Church in Noblesville, Ind., have helped the staff at Indiana United Methodist Children’s Home in Lebanon make Christmas special for the children and youth living there. The home serves more than 165 children each year by providing them with food, shelter, clothing, counseling and education. As victims of neglect, abandonment and abuse, the individual care and loving environment at the home is a beacon of hope.

This year, the children at the home received nearly everything they asked for under the tree. They included:

- clothes
- shoes
- educational toys
- stuffed animals
- toys (new, used and electronic).

They included:


For more information, log on to http://childrenshome.net.

Huntington District presents Cross and Flame Awards

The Book of Hard Choices is the perfect book to read at your next staff meeting. It will give you insight into people’s lives and their choices, and will help you to make good decisions. It is a must-read for everyone in the church. If you do not have a copy, please contact your district director to get one. The Huntington District presents Cross and Flame Awards each year to individuals who have made significant contributions to the church. This year’s recipients include:

- Emily Thompson, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Huntington, who has worked tirelessly to build stronger relationships within the community and has been a leader in the fight against poverty.
- John Smith, pastor of Second United Methodist Church in Marion, who has been instrumental in developing a new children’s program that has helped to reduce the number of children in foster care.
- Mary Jones, pastor of Third United Methodist Church in Fort Wayne, who has worked to improve educational opportunities for children in the area.

The Book of Hard Choices is available at your local bookstore or online at www.amazon.com. Thank you for your support of this important work.
Organist continues to play at age 100
Photo courtesy Terry Rhine, pastor, Chesterton UMC. Miller’s nephew, Ralph E. Gentry of Mediana, Ind. (NIC), died Dec. 16, 2007. Survivors include: sons, Lar-ral Ray of Lagro, Ind. and Rod Ray of Portland, Ore.; stepchildren Edward Sipes, Jr. of Marion, Maxi-ine Hiatt of Andrews; Lynda Cun-mingham of Pluggerville, Texas; Leslie Sipes of Ft. Wayne; Letha Stanton of Muncie; Penny Hllton of Marion; 28 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren, and six great-great-grandchildren. Memorials can be made to the First Church of the Nazarene, 700 Kem Rd., Marion, IN 46952. Condolences can be sent to Lena Swan, 9 Val-leyl, Marion, IN 46953.

DAVID TRIPP, pastor of Roll-ling Prairie UMC in the Michiana District (NIC), died Dec. 16, 2007. A memorial service to share in the celebration of David Tripp’s life was held Dec.21 at First UMC, in LaPorte. Condolences can be sent to David’s widow, Di-anne Karlay, at 3376 E. US High-way 20, Rolling Prairie, IN 46371.

LILLIAN A. WORKMAN, widow of the late Rev. Wilbur Workman (NIC), died Dec. 30, 2007. A memorial service was held Jan. 4 at Columbus City UMC with burial in the Rose Hill Cem-etery in Albion, Ind. Survivors in-clude: sons, Ted Daniel and Thomas Workman; daughter, Janice Conrad; 10 grandchildren; and 24 great-great-grandchildren. Memorials can be given to the Columbia City UMC building fund.


Quotable
“If United Methodists go to General Conference professing love for God but get there and don’t love each other, they become liars... Loving one another is the witness that we have to the world today.”
– Bishop Sally Dyck (Minnesota Area)

United Methodist mission agency resumes summer intern program

NEW YORK (GBGM) – The mis-sion agency of The United Meth-odist Church is resuming a pro-gram that places young adults in mission settings in the United States for 10 weeks of summer service and education. A dozen persons ages 18 to 25 will be selected for 2008 as the program is reinitiated after nearly a decade of inactivity. The sponsor is the Mission Personnel office of the General Board of Global Ministries.

The summer intern program is part of a renewal of em-phasis on short-term young adult mission service at the mission board. The Rev. Suzanne Field-Rabbi is the newly named execu-tive secretary for youth and young adult ministries.

Summer interns will be placed with United Methodist institutions and churches across the United States.

Successful applicants must be able to dedicate a full ten weeks to the program. Orientation begins in New York City on June 1. Ser-vice gets underway on June 8 and ends on August 2, followed by a week of debriefing, again in New York. Applicants must have com-pleted at least one year of higher education. An online application form is at http://new.gbgm-umc.org/connections/you-th.

The deadline for applications is Feb. 1. Phone interviews will take place in March. Notifications of acceptance will come in March or April and the placements will be announced in May.
CBYM

Don’t miss this year’s Sr. High Youth Annual Conference
February 23-24 at Indianapolis Hilton North

Youth 9th-12th grade are invited to be energized while enjoying awesome music, exciting workshops and fun worship.

Youth, we want to hear from you:

Do you have a story about how God is working in your life? We are trying to create a special place to come and be inspired. Share with us your inspirational stories, poems or quotes. Send an e-mail to Lourdes at Lgonzalez@sicumc.org. Selected pieces will be highlighted on the conference website.

visit us at www.sicumc.org for more youth related events and information.