



Connection

California-Nevada Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

ACS memories: Diversity and Global Praise



Pastors Michael Piña (left, Klamath UMC of the Redwoods) and Roy Piña (Round Valley UMC) lead a Native Peoples' prayer alongside Bishop Beverly Shamana to call the 159th Annual Conference Session in Sacramento to worship. *Photo by Spud Hilton*

By Chuck Myer

Connection *editor*

“Celebrating Our Diversity and Unity in Christ” was the theme of the 159th Session of the California-Nevada Annual Conference, held in Sacramento June 19-24, 2007. A bold new program to develop transformational clergy leaders was unveiled, with goals of increasing discipleship, addressing the needs of pastors, identifying issues to turn churches around, and setting goals for health and leadership.

In legislative sections, 43 items were discussed and perfected, and most were eventually passed on a consent calendar during efficient plenary sessions. A motion to amend the budget, to increase the amount for retired clergy health care premiums from \$100,000 to \$300,000, failed. The \$12.3 million budget was ultimately passed.

Celebrations included those honoring the 10th anniversary of ordination of deacons and the 100th anniversary of the Methodist Federation for Social Action. United Methodists who volunteered in the more than 50 UMVIM

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Also Inside

- A new Coordinator of Youth and Camping
- “True religion is love in action”
- Bishop Shamana featured in new DVD
- New direction for Conference publication



Walking in the Spirit

Bishop Beverly J.
Shamana

Bishop's Itinerary

Western Jurisdiction
College of Bishops,
Retreat and Humane
Borders experience
in Mexico
July 22-28

Renewal Leave
July 29-Sept. 9

General Board of
Church and Society
Washington, D.C.
Sept. 12-16

Ministry Staff and
Cabinet
Conference Center,
West Sacramento
Sept. 18-21

Holy Cross UMC
Stockton
Sept. 23

New Pastors'
Orientation
Sept. 25

Conference
Committee on the
Episcopacy
Conference Center,
West Sacramento
Sept. 27

Annual Conference Afterglow

DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN CHRIST:

The impact of our June Annual Conference Session continues to reverberate among us. This yearly event is a time to reconnect in holy conferencing with each other and share what God is doing through our ministries.

In addition to recognitions and awards we also shared and connected through the eyes of the victims:

- The report from the our own Conference-led fact finding team that visited the Philippines, allowing us to hear from the victims' families of more than 800 un-prosecuted killings in which the military has been implicated.
- The Sunday morning cantata with music by S.T. Kimbrough and his sister Mary Kimbrough Jackson. This deeply moving presentation with choir, instrumentalists, conductor, soloists, and stunning images told the story of *The Good Samaritan: Through the Eyes of the Victim*, using Charles Wesley's poetry. There were not many dry eyes after the performance and reflections by coordinator and soloist Derrick Spiva Sr., conductor Derrick Spiva Jr., and S.T. Kimbrough, composer.

We welcomed four Bishops: Bishop Warner Brown, Ordination Preacher; Bishop Gaspar Domingos, West Angola Conference, Angola Partnership; Bishop Roy Sano, Asian Caucus Speaker; and Bishop William Dew, Retired Clergy Speaker.

We elected General and Jurisdictional Delegates to General Conference, May 2008 and Jurisdictional Conference, July 2008, led by the Rev. Odette Lockwood-Stewart.

We frolicked in the park with a picnic dinner and mission exhibits that gave us time to meet, greet, eat, and stroll.

We ordained eight Elders, commissioned 11 Probationers and two Associate members, and recognized Orders for one Elder.

We celebrated more than 60 response teams to Louisiana and Mississippi with presentations from the Rev. Marva Mitchell and Barrie Mann.

We elected Bert Yin and Gayle Shearman as Co-Lay Leaders Elect to begin serving August 1, 2008 following Pete Taylor's completion of eight years as Conference Lay Leader.

We heard Laity Address by Blanche Farnam, Nevada-Sierra District.

We debated and passed significant legislation.

We memorialized 33 clergy and spouses after an inspiring sermon from Rev. John Dodson recalling his journey since the death of his wife, Sue.

We celebrated our sacred diversity and unity in Christ with stirring and contemplative music from the Global Praise Team, brought to us by Linda Wiberg, Director of Connectional Ministries and the Conference Board of Missions.

We received a new coordinated Plan for Clergy Assessment and Congregational

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Walking in the Spirit

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Revitalization from the Board of Ordained Ministry.

We commissioned United Methodist Volunteers in Mission teams as a body and welcomed Dr. Sue King, UMVIM Coordinator, to her first annual conference with us.

We set the appointments for seven districts as we said good bye to Jim Lockwood-Stewart, Bay View District and Vickie Armour Healy, Fresno District, and welcomed Renae Extrum-Fernandez, Bay View District and Mariellen Sawada Yoshino, Fresno District.

We passed the 2008 CFA budget proposal of 12.3 million dollars.

We recognized 30 years of service of Jesse Chang, Head Accountant, and 25 years of Grady Knowles, Pension and Health Care Officer.

We heard the joint announcement from the Episopacy Committee and myself that I will retire as of August 31, 2008 according to the Book of Discipline, Par. 409.1.

We recognized retiring clergy.

We took a deep breath and said, "Amen."

As I write these words sitting at my computer, I am enjoying the morning activities of God's winged, finned, and crawling creatures with which I share my backyard. The array of birds that eat at the feeders and drink and bathe in the fountains and stream, and the Koi that glide in the pond is a testament to the creative mystery of God. The families of speckled sparrows, blue jays, yellow finches, red and green head hummers, red breasted robins, grey doves, green frogs, and other rainbow visitors prompt me to give thanks for the diversity of creation that shares the earth with us humans. I praise God for the diversity of life and ministry we share together as the body of Christ in this Conference, and for the grace of God that binds us together in love.

May your summer be blessed and renewing.

YOUR SISTER AND BISHOP IN CHRIST,



Beverly J. Shamana

Kelly Newell named Youth and Camping coordinator

On August 23, Kelly Newell will join the Conference Council on Ministries staff as Coordinator of Youth and Camping Ministries. Newell brings strong leadership and organizational skills to the position, along with a background in multi-cultural education that gives her a keen understanding of the diversity of our church and Conference.

She received a Masters in Bilingual/Multicultural Education with Cultural Emphasis from California State University, Chico, having earned a BA in Liberal Studies with Bilingual Emphasis from there.

She has served as owner and director of Snow Mountain Camp, a residential and day summer camp for children ages 6-17; youth director at Aldersgate UMC in Chico and Nevada City UMC in Nevada City; and held Visitor status with the American Camp Association, a designation that required her to have a working knowledge of all national site and program accreditation standards, and

the ability to evaluate each camp's program and site compliance for national accreditation recognition.

She is also Conference Chair for the Western Association of Independent Camps, an association for 100 independent camp owners and their staff.

Newell succeeds the Rev. Colin Kerr-Carpenter, who served as Youth and Camping Director before resigning this spring, saying that he felt called to pursue another career path after 10 years of ministry in the position.



Kelly Newell, new Conference Coordinator of Youth and Camping Ministries.

Diversity and Global Praise

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teams from Cal-Nevada in the past year were also honored.

Lively and diverse musical selections were provided throughout the week by the General Board of Global Ministries' Global Praise Team under the direction of S.T. Kimbrough. Kimbrough, a world-renowned baritone, also sang the part of the Victim in the powerful new cantata, "The Good Samaritan: Through the Eyes of the Victim," composed by Mary K. Jackson with text by Charles Wesley. The production incorporated visuals and choral numbers presented at the culminating Communion service on Sunday.

The Rev. Odette Lockwood-Stewart, pastor of Epworth UMC, Berkeley, received the 2007 Francis Asbury Award during a plenary session. She will serve as head of the California-Nevada delegation to the 2008 General Conference to be held April 23-May 2, 2008, in Fort Worth, Texas. Those elected as General Conference delegates also serve as Jurisdictional Conference delegates. To be elected, a person must be named on a majority of valid ballots cast.

Lay delegates elected to General Conference: Randall Miller, San Francisco, CA; Susan Hunn, Placerville, CA; Rosa Washington-Olson, Davis, CA; Chuck Myer, Rancho Cordova, CA; and Katherine Kim, Morgan Hill, CA. Clergy delegates: Odette Lockwood-Stewart, Berkeley, CA; Renae Extrum-Fernandez, Walnut Creek, CA; Ted Virts, Sacramento, CA; Dale Weatherspoon, Redwood City, CA; and Felicisimo Cao, Sunnyvale, CA.

Lay delegates elected to Jurisdictional Conference: Blanche Farnam, Portola, CA; Karin Hilton, Berkeley, CA; Betty Suzuki, Sacramento, CA; Michael Herzog, Napa, CA; and Laddie Perez-Galang, Hayward, CA.

Clergy Jurisdictional delegates: Vickie Healy, Fresno, CA; Benoni Silva-Netto, Chico, CA; Siosifa Hingano, Sanger, CA; Karen Oliveto, San Francisco, CA; and Dave Bennett, Stockton, CA. Reserve lay delegates include: Katherine Parker, Rob Dunning, Connie Hunter, Bruce Pettit and



Global Praise song leaders Grace Cajiua (left) and S.T. Kimbrough, Jr., energized the music throughout the Annual Conference Session from a unified stage for both plenary and worship. Photo by Spud Hilton

Laura Tower. Clergy reserves include Michael Yoshii, Kham Dy Yang, Kristen Sachen, Kelvin Sauls and Elizabeth Brick.

Sixteen elders were granted retirement, and presented with intricately carved walking sticks from Tonga.

A memorial service was held in the newly combined

plenary/worship space to honor the lives of 33 pastors, spouses and partners.

Bishop Warner Brown of the Denver area served as conference preacher at the commissioning, and ordination ceremony.

Half of the Annual Conference Offering was designated for the Conference's growing partnership with the West Angola Conference, whose leader, Bishop Gaspar Domingos, was present at the conference, leading in worship services in his native tongue,

Portuguese. The offering was shared equally to support a ministry of solidarity for the 835+ victims of extra-judicial killings in the Philippines.

A Conference-led fact-finding mission team to the Philippines premiered a video

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This year's retirees include the Revs. Michael Brown, Gayle Pickrell, Nobuaki Hanaoka, Philip MuYoung Kim, Dave Slorpe, Dorothy Baker, Douglass Fitch, and Jim Lockwood-Stewart. Each was presented with an intricately carved walking stick from Tonga. Photo by Spud Hilton

Diversity and Global Praise

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resource at annual conference, available to help churches understand the issues facing United Methodists and other denominations reportedly being targeted by the Philippine government for murder and disappearance. A trailer of the video, "Live to Tell" was provided to each church.

Churches also received copies of a Conference video highlighting the theme, "Celebrating Our Diversity and Unity in Christ." The video, produced by the Conference Communications Office, profiled several churches and ministries that illustrate how diversity has become an integral part of ministry in the life of the Conference.

Bishop's Awards were presented to Fern and Gerry Green of Nevada City UMC, Martha Griffin of Smith Valley UMC in Nevada, and Georgie Summers of Trinity

UMC, Chico. The sixth annual Bishop Melvin Talbert Racial Justice Award was presented to Rev. John Oda of Pine UMC, San Francisco. Rev. Douglass Fitch received the MFSA's Leontine Kelly Peace and Justice Award.

Cory Parish, Executive Secretary of the Conference Claimants' Endowment Board, presented a check for \$1.4 million to the Annual Conference for pensions and benefits.

This year, the Annual Conference *Daily Connection* was also translated into Tongan (by Sione Moala) and, as *Conexion Diaria*, into Spanish (by Norma Betancourt).

Communications Director Jeneane Jones contributed to this report.

Statistician's Report

In his report to the Annual Conference, statistician Scott Allred said that growth, baptisms and Sunday attendance have continued to drop in most of the 358 churches in the conference. Membership stands at 84,504, down 1421 from the previous year. Worship attendance stands at 39,894, down 851. Church school attendance stands at 44,986, up 335.

ACS sights and sounds

Experience some of the highlights of this year's Annual Conference Session. DVD copies of the Sunday morning worship service, featuring the new cantata, "The Good Samaritan: Through the Eyes of the Victim," composed by Mary K. Jackson with text by Charles Wesley, are available to purchase:

<http://www.ceedtv.com/Communion.html>.

The production incorporates visuals and choral numbers presented at the culminating Communion service on Sunday. Performed by choir members from throughout the Conference*, it features General Board of Global Ministries' Global Praise Team director S.T. Kimbrough, and Dr. Derrick Spiva Sr. of this Conference. The cantata was directed by Derrick Spiva, Jr. (CEED TV website also offers the DVD of the Committee on Reconciliation luncheon and Spiva, Jr.'s CD "Embraced Destiny.")

In addition, the 11-minute video "Celebrating Our Diversity and Unity in Christ," illustrating how churches in the California-Nevada Conference embrace diversity through ministries, is available (one per church) through the office of Communications. For your church's copy contact Cate Monaghan at (916) 374-1529 or e-mail catem@calnevumc.org.

Rev. Carl Schwarzenberg made audio recordings of all plenary sessions, worship services and the MFSA dinner. These are available at \$5.00 per tape, with no additional charge for shipping.

For more information contact him at (530) 467-3166, hiddenvly@sisqtel.net or 7800 French Creek Road, Etna, CA 96027.

* Due to a distribution error, the names of singers and instrumentalists in the bulletin insert were not handed out at the Sunday Communion service. Choir: De Calvert, Randy Crawley, Emanuel Cruz, Andrew Dick, John Dick, Larry Dick, Debbie Dillon, Kent Dillon, Donna Hamilton, Candise Hanson, Michael Herzog, Mary Herzog, Jerry Ludeke, Chuck Myer, Brian Nippa, Adaire Palm, Kent Parr, Carolyn Shama, Betty Steinbach, Rosa Washington-Olson, Jerry Olson. Instrumentalists: Adaire Palm (Flute), Betty Steinbach (Flute), Kamilyn David (Piano), Candise Hanson (Oboe). Global Praise Team with S.T. Kimbrough Jr.: Solomon Dorsey (Percussion), DeLyn Celec (Keyboard), Drew Belk (Guitars), Grace Cajuat (Singer).

True religion is love in action

By Michael J. Christensen

CitiHope International

“True religion pleasing to God is this: caring for orphans and widows in their distress, and keeping oneself from being contaminated by the values of the world.” (James 1:27)

I’m a man on a mission to help save 1,000 AIDS orphans and widows in Africa, and I need help. As Bono says: “Africa is ablaze. We are called to put out the fire!”

AIDS as we know it is 25 years old. When I was a pastor in San Francisco in the early 1980s, we began hearing about a

strange new form of cancer among gay males in San Francisco and New York City. The medical establishment called it “GRID” (Gay-Related

Immuno-Deficiency). By 1984, HIV was identified as the cause and the disease became known as AIDS. As Director of the United Methodist AIDS Project in San Francisco, and as a volunteer chaplain on the AIDS unit at San Francisco General Hospital, I witnessed and tried to offer the *ministry of presence* to mostly gay men and IV drug users who died.

Today, 25 years later, there is a new face of Global AIDS – that of a young woman, between 15 and 24, living in sub-Sahara Africa or Asia. Here are the alarming numbers behind the new face:

- Around 40 million people worldwide have HIV/AIDS
- 63% of them live in sub-Saharan Africa
- 20% of them live in Asia – where new cases of HIV/AIDS are on the rise



Michael Christensen feeding orphans at Kutemwa Orphan Care Center, Malawi.

- Five people die of AIDS every minute
- In the same amount of time, nine more people are infected with HIV
- About 25 million people have died of AIDS since 1981
- The same number are now infected in sub-Saharan Africa: 25 million
- Half of those living with HIV in Africa are orphaned or abandoned children. The common estimate is about 12 million kids whose lives have been impacted by AIDS.

My particular involvement over the past 25 years has been with CitiHope International – a non-sectarian, Christian, humanitarian relief and development agency working in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Caribbean, and Africa. (Visit www.citi-hope.org.)

Malawi, Africa, is a small, land-locked, Pennsylvania-size country of 13 million bordering Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique. Malawi is particularly vulnerable to famine and disease, and suffers disproportionately from extreme poverty and AIDS. Currently, AIDS infects 14% of the population and accounts for more than 85,000 deaths per year, leaving 950,000 AIDS-affected orphans.

CitiHope’s mission in Malawi is to bring help and raise hope by supplying nutritional meals to orphaned, abandoned and vulnerable children and their extended families; by delivering life-saving medicine to hospitals

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Nutritional meals for Orphans in Malawi are provided by CitiHope International.

New partner to help with capital campaign

The Conference United Methodist Foundation announces that Susan Peters, CFRE, is the new lead partner to help your local church with its capital campaign, and that the Foundation's capital campaign consultants are moving "full steam ahead."



Susan Peters

Over the past six years the Foundation has offered top-quality, prayer-based capital campaign leadership to congregations in our Annual Conference, thanks to the dynamic team of John Dodson and Susan Peters. Now Peters has taken the helm, assisted by Director of Development Betsy Schwarzentraub.

John Dodson, a retired pastor, teacher and consultant, leaves a legacy in this Conference of passion for ministry and over-the-top financial goals for churches of all sizes. In December he resigned as the Foundation's lead partner, to "really retire" and be more available to his extended family.

But resourcing for our congregations now has moved on to equally expert hands! Susan Peters, CFRE, is a lifelong United Methodist and member of El Dorado County

Federated Church in Placerville. She has 22 years of extensive experience with churches and not-for-profit organizations, and has worked primarily in capital campaigns, as well as in endowments and planned giving. She has led capital campaigns for the CA-NV United Methodist Foundation since 2001, and in 2005 also became the Foundation's Endowment Development Specialist.

Susan is a Certified Fund Raising Executive, having completed the requirements in 2003 for this top award in her field. She is a graduate of numerous seminars offered by The Fund Raising Institute, Association of Fundraising Professionals, and Association of Healthcare Philanthropy, as well as the United Methodist Planned Giving School and the National Planned Giving Institute at the College of William and Mary. She is a frequent trainer in fund development for the Nonprofit Resource Center in Sacramento.

"We are very pleased to have Susan Peters as our lead consultant on local church capital campaigns," says Mark Parsons, Executive Director of the Foundation. "Our capital campaign work is going strong, and Susan brings not only tremendous experience and expertise to her work, but also a great heart for people and ministry."

To learn more about Susan and capital campaign help for your church, contact Mark Parsons at (916) 374-1579 or through the Foundation's Web site "Campaigns" page, at www.canvumf.org.

True religion

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and rural clinics; and by providing Pastoral and Congregational Care Training (PACCT) in AIDS prevention and compassionate care in communities and congregations suffering from AIDS. In 2006, CitiHope International and its ministry partners

- provided more than one million nutritional meals to 3,000 orphans in nine orphan care centers
- delivered \$2 million dollars' worth of medicine and medical supplies to 17 hospitals, seven schools, and five prisons
- supported 38 community-based organizations that feed and care for more than 12,000 persons with at least one meal a day for the year
- trained and equipped 60 pastors and community leaders (20 men and 40 women) in dealing with the

social and spiritual issues surrounding HIV/AIDS in their churches

- identified and funded our first HopeHome in Malawi

This year, we hope to do more. As John Wesley said: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

Michael J. Christensen, a clergy member of California-Nevada Annual Conference, is Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Drew University and Africa Regional Director for CitiHope International.

Conference News Briefs

New hymn collection by Cal-Nev pastor

Hope Publishing Company is releasing a fourth collection of hymns by the Rev. Dan Damon, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Richmond, California. The work, titled *Fields of Mercy*, is available from the publisher.

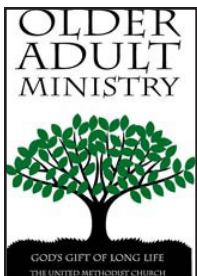
Rev. Damon is an internationally published writer of hymn texts and tunes. Hope Publishing Company released two previous collections of his hymns: *Faith Will Sing* (1993), and *The Sound of Welcome* (1998). Abingdon Press released his collection *To the Thirsty World* in 2002.

Rev. Damon's hymns have been included in the *New Century Hymnal*; *Chalice Hymnal*; *Voices United*; *The Faith We Sing* and several others. He has released two recordings: "Sleepy Time Down South: Solo Piano" (2002), and "Like a Child: Songs and Hymns" (2005). He has also written hymn translations from Vietnamese, Portuguese, and Shona languages and, with Patrick Matsikenyiri, recently edited *Njalo*, a collection of 16 hymns in the African tradition for Abingdon Press. He has presented his work at national conferences of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada and the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts.

In addition to his ministerial duties and songwriting, Rev. Damon serves as adjunct faculty in church music at the Graduate Theological Union, Center for the Arts, Religion, and Education in Berkeley and is a jazz pianist heard frequently in clubs in the San Francisco area. For more information visit his website at www.damon-stuneshop.com.

Older adult ministries

Grants awarded to 26 United Methodist older adult ministries across the globe include two from our Conference. The grants total \$38,000 and were awarded through the UM Committee on Older Adult Ministries, Board of Discipleship. Awards this year included \$1,250 for Angels on Call, providing training and resources to welcome visitors and assist those in need in the Golden Gate District, and \$1,000 for Coming Fully Alive, a joint venture between Grace UMC, Yuba City, and Senior New Ways. Coming Fully Alive offers an eight-class series on topics for older adults, and will help launch an older adult program in two locations.



The Spiritual Leaders' Retreat is on hiatus. Watch for it in 2008!

Anniversary planned in Fairfield

Fairfield Community UMC is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. Everyone is invited to attend on Sunday, October 21 at 9:30 a.m. for a celebratory service with Bishop Shamana as guest speaker. A reception will follow the service.

The address of the church is 1875 Fairfield Ave., Fairfield, CA.

For more information e-mail Linda Patrick at grmalinda@earthlink.net or call the church office at (707) 426-2944.

Igniting Ministry honors First UMC Modesto's hospitality skills

For a second year, First UMC, Modesto has distinguished itself as an official "Welcoming Congregation." The United Methodist denomination recognizes our churches around the country that make a concerted effort to build hospitality into a vital ministry. It's part of Igniting Ministry, the denomination's Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors commitment to welcoming and hospitality.

To gain its second year certification, First UMC has provided opportunities for discipleship in its congregation and worked at embracing newcomers as part of its ongoing lifestyle. To learn more about welcoming certification visit www.ignitingministry.org, where the Welcoming certification worksheet can be downloaded.

Oct. 26-27 the California-Nevada Annual Conference will offer Igniting Ministry training for laity.

The training will be designed for laity and open to teams from each church in the Conference.

It will feature new Igniting Ministry workshop tracks and presenters from around the country. The two-day training session will be held at Davis UMC. Registration information will be coming soon! To learn more contact Communications Director Jeneane Jones at (916) 374-1518 or jeneanej@calnevumc.org.

Conference News Briefs

PSR student wins Georgia Harkness Scholarship

Robyn J. Morrison, a student at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, is one of 11 seminary students who will travel to other countries to learn about the leadership styles of women in an effort to help develop leaders for global justice. The experience is provided through the 2007-08 Georgia Harkness Scholarships, which awards \$5,000 to women who are older than 35 and preparing for ordination as elders in the United Methodist Church as a second career. Morrison is from the Yellowstone Annual Conference.

Harkness, the first woman theologian to teach in a Protestant seminary in the United States, dedicated her life to dismantling sexual and racial discrimination in The United Methodist Church and the world. She taught at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois and was instrumental in the 1956 decision giving women full clergy membership in The Methodist Church. She died in 1974. For more information about the scholarship program visit

www.gbhem.org/Harkness.html or contact the Rev. HiRho Park at (615) 340-7409.

Further GC study asked for church's ministry

(UMNS) – The commission charged with clarifying the ordering of ministry within The United Methodist Church will carry a resolution to the 2008 General Conference calling for four more years of study.

Created by the 2004 General Conference, the 25-member Ministry Study Commission sought to address the “continued ambiguity in the denomination’s understanding of lay, licensed, and ordained ministry” and is to bring conclusions to the April 23-May 2, 2008 gathering in Fort Worth, Texas. The resolution calling for further study, if approved, will be followed by a study document suggesting adjustments to the church’s current ministry.

Global AIDS Awareness

The General Board of Church & Society has a number of resources

available for churches planning Global AIDS Awareness Sundays. Materials for special services can be found at the Board’s website, www.umc-gbcs.org, or by e-mail to lbales@umc-gbcs.org. Also, a new 32-page booklet of meditations, “Prayers for Encouragement,” has been published by The Upper Room and is available in quantities.

Yoshii to speak

Rev. Michael Yoshii, pastor of Buena Vista UMC in Alameda and a longtime activist for peace and justice, will be a speaker at “Living Faith, Seeking Justice,” a conference to be held November 1-4 in Fort Worth, Texas, which is also the location of the 2008 General Conference. The conference is sponsored by the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, the denomination’s social action agency. The event will feature speakers, workshops, exhibits and activities designed to teach and preach the United Methodist Social Principles. To learn more or to register visit www.umc-gbcs.org/livingfaith.

More Annual Conference Session memories ...



At left, fabrics provided by delegates to represent the diversity of cultures within the Conference. At right, Ordinands (clockwise from top left) Kathryn Mary Gollub Dunning, William Hong-Yee Chou, Adrionne Beasley, Virginia (Ginger) Foster, Cynthia Jean Stateman, Christina (Tina) Ballagh, Victoria L. Schlintz, and Julia Hallett Horne. Photos by Spud Hilton

A Missionary's Notebook

Rev. Linda Kelly

Linda Kelly directs the Side-by-Side Spiritual Companions program as Conference Missionary to Loaves & Fishes. Her work is supported in part through Conference Board of Missions and donations (Advance Special #811). Phone: (916) 443-4362; revlinda@sbcglobal.net.

Clergyman finds connection with homeless man

At Annual Conference Session in June, a rather scruffy man on a bicycle stood outside the Convention Center and pestered attendees for money. He was hungry. One of our clergy members (per my influence, says he) decided to acknowledge the man's presence. Several times during the week on the streets of Sacramento, the pastor and the homeless man engaged in brief conversation. The minister asked the man his name and where he was

staying at night. He had a camp (illegal in Sacramento) and was trying to buy staples such as rice to cook. One day the pastor asked, "Didn't you ask me for money yesterday?" Then, teasingly, "Oh, I suppose you are hungry today too and need to eat again!" The man with the bike got the joke and smiled back. Later the panhandler told the pastor, "Thank you for looking at me. Most people don't."

How like the story in Acts 3 of Peter and John entering the temple and encountering a beggar at the gate. "Look at us," said Peter to the man. In other words, "Let's make a deeper connection here and discover the grace of God between us." It requires both parties to risk a relationship and healing.

I asked the pastor who encountered the beggar on the street how he felt about their exchange. Because he could do something – in at least seeing the man and talking with him – he felt less nervous. The beggar did not "guilt trip him" and it felt like an honest and mutual exchange, one human being connecting with another.

With youth groups and others, at the close of most of my talks, I remind them that a smile, a look in the eye, a simple "Hello" acknowledging the other's presence, whether or not we give them money, is the greatest gift. It is an offering of life and hope.



Linda Kelly and friend.

This is the last publication of the *Connection*. Many of you, dear readers, tell me how much you enjoy my articles about the Side-By-Side ministries with the homeless. To continue reading such stories, I invite you to receive the new Side-By-Side electronic newsletter.

To be on our list, email me at revlinda@sbcglobal.net, or call the Delta District administrative assistant, Cindy Buna, at (916) 374-1501. Please tell us if you'd rather have a print edition mailed to you.

One more word: people often ask me how I am funded. I raise my own funds. Mainly it is through *you*, your individual and local church giving and the support of the Conference Board of Missions that I (and the Side-By-Side mission with the homeless) am supported. If you'd like more information about partnering with Side-By-Side to keep this Conference mission alive, contact me as detailed above, or at the number in the box. Thank you for your encouragement, and may God bless you.

"Missionary's Notebook" signing off. . .



Bishop featured in one of three new DVDs

(UMNS)- The media distribution ministry of United Methodist Communications has released three new DVDs, one featuring our Bishop, as the church responds to requests for learning materials in new formats about basic Christian beliefs and practices.

The Ecufilem releases include a three-part DVD to help acolytes, ushers and greeters understand their responsibilities; an updated DVD to trace the history of African Americans in The United Methodist Church; and a new video that explains the United Methodist position on baptism.

“They represent another step into digital learning and the need for content that informs people about faith in new language and new format,” said the Rev. Larry Hollon, chief executive at United Methodist Communications.

Our Bishop Beverly Shamana provides narration for the DVD titled “Acolytes, Ushers and Greeters” and familiarizes worship leaders with their responsibilities.

Viewers can learn theological rationale behind these roles, but also general information such as symbols used in Christian worship and the seasons and colors of the Christian year. The \$19.95 DVD provides practical suggestions as well, including what an acolyte should do when the candle will not light and how ushers should seat late-comers to worship.

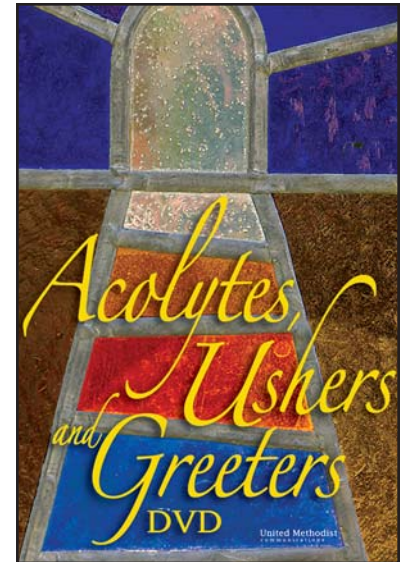
Greeters are reminded of the importance of arriving early, proper etiquette for their task and assisting people with disabilities.

The resource encourages children to become involved in worship ministry by serving as an acolyte who brings forth the light to represent that Jesus is the light of the world – “a role that is an important one for you and your church” and “a first step in a lifetime of service to the church and the world,” Shamana said.

The other DVDs are “Black Methodism: Legacy of Faith-Revival” (\$20), which celebrates the 40th anniversary of pivotal events in the life of The United Methodist Church, and “Baptism in The United Methodist Church” (\$79.95), a companion DVD to *By Water and the Spirit*, the denomination’s official statement on baptism.

Free leader’s guides are available in the “study guides” section of Ecufilem’s Web site at <http://www.ecufilem.org>.

A service of United Methodist Communications, Ecufilem serves nine other denominations besides the United Methodist Church. DVDs may be ordered online at www.ecufilem.org. E-mail orders can be sent to esc@umcom.org. To order toll free by phone, call



Ecufilem, a service of United Methodist Communications, is releasing three new DVD resources. One features narration by Cal-Nev Bishop Beverly J. Shamana, left. At right, UMNS photo illustration.

(888) 346-3862. Fax orders can be sent to (615) 742-5499 at any time.

Mail orders can be sent to Ecufilem, P.O. Box 440366, Nashville, TN 37244-0366.

To see Bishop Shamana in a clip from the “Acolytes, Ushers and Greeters” DVD, go to:

http://media.umcom.org/umns/20070705_umcom//Acolytes.asx

**Connection is a publication of
the Office of Communications of the California-Nevada
Annual Conference.**

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New Testament Resources

For Children

The Apostle Paul (DVN-306) introduces children to the early church, the spread of the Gospel after Jesus, and the role Paul played as a great missionary.

For Youth and Adults

Peter (DVN-509), with Harry Smith, Peter Graves and Jack Perkins, is the story of Peter told through art and drama. Rare footage, new research, and exclusive interviews bring his story to life.

For Adults

In **Paul: An Appealing or Appalling Apostle (DVN-507)**, John Dominic Crossan addresses challenges to under-

standing Paul: three different Pauls, Paul's character and theology, and gender balance and imbalance in the New Testament. The DVD contains a bonus sermon by Crossan titled "Justice as Love."

For Adult Study

Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation (VCN-823) is an eight-session, easy-to-understand, scholarly study. Dr. Bruce Metzger provides solid scholarship that is sensitive to various theological viewpoints. The video was a gift of Willow Glen United Methodist Church.

New direction planned for Conference publication

The California-Nevada Annual Conference has taken its place in a global revolution during which communication has evolved faster than we ever imagined possible. Within this Conference, as with the rest of the world, e-mail and Web sites have emerged as the best means for getting the news out quickly, in many ways replacing paper publications. Our **Instant Connection** places information at the fingertips of Conference members in seconds instead of days or weeks.

We recognize the need to share vital information and resources for ministry and mission in a way that print media can best provide.

For these reasons, the Communications Commission is

allowing the paper version of the *Connection* to retire, having done the required job of establishing a connection between Conference and church well. As the **Instant Connection** continues to perform that task, with 2000+ readers and growing, we will refocus our attention on the print medium.

Our plans are to introduce a quarterly, needs-driven magazine publication that represents the unique and diverse ministries and challenges of the California-Nevada Conference, giving church communities more of what they can use to better build our faith community. It is our plan to unveil this publication in Spring 2008.

Motion passed at Communications Commission, 3/3/07

CA-NV Annual Conference, United Methodist Connection

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