



The Methodist Herald

July, 2009

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

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Pastor's Column:

Last week we held the baccalaureate service for the Downsville Central School graduating class of 2009. This year's baccalaureate service was extra special to me because my son was one of the graduating seniors. The service was held on Thursday night, the day before graduation. Now as most of you know, the entire month of June had been exceptionally wet and rainy and this Thursday evening was no exception. It had been overcast and cloudy all day long, but the rain did not start falling until right before the baccalaureate service was scheduled to start.

As the graduating seniors and their families started arriving at the church, the sky turned ominously dark and threatening. Flashes of lightning followed by long menacing rumbles of thunder gave advance warning that some serious thunderstorms were about to arrive. A few minutes before the service was to start, the rain started coming down in torrents. Arriving guests made rapid dashes from their cars to the church trying to avoid getting soaked, but not succeeding. The whole scene had an eerily familiar feel to it...

I stood inside the door to the church, greeting people and handing out bulletins. One woman came into the church and she was visibly upset, tears running down her cheeks. As I spoke to her, I quickly learned why she was upset. This whole scene with baccalaureate and the thunderstorm had resurfaced for her painful

memories of similar circumstances two years ago, when during the baccalaureate service, we had the severe storms that sparked the flash flooding along Cat Hollow that cost four people their lives, two of which were close friends of this woman.

It was a reminder to me that even though the physical damage from that flood two years ago has mostly been repaired, there are still deep wounds from that event that need healing. Not the least of which is the sense of fear and anxiety that rises up whenever severe storms threaten to cause a repeat of the destruction caused by the 2007 Colchester flood. It certainly did not help when near the end of the service the fire siren went off, adding to the similarities to the events of two years ago.

It seemed somehow appropriate, and perhaps even divine intervention, that our opening song for this baccalaureate service was "Stand By Me." As the rain came down, the lightning flashed, and the thunder rumbled, we sang "When the storms of life are raging, stand by me. When the storms of life are raging, stand by me. When the world is tossing me, like a ship upon the sea, thou who rulest wind and water, stand by me." I could not help but think of the words from Psalm 121: "I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth....The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time

forth and forever more.” Indeed the Lord is our source of help in all circumstances.

The storms of life will inevitably still come, but the Lord is steadfast in love and will stand by us in every storm. The Lord offers us healing grace and peace that the world cannot give nor take away. The healing and rebuilding that has occurred since the 2007 Colchester flood could not have happened without God moving the hearts of so many people of faith to generously share their time, gifts, talents, and resources. And the healing process continues still today. When we put our full faith in the Lord, God will heal our wounds, remove our fears and grant us divine peace.

God’s peace and blessings to you all,

Dale

Pastor Dale

AC Connection

From June 10 through June 13, Pastor Dale, Laura, and Toni Vessey attended Annual Conference at Hofstra University in Hempstead, Long Island. This is the annual gathering of all the clergy and the lay delegates from across our Conference for four days of worship, fellowship, business, and all things Methodist. It is a time of renewing old acquaintances and making new ones. It is a time of celebrating what God is doing through our churches and congregations in the New York Annual Conference. There are inspiring preachers, teachers, and speakers to lift our spirits and challenge our faith to grow. And of course there is lots of singing and sharing table fellowship at meals because you cannot have a Methodist gathering without food and song. The Annual Conference is led by our enthusiastic and energetic Bishop Jeremiah Park, who I think expends enough energy during Conference to power a small city!

There were many opportunities to worship together during Annual Conference. For those who like to rise early, there was a daily Communion service at 6:15 a.m. These services were each unique and creative, inviting participants to think afresh about the meaning of Communion. There were many moving worship services in the Arena with the entire

gathered body of Annual Conference, including a memorial service for those in our Conference who have passed on in the last year, and a passing of the mantle service that honors those clergy who are retiring, passing on the mantle of ministry to the newly commissioned clergy. Worship at Annual Conference includes many different styles of moving music, different languages, beautiful altars, and so much more.

There were also lots of reports to hear, legislative business to work on, and constitutional amendments to vote on. Some of the issues addressed in legislative sections included resolutions to assure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in local churches and on committees, a resolution addressing the evil of human trafficking in the world, a resolution calling for a commission of inquiry on U.S. sponsored torture, and a resolution to establish a NYAC task force on immigration. All of these passed overwhelmingly. Other resolutions such as one supporting a New York State Marriage Equality Law garnered more debate but were eventually passed by the body.

The last day of Annual Conference was a great day of celebration. The Bishop had invited all the Lay Speakers from our Conference to join us on Saturday. There was a great celebration of mission work that our Conference is engaged in. And the day culminated in the service of ordination, during which Pastor Dale and eight other provisional elders were ordained as elders in full connection in The United Methodist Church. The Southern Delaware Charge had a busload of almost 30 people come down to attend the ordination service. One other piece of good news is that Pastor Dale has been reappointed to serve the Southern Delaware Charge for another year.

If you are interested in knowing more about Annual Conference or some of the reports and legislation that we dealt with, please feel free to talk with Pastor Dale, Laura, or Toni. Also, Pastor Dale and Laura have a DVD of the ordination service and will schedule a time soon to show it for those who were not able to make it down to Annual Conference on the bus. Annual Conference is a great time of celebrating our lives and work together as Methodists.

Faith in Action

As you read this, health care reform is being debated vigorously in the House and Senate. The health care system in this country is in crisis as millions of Americans are uninsured and millions more are underinsured. There are people here in our own community that cannot obtain needed health care because they cannot afford it and others who elect long trips to VA hospitals or put off seeing the doctor because they cannot afford private insurance. In the midst of our present economic crisis, many people are losing their jobs and their health insurance as well. Those who have jobs may be trapped in those jobs for fear of losing their health insurance.

Somewhere along the line health care became big business, with profits taking precedence over patient care needs. Health insurance bureaucrats seem to have more say in decisions about what treatments a patient can or cannot receive than the doctor. The reality is that if a procedure is not covered under insurance, most people cannot afford to have it. We have some of the best health care options in the world here in the U.S., but who gets to take advantage of those health care options depends on the money you have. Basic quality health care should be a right for all people, not a profit-driven business. Below is an article on the health care reform debate from the Faith in Action website of the General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church. The article can be found at the following website: <http://www.umc-gbcs.org/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=frLJK2PKLqF&b=5282929&ct=7161705>

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Nearly 1,000 persons representing many faith groups gathered in Freedom Plaza in the evening of June 24 to unite in support of a health-care future grounded in the sacred bonds of common humanity, defined by compassion, especially for those most vulnerable, and reflective of faithful stewardship of the United States' abundant health-care resources.

The event was sponsored by Believe Together: Health Care for All, a coalition of more than 40 national faith organizations and religious denominations united around the urgent need for health care for all. The rally encouraged U.S. leaders to pass comprehensive and compassionate health-care reform legislation this year.

“The health-care system in the United States is in crisis,” declared Shelley Lindauer, executive director of Women for Reform Judaism. “With well over 46 million uninsured Americans and more who are underinsured, as well as the almost exponentially rising health-care costs, the need for comprehensive health-care reform to cover all Americans is urgent. We are calling on Congress to address this need now.”

Even the warm summer couldn't deter the faithful, who prayed, danced, sang and voiced their support for health-care reform in the face of an unsustainable future and a present in which millions are left on their own for medical care.

Faith leaders representing nearly every major faith tradition, including Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus, offered prayers for Congress to have the vision and courage to pass comprehensive health care reform this year.

Jim Winkler, chief executive of the United Methodist General Board of Church & Society, declared health care is a human right. We believe health care is a human right. “We affirm the interconnectedness of Creation,” he said in a prayer, adding, “We reject the notion that the profits of health-insurance companies should come before health care for our people.”

Special guests from the Obama administration and Congress attended the event to voice their support, including Joshua DuBois, special assistant to the president and executive director of the White House Office of Faith-Based & Neighborhood Partnerships; Neera Tanden, senior adviser, Dept. of Health & Human Services, Office of Health Reform; Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C.; and Rep. Tom Perriello, D-Va. All spoke to the urgency of the health-care crisis in the United States and noted their

dedication to ushering in a new age of health-care reform.

“Millions of Americans with chronic or advanced illness do not receive the quality of care and life that they deserve,” said the Rev. Dr. Walter Smith, president and CEO of HealthCare Chaplaincy. “We call for national health-care reform to create a new strategy that delivers this quality, is sustainable, and helps reduce costs.”

The Believe Together: Health Care for All coalition grew out of an April 2009 meeting between faith leaders and President Barack Obama. Yesterday’s interfaith service of witness and prayer for health care for all was the largest faith-inspired rally for reform ever. Similar “echo events” occurred across the country all week.

For more information about Believe Together: Health Care for All, visit <http://www.webelievetogether.com/>

For more on health care-related topics, visit the “Health & Wholeness” page on the United Methodist General Board of Church & Society (GBCS) website: <http://www.umc-gbcs.org/site/c.frLJK2PKLqF/b.2808979/>

A Note of Thanks...

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone in our church family and in the community for all of your cards and well wishes following my ordination as an elder in The United Methodist Church at Annual Conference this year. It has been a long journey to get to this point and it has been a great blessing to me to have all of you share the journey with me. It was wonderful to have so many of you travel down on the bus to be a part of the ordination service. I look forward to continuing the journey of faith with all of you.

God’s blessings to you all,
Pastor Dale

Pastor Dale to spend a week as chaplain for youth at Kingswood Camp

Pastor Dale has been asked to serve again as a chaplain for one week of the Woodsmoke camp program at our Kingswood United Methodist Camp near Hancock this year. This

is an annual camp program put on by our Conference for youth at our beautiful Kingswood Camp. Pastor Dale will be up at Kingswood starting the morning of Sunday, July 26th and returning Saturday, August 1st. In the event of a pastoral emergency, you can contact Pastor Dale by cell phone at 607-821-8762.

Colchester Community UMC Bake Sale

The Colchester Community UMC will be holding a bake sale on the front lawn of the church on Saturday July 11th from 9:00 a.m. until about 1:00 p.m. We will have all kinds of delicious homemade baked goods for sale. You will want to get there early so you do not miss out on your favorite treat. The proceeds from our bake sale go to help with the ministries of our church to the community and to the world.

Colchester Community UMC Finance Committee Meeting

The Colchester Community UMC Finance Committee will hold its July meeting on Sunday, July 12th at 4:00 p.m. at the church instead of our regular meeting time and place so as not to conflict with our VBS. Please make note of this change if you are on Finance Committee

Colchester Community UMC Vacation Bible School is coming!

Vacation Bible School will be here soon. The theme this year centers on an extreme adventure camp called Camp E.D.G.E. – Experience and Discover God Everywhere. Come join the fun on July 13th to 17th from 6-8 pm at the Colchester Community United Methodist Church. There will be music, stories, crafts, snacks, and science activities. It should be a fun week of learning about God’s Word as we meet different Bible characters and hear their stories.

If you would like to sign up your children or grandchildren, please call Pastor Dale at 363-2362. If you get the answering machine, please leave a message with your name, the number and ages of the children to be registered and

your telephone number. Pastor Dale will return your call to confirm the registration. Please feel free to pass this information on to your friends and neighbors if they have children who would be interested in attending VBS. We are looking forward to a fun and exciting time exploring the Word of God with your children this summer.

Colchester Community UMC First Friday Family Fun & Fellowship Night

The Colchester Community UMC is continuing our 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, July 25th 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 Angel Food Ministry

This month we will be taking Angel Food orders on the following dates: Monday, July 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesday, July 8 from 1 – 3 p.m., and Saturday, July 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. all at the Colchester Community UMC. We will also take orders at the East Branch/Harvard UMC on Thursday, July 9 from 10 a.m. to noon. The pickup date for Angel Food orders is Saturday, July 18 from 8 – 10 a.m. at the Downsville Fire Hall. 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. If you have any questions please call Toni at 363-7363 for more information. Menus can be found at all local business locations.

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

This summer the East Branch/Harvard United Methodist Church is once again 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 Church Council Meetings During Summer

The East Branch/Harvard UMC Church Council will hold its July and August meetings on the third Sunday of the month, July 19th and August 16th, at 1:30 p.m. at the church instead of our regular meeting time on the third Thursday of the month so as not to conflict with our summer services at the Harvard church on Thursday evenings. Please make note of this change if you are on Church Council.

United Methodist News Briefs

NEW YORK (UMNS)—United Methodist leaders reported that all mission personnel and volunteers in Honduras were safe and

congregations relatively unaffected by the military ouster of President Manuel Zelaya on June 28. The Rev. Edgar Avitia, a staff member of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, said he had spoken with the Rev. José Roberto Peña-Nazario, superintendent of the denomination's Honduras Mission, and others in various parts of the country. "Things in the streets are fairly peaceful," Avitia reported his contacts as saying, "and all of our missionaries, volunteers, and congregations are safe. Electricity and land phone lines were cut during the day but have been restored." The mission agency has 12 congregations and 6 missionaries in Honduras, which is a "mission initiative" country.

BUCKHEAD, Ga. (UMNS)—“Next time, I want to ride on that thing with my kids,” shouts retired Col. Bob Quinn as a sleek boat pulls six grinning children on an inflatable toy across the green surface of Lake Oconee. The summertime living is easy along this lake about an hour east of Atlanta. And that is a good thing for wounded military veterans and their families enjoying a weekend of fun at the United Methodist camp Collinswood of Aldersgate Homes. The retreat was the result of a partnership between veterans and officials at Collinswood searching for ways to assist soldiers returning home from service, particularly those among the more than 30,000 wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan.

NEW YORK (UMNS)—“Made in L.A.,” an award-winning documentary about three immigrant women who stood up to exploitation in Los Angeles sweatshops, has been endorsed by the United Methodist Task Force on Immigration. The task force encourages congregations to view the film as a means of introducing and promoting dialogue on issues of immigration and justice in the United States. A Made in L.A. Study Guide is available online. Bishop Minerva Carcaño of Phoenix, chair of the task force, says that the film "beautifully illustrates the courage, perseverance, and strength" of the women.

Church Humor

At Sunday School they were learning how God created everything, including human beings. Johnny was especially intent when the teacher told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs. Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny, what is the matter?" Johnny responded, "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

Two boys were walking home from church after hearing a strong preaching on the devil. One said to the other, "What do you think about all this Satan stuff?" The other boy replied, "Well, you know how Santa Claus turned out. It's probably just your dad"

A pastor I know has a standard liturgy for funerals. To personalize each service, he uses the Find and Replace command on his computer to replace the name of the deceased from the previous funeral with the new name. The next morning, the funeral was going smoothly until the Apostle's Creed. "Jesus Christ," the congregation read from the program, "born of the Virgin Edna..."

Muldoon lived alone in the Irish countryside with only a pet dog for company. One day the dog died, and Muldoon went to the parish priest and asked, "Father, me dog is dead. Could ya' be saying' a mass for the poor creature?" Father Patrick replied, "I'm afraid not; we cannot have services for an animal in the church. But there are some Baptists down the lane, and there's no tellin' what they believe. Maybe they'll do something for the creature." Muldoon said, "I'll go right away Father. Do ya' think \$5,000 is enough to donate to them for the service?" Father Patrick exclaimed, "Sweet Mary, Mother of Jesus! Why did ya' not tell me the dog was Catholic?"

Inspirational speaker Dr. Wayne Dyer still remembers the card his kids gave him for his 64th birthday. The front said, "Inside is a message from God." Pleased they finally appreciated his work, he opened it to read, "See you soon!"

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