



The Methodist Herald

June, 2009

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

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Pastor's Column:

I have been doing a lot of walking lately. It is all part of our Conference's effort to help our clergy and their families to get into healthier lifestyles. So I have my little pedometer and I try to go for a walk every day, often with my dog Tre. I also try to walk to places in town instead of driving. One of the joys I have discovered in walking more is that you have time to see more of the world around you.

The other day I was walking over to the Downsville Central School for a meeting. As I rounded the bend in the road and came to the front of the school, I looked up at the hillside across from the school. This hillside is used as grazing land for a herd of Texas Long-horned cattle. These are magnificent animals, with their enormous curved horns jutting out from the sides of their heads.

On this particular day, I saw a group of these long-horned cattle gathered around a trough filled with feed. As I watched the cattle feeding, it suddenly occurred to me that those long horns, as impressive as they are, can present some interesting challenges at times. One such challenge comes at feeding time when a group of long-horned cattle are gathered around a single feeding trough, all trying to eat. If the cattle all rush in and all try to eat at once, well you can imagine the problem! Those long horns are going to get locked up with one another or worse yet they might end up gouging each other.

If all the cattle are to eat, they must take turns and cooperate with one another. First one and then another and another dips their head into the trough to get a mouthful of food. When one has a mouthful, it moves out of the way for another to eat. It is the only way to have peace and have everyone be able to eat.

This month we celebrate Peace with Justice Sunday. It is a time when we as United Methodists lift up and celebrate the many ways our denomination puts our faith in action and works for peace with justice in our communities and in the world. In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:9, Jesus says "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." I like the translation given in The Message, which says "You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family." As I think of those long-horn cattle at the feeding trough, I see them teaching us how to cooperate.

Achieving peace, true lasting peace, cannot be accomplished by force or by might, through threats or coercion. Indeed, true peace cannot be found independent of justice. It is only through a spirit of cooperation, of seeking to make sure all have a place at the table, from the least to the greatest, that we can find true peace.

God's peace and blessings to you all,

Dale

Pastor Dale

AC Connection

Pastor Dale, Ruth Shumard, and I had a lovely afternoon at the Catskill/Hudson District Camp Meeting at Camp Epworth. The weather and setting were perfect for a day of fellowship and song and communing in God's beautiful world. There were about 300 in attendance of all ages and sizes and all of us had a memorable time.

From June 10-13 Pastor Dale & Laura and I will be attending the NY Annual Conference at Hofstra University. We ask for your prayers for safe travel to and from the conference and for discernment of God's will as we discuss and vote on major issues of the United Methodist Church. Special prayers are in order on Saturday, the 13th, as Pastor Dale is ordained as an Elder in the United Methodist Church. If you cannot be there in person we ask for your thoughts and prayers at 2:00pm as the Ordination Service begins. It will be a monumental day for the Ashby Family and the Southern Delaware Charge.

Faith in Action

This month, our mission offering, taken on the third Sunday of the month, will be for the Peace with Justice Offering sponsored by The United Methodist Church. The following is excerpted from an article on the United Methodist Faith in Action website. The full article can be read at the following website: <http://www.umcgbcs.org/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=frLJK2PKLqF&b=5208215&ct=6925439&tr=y&auid=4923365>

Peace with Justice Sunday, one of the six United Methodist churchwide Special Sundays, witnesses to God's demand for a faithful, just, disarmed and secure world. Established by the 1988 General Conference, the denomination's highest policy-making body, Peace with Justice Sunday supports programs that advocate peace and justice at home and around the world. It will be observed on June 7 this year.

Because half of the Special Sunday offerings collected by an annual conference is retained to fund local peace with justice programs, differences can be made locally. In addition,

half of the offering is remitted to the General Board of Church & Society to help fund U.S. and global work in social action, public-policy education and advocacy.

This spring the board approved 28 grants totaling \$52,805. A recipient of a Peace with Justice grant is a solar oven project in the Dakotas Conference that is helping improve life in Haiti. Drinking dirty water and cooking over open fires because one has no choice are justice issues. By building and taking solar ovens to Haiti, missionary Rick Jost and other United Methodists help poor families pasteurize drinking water and cook healthy meals in a safe environment. "Motivation for what we do is the crushing poverty in Haiti," Jost said. "It brings many people to tears when they see how these people live."

Other grants went to ministries geographically dispersed from the Philippines to Mozambique and from Iowa to Jerusalem. Recipients comprise diverse ministries, such as to empower women, immigrant legal services in Iowa, justice and peace work in Jerusalem, training election observers in Mozambique, conflict management and mediation, and a water justice project.

The 1980 General Conference created a churchwide Peace with Justice program assigned to the General Board of Church & Society. The 1988 General Conference established Peace with Justice Sunday as the first Sunday after Pentecost to give churches a single, more convenient date for the offering and a name that clearly identifies the ministries it supports.

Peace with Justice Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday after Pentecost. If a local church needs to celebrate Peace with Justice Sunday on a different date, that is fine.

This offering allows The United Methodist Church to have a voice in advocating for peace and justice through a broad spectrum of global programs:

- The Ohio-based Faith Communities Uniting for Peace encourages Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Sikhs "to live from a vision of peace rooted in faith."

- In Liberia, in partnership with other religious and humanitarian groups, The United Methodist Church provides a place for former child soldiers to live, recreational activities to address war trauma, and basic necessities such as fresh drinking water and medical treatment.

Each ministry that relies on support from the individual offerings contributes collaboratively to the promotion of the six churchwide Special Sundays.

Every annual conference has a Peace with Justice Coordinator. Many conferences give grants to local churches and other United Methodist programs that promote peace with justice; others use the money for training in conflict resolution or other education initiatives within the conference.

In 2008, \$290,469 was given to the Peace with Justice Sunday offering. In 2007, \$301,357 was given and \$306,905 in 2006. You can give online to Peace with Justice Sunday at <https://donate.gcfa.org/FundDetails.aspx?ID=10000141000110003> or any other Special Sunday.

Ordination Bus Trip on June 13th

We have chartered a 30 passenger bus to take folks from the Church in Downsville or the firehouse in East Branch to Hofstra University in Hempstead New York. The price has increased to \$36/person which includes the bus driver's gratuity. The bus will leave Downsville at 9:00am and East Branch at 9:30am. There will be one short stop on the way down. You can purchase lunch at the university or bring your own. The Ordination service begins at 2:00pm in the arena. The bus will leave Hofstra at 4:30pm and make a dinner stop on the way home. "Dress casual" attire is appropriate for the day. We still have some seats available. If you would like to attend please call Toni at 363-7363. All money is due before June 4th.

Let's Celebrate...

Please join us on Sunday, June 14th to congratulate and celebrate with Pastor Dale on his ordination. The party will be held at the

American Legion Hall in Downsville starting at 1:00 p.m. Those attending should bring a dish to pass. Drinks, paper goods and dessert will be provided. We hope you will take this opportunity to come and celebrate this momentous milestone that Pastor Dale has achieved in his spiritual journey. All are welcome. If you need more information, please feel free to contact Cindi Early at 363-7584.

The PPRC is Here for You...

At our recent PPRC meeting, we were discussing some recent concerns/issues that had occurred within our congregations. During this discussion, the members felt that it might be good to remind our fellow congregants who we are, what we are and most of all that we are always here for you. The PPRC (Pastor Parish Relations Committee) is your liaison between you, the congregations, and the Pastor, the District Superintendent and higher, if need be. We are your fellow congregants, your voice and we want you to know that we are always here to listen and communicate as appropriate.

If ever there are concerns, issues or positive feedback that you feel someone needs to be aware of, but are unsure of who to contact and/or may not want to directly speak with Pastor Dale (who, by the way, is very, very approachable), we encourage you to speak with or communicate directly with one of us. The members of the committee are: Dave Lawrence, Rick Shaw and Maxine Doig from Downsville, along with Joanne Keesler, Edgar Skinner and me from East Branch/Harvard.

At each of our regular meetings, we have a standing agenda item for concerns and feedback for both churches. It is here that we brainstorm, discuss and try to come up with solutions, resolutions and/or ideas to make us a better church. We cannot remedy what we don't know is a problem, nor can we give praise if we don't know it is warranted. As with everything in life, communication is key and we want free and open flowing lines in our congregations and churches.

At this time, we are embarking on a whole new vision with our fellow Methodists to "RETHINK" our church, and be part of the Ten

Thousand Doors campaign. We need each of you to assist us in finding new ways to grow our church and make it the best it can be. This doesn't necessarily mean (but it would definitely be a wonderful bonus) getting more people in our pews on Sundays, or any other day of the week we choose to hold service. Rather, we need to find other ways, possibly by taking ourselves, our missions, and our visions out to the people and communities we are part of and beyond. If we lead by example, others may follow. I am sure you all notice the financial facts on the back of your bulletins every Sunday. These figures are real and if we continue with the current trends, it doesn't take a rocket scientist or CPA to tell us that we won't be able to maintain a viable existence forever. We need and are asking for your assistance by sharing your ideas, concerns, visions and observations with us. Let us be your voice as we RETHINK our church and start opening some of those Ten Thousand doors, with our Open Hearts, Open Minds and Open Doors. With Peace and Blessings...Cindi Early, PPRC Chair

DCS Baccalaureate Service

The Baccalaureate service for our Downsville Central School graduating seniors will be held Thursday, June 25th at 7 pm at the Colchester Community United Methodist Church. This is an ecumenical worship service put on by all the churches in our community. We will have an ecumenical choir for our service as well. Those interested in singing with the choir for the Baccalaureate are asked to meet at the Colchester Community UMC at 6:30 pm on the night of the Baccalaureate to go over the music. We invite you to join us as we celebrate the accomplishments of our graduating seniors and wish them God's blessings as they embark on a new chapter in their lives.

Choir Appreciation Sunday

On Sunday, June 14th, the Colchester Community UMC and the East Branch/Harvard UMC will be honoring our choirs and music directors during our worship service as we

celebrate Choir Appreciation Sunday. The choirs at both of our churches will be presenting a selection of their favorite anthems as our "sermon" for the worship service. We hope you will join us in giving a big and well-deserved thank you to our choirs for all they have done during this past year to enhance our worship services with their beautiful music. We appreciate their willingness to share their musical gifts with us each Sunday.

Colchester Community UMC Children's Day

The Colchester Community UMC will be celebrating Children's Day on Sunday June 7th at our worship service. We will be recognizing all the children that have participated in our Sunday School program throughout this past year. We will also be showing our appreciation for our Sunday School teachers, our Release Time Coordinator and helpers, and our Sunday School Superintendent for all their efforts on behalf of our children. We hope you will join us on this special Sunday.

Colchester Community UMC Music Notes

Our choir will soon be enjoying their summer break. On Sunday, June 14th, we will celebrate Choir Appreciation Day. We are very fortunate to have such a talented, dedicated choir. This service will include a sermon of music, with the choir singing some of their favorites. The choir will sing through the month of June, and will return in September. We hope to have special music in July and August. Also on June 14th, our handbell choir will perform "Will the Circle Be Unbroken." The rehearsal for this will be on Wednesday, June 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. All ages are welcome. Anyone with an interest in or questions about the choir or the handbells should call our Music Director, Marcia Edel, at 363-7185

Colchester Community UMC Chairperson's Chat by Toni Vessey

This month's meeting focused on doing that which the Spirit leads us to do. Doing good is one of the Three Simple Rules that we are

following this year. We also shared a poem by Maya Angelou that speaks of Being a Christian..."I was lost but now I'm found"...and we compared being a Christian in today's world to being a "lonely little petunia in an onion patch".

Your church council is working diligently to find the resources to continue the ministries of the church. We continue to carry a deficit in our apportionments but are able to cover our monthly expenses. We are grateful for your support of our fund raisers but as you see every Sunday in the bulletin we are still about \$2500 short in our budget needs.

The PPR committee is meeting regularly with Pastor Dale and airing concerns as they come up. If you have a concern about worship or Church ministries feel free to approach any of the members of the committee or Pastor Dale so your concerns can be addressed. CCUMC members are Maxine Doig, Dave Lawrence and Rick Shaw.

We're also in the beginning of a new approach to spreading the Word with a program called Rethink Church which is geared primarily to the 18 to 35yr old "seeker". For more information you can go to 10thousanddoors.org to see what it's all about. And while you are at it please go to our website http://www.gb-gm-umc.org/Southern_delaware_charge and see the hard work that John Hampel continues to do on our behalf as webmaster.

As always please let us know how we're doing. Any of your council members or Pastor Dale are willing and able to hear your comments and concerns and to address them quickly so that we are all moving in the same direction on our individual spiritual journeys as a unified Church family.

Colchester Community UMC holds monthly First Friday Family Fun & Fellowship Night

The Colchester Community UMC has started holding a monthly First Friday Family Fun & Fellowship night at the church. This event will be held on the first Friday of each month at 6:00 p.m. It is a family game night at the church. You are invited to round up your family, bring some of your favorite board games

or card games, a snack to share and come over to the church for an evening of family fun. Invite your neighbors and friends. The whole family is welcome. We hope to see you there.

Colchester Community UMC Men's Devotional Breakfast

The monthly Men's devotional breakfast will be held on Saturday, June 27th this month at the Downsville Diner. We will meet at the Diner at 8:30 a.m for breakfast. Pastor Dale will lead a short devotional following breakfast. This monthly devotional breakfast is open to all men in our community. So men, mark your calendar and plan to join us for breakfast and a short devotional.

Colchester Community UMC Release Time 2009

We have completed another year of Release Time and are happy to report over 90% attendance. We had 9 students who came every time we met except for when they were absent from school. We had a limited number of meetings due to holidays and inclement weather but when we did meet we had fun and learned that God loves us and remains with us no matter where we are or what we're doing and with special emphasis on the Golden Rule. Thank you to Shirley Grant who walked our kids to and from the church with a smile on her face and the parents who allowed their children to attend.

Colchester Community UMC Angel Food Ministry

This month we will begin taking orders with Food Stamps. We feel there is a need for this service and with the coming of cell service in Downsville we feel that we can add this to our Angel Food Ministry. We will be donating another "love box" to a needy family and we are grateful to those who have donated time and resources to our program. Orders will be taken early this month because I will be away at Annual Conference. Orders will be taken in Downsville on the 3rd, 6th and 8th and on the 4th in East Branch. If you have any questions

please call Toni at 363-7363 for more information. Menus can be found at all local business locations.

Colchester Community UMC Trustees Renovating Church Bathroom - Update

If you have been over to the church in the last week or so, you have seen the progress we have made on renovating our church bathroom to make it handicap accessible. The bathroom has been expanded, with the wall framing, sheetrock work, floor, ceiling, and plumbing work all pretty much completed. A hearty thanks goes out to all the helping hands that pitched in during the week following Memorial Day.

We still need to do the mud and tape work, paint, contact the flooring company to install the linoleum, and put the fixtures in. The toilet will be installed temporarily to make the restroom functional while we are finishing up the rest of the work.

If you are able to help in any way, please contact Brian LaTourette via email bc lato@frontiernet.net, or by phone 363-7123 to volunteer your time.

East Branch/Harvard UMC Summer Worship Services at the Harvard Church

This summer the East Branch/Harvard United Methodist Church will once again be holding a weekly worship service at the historic Harvard Church on State Highway 30 in Harvard. This year the worship services at Harvard will be on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. for the months of July and August. Our first service will be on Thursday, July 2nd. These worship services will feature more contemporary Christian music and a more informal style. No need to get all dressed up for church. Just come as you are and spend a little time worshipping with us. Sunday evening worship services will continue to be offered at the East Branch Church every Sunday at 6:30 p.m. The Thursday evening service at Harvard Church offers an alternative for people in our community who may not always be able to make it to Sunday evening worship service

during the hectic summer months. Please let your friends and family know of our new worship offering. We hope to see you sometime this summer at the Harvard Church or at the East Branch Church.

East Branch/Harvard UMC Trustees at Work

The Trustees at the East Branch/Harvard UMC have been at work taking care of our facilities. We have been enjoying our new kitchen facilities at the East Branch church, especially for our monthly potluck supper on the last Sunday of each month at 5:30 p.m. The expanded parking area next to the church makes parking and inviting friends much easier.

The next project that the Trustees are looking at is the crumbling rock retaining wall in front of the church. This rock wall is in need of some serious attention. The Trustees are formulating a plan to take care of this problem and make the front of our church much more attractive in appearance. Watch for our progress over summer as we continue to work to enhance our church to better serve our community.

Church Humor

The preacher's 5 year-old daughter noticed that her preacher father always paused and bowed his head for a moment before starting his sermon. One day she asked him why. "Well, Honey," he began, proud that his daughter was so observant of his messages, "I'm asking the Lord to help me to preach a good sermon." "Well then, how come He doesn't do it?" she asked

A Sunday School teacher challenged her children to take some time on Sunday afternoon to write a letter to God. They were to bring their letter back the following Sunday. One little boy wrote, "Dear God, We had a good time at church today. Wish you could have been there."

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

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