



The Methodist Herald

April, 2009

**Southern Delaware Charge
Colchester Community United Methodist Church
East Branch/Harvard United Methodist Church**

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Pastor's Column:

Well spring seems to have finally made its arrival. The sun stays out longer and rides higher in the sky. The days have turned warmer and all that snow and ice have finally melted away. The daffodils are starting to push up out of the ground and the robins have returned. People are out walking, enjoying the outdoors after a long hard winter.

I have started taking my dog Tre for walks in the late afternoon, both for his exercise and my own. We usually walk the same route every time. We start off going around my block and then down the street and over the covered bridge to the other side of the river. We will walk along River Rd almost to Cable's barn before turning around and heading back. In all, it is about a three mile walk.

I have walked this same route enough times with Tre that I know it pretty well. And so as we walk along, I tend to get lost in my thoughts, either thinking about what next Sunday's sermon will be about or simply enjoying the warm evening air. I greet folks that I pass along the way. But because I think I know this route pretty well, I seldom spend much time looking to see anything new.

The other day as Tre and I took our walk, I watched how Tre approached our walks. Even though he has been on this same path many times, Tre is always excited to go again. He jumps and spins around and pulls his leash to

get started on our walk. He darts from one thing to the next, investigating sights and smells like he has never been here before. Tre has to rush over to greet every person we meet as though they were a long lost friend. Everything has a sense of newness and wonder for Tre. He will look back at me, his tongue hanging out, grinning from ear to ear (can a dog grin any other way?) excited just to be here. For Tre, this is just the greatest thing ever.

It made me think, what if we approached life every day that way, always seeking the newness and wonder in life, always seeking God's presence in all things? Psalm 105:2-5 reminds us to "Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually. Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he has uttered." What if we sought God's presence continually in all things? What if we rejoiced in the marvels of God's creation, the miracles all around us? What if we saw each day as filled with God's new possibilities? I think we would rejoice and sing praises to God with our tongue hanging out and grinning from ear to ear! As we come to the season of Easter and the joy of the Resurrection, may newness of life and wonders of God's miracles fill you daily.

God's peace and blessings to you all,

Dale

Pastor Dale

AC Connection

The United Methodist Church and the NY Annual Conference are beginning a new program entitled "Rethink Church" which is encouraging us all to think of church as a *verb* not a noun. We will be looking at ways to "open" our arms, "open" our hearts and "open" our doors to those seeking a relationship with God both inside and outside of Sunday morning worship services.

In an effort to reach out to those in the 18 to 35 yr old generation the "10 Thousand Doors" campaign will utilize areas of interest for that particular age group, including websites that will attract those looking for a meaningful relationship with God and a sense of community outside of the "traditional".

We are looking for a few volunteers in that 18-35yr old age group to attend a workshop with us in Kingston on April 25th. We'll be carpooling so there's no chance of getting lost. It looks like a new and exciting way of sharing the good news with young people who are searching. Won't you please consider helping us in what promises to be a really new and worthwhile opportunity?

Faith in Action

‘World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel’

The World Council of Churches (WCC) invites you and your congregation to become part of the fourth “World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel,” June 4-10. The week is intended to foster joint international church actions for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

The week began as a way to demonstrate to governments that churches worldwide are watching the occupation, deeply concerned at its consequences and acting together for peace. The week is anchored in the Palestinian Christian community and built by participants around the world as a common international public witness.

During this year’s World Week for Peace, churches in different countries will send a clear signal to policy-makers, interested publics and their own parishes about the urgent need for a

peace settlement that secures the legitimate rights and future of both peoples.

Participants are requested to plan their activities around these points:

1. Pray with churches living under occupation, using a special prayer from Jerusalem.
2. Educate about actions that make for peace and about facts on the ground that do not, especially, settlements in occupied territory.
3. Advocate with political leaders using ecumenical policies that promote peace with justice.

The week calls participants to seek justice for Palestinians so that both Israelis and Palestinians can finally live in peace. It is now more than 60 years since the partition of Palestine hardened into a permanent nightmare for Palestinians, the WCC emphasizes. “It’s more than 40 years since the occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza overwhelmed the peaceful vision of one land, two peoples,” WCC points out, adding “Yet the dream of one nation cannot be fulfilled at the expense of another.”

The action week’s message is that now:

- * It's time for Palestinians and Israelis to share a just peace.
- * It's time for freedom from occupation.
- * It's time for equal rights.
- * It's time for the healing of wounded souls.

Each year, according to the WCC, the week has become stronger because more and more groups contribute their strength and commitment. “Unique actions are linked by a common message and purpose,” WCC says. “With each passing year, it becomes clearer that churches committed to Israel-Palestine peace must do more of their advocacy work together.”

WCC says the Amman Call in 2007 to develop a long-term advocacy strategy in order to mobilize all of its constituencies and influence change attests to that imperative. The Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum is enabling joint advocacy initiatives to grow. This newly renamed World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel, 4-10 June 2009 is one example. It was formerly known as “International Church Action for Peace in Palestine and Israel.”

For more information, such as “what” and “how,” send e-mail to Beatrice.merahi@wcc-coe.org. For other questions, send e-mail to Jonathan.Frerichs@wcc-coe.org.

We will have more details about what our churches will be doing for this event in upcoming newsletters.

District Camp Meeting May 16th

May 16th – Catskill Hudson Camp meeting at Camp Epworth. Mark it on your calendars right now! Go ahead, I’ll wait. Got it on there? Great! You will not want to miss this. Though we’ll be there only for the afternoon and perhaps part of the evening, we hope that hundreds of people from our churches in the district will gather, that our faith will be lifted up, that we’ll have a lot of fun together, and that by evening we will be saying to each other, “It’s been great to spend this day with so many Methodist Christian friends!”

Here’s the basic schedule for the day as it’s been planned thus far:

12:30: Registration begins

1:00 - 2:15: Meeting under a tent for music by Glory Road, an inspiring word from Bishop Jeremiah Park, and gathering of offerings in support of the PET (Personal Energy Transport) mission.

2:15 till 4:30 or 5:00: Activities and Socializing Kids and kid-like adults can do the Epworth ropes course, explore Epworth’s caves, go for a canoe ride (an adult has to be in each canoe), and do a “nature scavenger hunt.” Basketball and other outdoor sports equipment will be available. Tours of the camp and presentations on Epworth’s ecological farming and no-energy-use house will be given. There will be an area where people can sit and play board games together, and a labyrinth will be set up for those who would like to quietly walk this spiritual path. For those who would like to do a bit of work, volunteers will help re-line one of the camp nature trails with wood chips. And for those who don’t want to do anything organized

there are hundreds of acres of beautiful scenery to walk, explore and appreciate.

4:30: Gathering for more music

5:00: “The Shortest District Conference in History”

5:30: Barbeque prepared by Epworth’s staff
Cost will be approximately \$5 (partly underwritten by the district)

6:15: Campfire for those who would like to stay until early evening.

We will arrange carpools and caravan out to Camp Epworth, which is out near New Paltz, about an hour and a half from here. Plan on coming because it will be a great time!

Heritage Sunday on April 26th

Both of our churches in the Southern Delaware Charge will be celebrating Heritage Sunday on April 26th at our regular worship service. We will be recognizing members of our churches who have reached membership milestones of 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, and more years. We hope you will join us to recognize these faithful servants in our churches.

Colchester Community UMC Holy Week and Easter Services

Holy Week this year is the week of April 5-12. Colchester Community UMC will start Holy Week off with a Palm Sunday worship service on Sunday, April 5 at our normal 9:15 a.m. worship time. This will be a celebration of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, setting him on a path toward the cross. The children will be presenting a song and a short drama on Jesus’ journey to the cross.

A special Holy Communion service will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 9th at 7:30 p.m. We will relive events of the Last Supper as we share Communion. For this service, we will be creating a Garden of Gethsemane setting in the church, so we will need to borrow plenty of potted plants, large and small, from members of our congregation. Potted plants can be dropped off at the church on Wednesday, April 8th between 9 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

On Good Friday, April 10th, at 7:30 p.m., we will have a worship service with a dramatic

retelling of the Passion of Christ, as we relive those terrible events of Jesus' arrest, suffering, and crucifixion.

On Easter Sunday, April 12th, we will witness the mystery of the empty tomb as we celebrate with great joy the Resurrection of Jesus at our worship service at 9:15 a.m.

There will also be an Easter Sunrise service held at the East Branch/Harvard UMC at 7:00 a.m. for those who would like to greet the rising of the sun with a worship service celebrating the rising of the Son, Jesus Christ. A breakfast will follow the service at the East Branch church.

You and your family and friends are invited to join us as we journey with Christ through this Holy Week, reliving some of the central events of the Christian faith.

Colchester Community UMC March Madness Fund Raiser Reminder

Just a reminder that your checks are due! We hope you had some fun this past month and that even if you don't have a lot you can share just a little with us to keep the ministry of the church going. Who knew we had so many bottles of wine??? and so many Bibles???? Thank you for your support and your generous hearts.

Colchester Community UMC Chairperson's Chat by Toni Vessey

It's been three whole months and I'm still here! Haven't heard of any talk of impeachment so I guess we're on the right track! In March we focused on staying in love with God. Just like our personal relationships take time and effort so too does our relationship with God. Are you willing to take the time to build up a close personal relationship with God who waits like a lover to hear your voice and to spend time alone with you?

Your trustees are doing wonderful things to maintain and improve our place of worship. The side door to the sanctuary will be replaced soon with a new door with a small roof covering the opening. If you haven't noticed they have painted the choir room a bright and cheery color

so that those who make a joyful noise have a pleasant place to rehearse and they removed the divider in the library in preparation for the new handicap accessible bathroom they have planned. Thanks to the generosity of the Sherm Armstrong family they will be able to use the Memorial Fund in Sherm's name to remodel the bathroom which he always thought was a "necessary room" in the church.

The Finance Committee is working hard to make sure we are using our funds in the best way possible to continue our ministry in our community and the world. The weekly incoming funds are reported each Sunday on the back of the bulletin.

Our Historical Chair, Kay Parisi-Hampel has spent many hours sorting through all manner of Church History and has put things in order and in acid free envelopes so that years from now they will be available for generations to come. John Hampel works diligently to keep our web page up to date and interesting with his postings of photos of major events at the church. We are grateful for all their time and dedication to this work.

Don't forget to let us know how you think we're doing..

Colchester Community UMC Update on Our NCD Process – Passionate Spirituality

One of the themes our Church Health Team discussed in looking for ways to build our Passionate Spirituality was the idea of multiple entry points to the journey of faith. This theme fits well with the new United Methodist emphasis on Rethink Church and the 10,000 Doors initiative.

In keeping with the multiple entry points theme, the Colchester Community UMC is launching two new programs to open more doors to our church. The first is a monthly Family Fun & Fellowship Game Night. It will be held on the First Friday of each month at the church from 6 – 8 p.m. Come young and old alike, bring your favorite board game or card game and a snack to share and enjoy an evening of family fun and fellowship. Our first Family Fun & Fellowship Game Night will be May 1st.

The second program we are starting up is a monthly Men's devotional breakfast. We will plan to hold this on the last Saturday of each month. Our first organizing Men's devotional breakfast will be Saturday, April 18th at 8:30 a.m. at the Downsville Diner so as not to conflict with the Rethink Church Workshop on April 25th. At our first gathering we will decide on our format and confirm our regular meeting time. So men, mark your calendar and plan to join us for breakfast and a short devotional.

Colchester Community UMC Youth Group News

Our Youth Group participated in the 30 Hour Famine on Friday, March 13 and Saturday, March 14. Dylan Fisk-Foote raised \$80 while doing the Famine to help fight hunger in the world. We broke our fast with a wonderful meal at Russell and Amelia Foote's house. Thanks to all who helped contribute to this mission effort by our youth.

Our first meeting in April will be Sunday, April 19th from 2-4 pm at the parsonage. We will have a program on learning about poverty in the world and ways we can respond in faith. Our second meeting will be on Monday, April 27 at 5 pm at the parsonage. We will have a movie and pizza night.

Colchester Community UMC Angel Food Ministry

Our numbers remain the same and we are blessed in so many ways by the number of volunteers we have who keep this ministry going. Orders will be taken this month on April 6th from 1-3pm, April 8th from 4-6pm and April 11th from 10am-2pm at the Colchester Community Church library. On April 9th we will take orders at the East Branch UM Church from 10am until noon. Pick up will be on April 18th from 9 to 11am at the Downsville Fire Hall.

We have a new seafood box available for \$35. It includes salmon, shrimp and whiting fillets. Our specials include a wonderful fruit and veggie box and a special Valencia orange box this time.

Why not stop by and give us a try and see if our menus suit your family's needs. Some of our folks are even buying the "Signature Box" for their college kids. It's a pretty good deal for \$30. We have been blessed enough through this ministry to be able to donate a "Love Box" to a family in need. We will be giving one box/month so long as we have your continued support. If you have some extra cash and would like to help a family in need you can buy a box for a needy family and we will make sure they get it. If you have any questions or are ready to join our group of volunteers please give Toni a call at 363-7363.

Colchester Community UMC Open Arms Prayer Shawl Ministry

It has been a busy month for us. 4 Shawls were given to Dale Conklin, Cathy Reed, Linda Wheeler and Mary Cheska. Please keep them in your prayers along with the many others who have received a warm hug from us. We are grateful to Lorna Luscomb who continues to supply us with wonderful shawls and lap robes to pass along. If you feel called to help in any way we are in need of gift bags and money to purchase the cards we enclose with each shawl. Thank you for your continued support of our ministry with your prayers and your gifts.

Colchester Community UMC Annual Spring Rummage Sale

The Colchester Community UMC is again holding our annual Spring Rummage Sale on Friday, May 1st from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Saturday May 2nd from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the Downsville Fire Hall. This is a chance to come down and get some great bargains on clothes, shoes, and many other items. There are always some great treasures to find at these rummage sales so come and do a little perusing.

If you have not done your spring cleaning yet, this is the time to get it done. We are accepting donations of clothing in good shape for the rummage sale. Also accepted are small items, books, movies, and children's toys in good repair. Please make sure that clothing to be donated is clean and in good shape and that

other donated items are complete and in working order. Items to be donated to the Rummage Sale can be dropped off at the Downsview Fire Hall on Thursday, April 30th from 2 – 4 pm. Questions about donating items to the Rummage Sale can be directed to Helen Surry at 363-7316

Set up for the Rummage Sale will be Thursday, April 30th from 2 – 4 p.m. at the Fire Hall. Please contact Helen Surry if you can help with set-up or during the rummage sale.

East Branch/Harvard UMC Holy Week and Easter Services

Holy Week this year is the week of April 5-12. East Branch/Harvard UMC will start Holy Week off with a Palm Sunday worship service on Sunday, April 5 at our normal 6:30 p.m. worship time. This will be a celebration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, setting him on a path toward the cross. A special Holy Communion service will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 9th at 5:30 p.m. We will relive events of the Last Supper as we share Communion. For this service, we will be creating a Garden of Gethsemane setting in the church, so we will need to borrow plenty of potted plants, large and small, from members of our congregation. Potted plants can be dropped off at the church on Wednesday, April 8th between 9 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

On Good Friday, April 10th, at 5:30 p.m., we will have a worship service with a dramatic retelling of the Passion of Christ, as we relive those terrible events of Jesus' arrest, suffering, and crucifixion.

On Easter Sunday, April 12th, we will witness the mystery of the empty tomb as we celebrate with great joy the Resurrection of Jesus at our worship service at 11:30 a.m. We will return to our regular 6:30 p.m. worship service on the Sunday following Easter.

There will also be an Easter Sunrise service held at the East Branch/Harvard UMC at 7:00 a.m. for those who would like to greet the rising of the sun with a worship service celebrating the rising of the Son, Jesus Christ. A breakfast will follow the sunrise service at the church.

You and your family and friends are invited to join us as we journey with Christ through this Holy Week, reliving some of the central events of the Christian faith.

We will have someone available on Palm Sunday and Easter for our children that attend. Jesus told his disciples to let the children come to him, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven. Bring them and we'll help them to learn about Jesus and the love he has for all of us.

East Branch/Harvard UMC Music Notes

It has been so wonderful feeling a few warmer days and sunshine and having a glimpse of Spring weather that is coming. Thoughts at my house have been much brighter and the songs of the season have filled my mind and my heart. I find myself spending lots of time at the piano playing music for our upcoming services. I also got out an autoharp that Bud Taylor built for me while I lived in Connecticut. It is great fun to enjoy the songs using different instruments. I hope that you will come to share in these songs with us. It is said that those that sing pray twice. I hope to touch your hearts in some way with the songs we sing to celebrate our faith together. Choir meets at 5:45 p.m. on Sundays, just before the worship service, so join us if you would enjoy that. Thanks, Ruth

Church Humor

The ninety-five year old woman at the nursing home received a visit from one of her fellow church members. 'How are you feeling Mary?' the visitor asked. 'Oh,' said the lady, 'I'm just worried sick!' 'What are you worried about, dear?' her friend asked. 'You look like you're in good health. They are taking care of you, aren't they?' 'Yes, they are taking very good care of me.' 'Are you in any pain?' she asked. 'No, I have never had a pain in my life.' 'Well, what are you worried about?' her friend asked again. The lady leaned back in her rocking chair and slowly explained her major worry. 'Every close friend I ever had has already died and gone on to heaven. I'm afraid they're all wondering where I went.'

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