

THE COURIER

Catskill Hudson District New York Annual Conference

<http://www.gbqm-umc.org/catskillhudson>

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FROM THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Friends in the Catskill Hudson District,

These first three weeks in my new assignment have been a whirlwind of activity, with the work of moving, the farewells to old friends and an old way of life, and the first halting steps of beginning my responsibilities as your superintendent. There has been a lot to process, but God is good, and I have been enjoying my experiences thus far. I want to share with you two aspects of these weeks that have been especially satisfying, namely my experiences of worship and my one-on-one visits with pastors.

Holly and I have attended a different church each of these three weeks, and in each case we have been blessed by the experience. Each church had its unique qualities, but in every congregation we sensed that there were people that cared about each other. We heard three fine sermons, each lifting up a message from the gospels that spoke to us and (I believe) to many others in the pews. We shared in prayers that were raised with the confidence that God is listening, and we joined in song with others who love to sing praise to God. We met people who love their churches, and their God, and who extended gracious welcome to us. Attending worship, rather than leading it, is a big change for me, and I miss the responsibility and privilege of preaching on a weekly basis, but worshiping with you has been a blessing thus far.

I have also been moved and blessed by many of the one-on-one meetings I have had with pastors. Our conversations have been so enriching to me, as I have begun to learn so much about people's life journeys – their families, earlier life experiences, spiritual highs and lows, pastoral joys and frustrations, and many other aspects of the lives. I have been surprised and moved by the candidness with which some have shared very deep spiritual moments and the stories of hard life experiences that have shaped their lives. I've felt a kinship as a fellow pastor, listening to stories of inspiration and frustration in parish life. I've enjoyed hearing about how people have applied to ministry the things they learned in experiences that wouldn't be considered the normal pre-ministerial training – working as a bartender, playing poker, or dealing with a failed marriage, for example. I've been blessed to pray with these fellow pastors, and to listen as they have offered up prayers for me and my family. After a day of meeting with pastors I am sometimes tired – listening takes energy – but also inspired, and I often say to Holly, "I met some very good people today."

So, I feel happy about these initial contacts. How our relationships will evolve in the coming years, what challenges we will face, what accomplishments we will celebrate, what growth in faith will come – these things we can't foresee, but I am moving forward in hope, and with gratitude to the God who has brought us to this place together.

Jim Moore, Sup't

Special Invitation from Jim Moore:

Please do me the honor of coming to a special service in celebration of my appointment as Superintendent. The service will be at the **Overlook UMC in Woodstock, at 4:00 pm on Oct. 21st**. Bishop Park and all the other members of the cabinet will be present, and I am hoping that each pastor and a delegation of laity from each church will be present to join in the event. The members of the Superintendency Committee and I will be working together to plan the service, and we will share more details as we draw closer to the date.

In one sense this is “about me,” but in a larger sense I hope that our celebration will affirm the life we share together as United Methodist Christians in this district. I hope that this service will be a unifying and inspiring experience that strengthens and motivates us as we are embarking on the next chapters of our story.

Jim Moore

WANDERINGS... by Diane Meredith, District Lay Leader

Summer Greetings!

My heart is heavy after having seen the disastrous, and this time fatal, flooding in Rockland and Colchester, New York, just one year after the devastating flood of June 2006 hit my home area in Walton. And yet, my spirit is strangely light, having witnessed the generous connectionalism of our district, our Conference, and beyond. The financial assistance, physical labor of the volunteers, the prayers, the food, and the gifts to refurbish our nursery have brought hope and comfort. Pastor Dale Ashby and our brothers and sisters of the Colchester Community Church have already begun the disaster assistance and recovery efforts. Please remember them with your prayers and gifts. For more information on how you can help, contact: Pastor Dale Ashby, Colchester Community UMC, 607-363-2362, [dashedby@frontiernet.net](mailto:dashby@frontiernet.net)

In the midst of the storm, a rainbow appears! Please join me in welcoming our new District Superintendent, Rev. Jim Moore and his wife, Holly, to the Catskill Hudson District. I had a wonderful phone conversation with Jim last week; he is eager to travel our beautiful hills and valleys! Pastor Bridgette LeConey, who chairs the District Superintendency Committee, recently offered the following message:

Dear colleagues in the Catskill-Hudson District,

It has been my pleasure to have recently visited our District Parsonage to welcome Rev. Jim Moore and his wife, Holly. As you may be aware, Rev. Moore is no stranger to rural ministry and has a devoted heart for the Lord. The task ahead is daunting, over 100 churches and 70 some Pastors!

Therefore, I ask that we all make every effort to respect the overwhelming nature of this role. Holly will be serving us as a part-time administrative assistant.

May God bless our new relationship with the Moore's and provide his blessing on our efforts together.

I invite you to share with me your joys and your concerns for our district. Rev. Moore and I will meet next month to exchange our perceptions, experiences, and visions for Catskill Hudson, and I would be honored to include your hopes, dreams, and frustrations (!) in that dialogue. My email address is: mereditd@dcmoboces.com or you can reach me at 157.5 Prospect Avenue, Walton, NY 13856

Finally, I am delighted to tell you that this country girl wandered, somewhat apprehensively, all the way to the Bronx on July 16th to participate in the Natural Church Development Coaches Training. (Hello to Shelley Mitchell, another coach-in-training.) This research-based process to promote church growth and development is an exciting prospect offered by our New York Annual Conference. Ann Pearson, Director of Connectional Ministries, has taken up this initiative with passion! The cost is minimal, as the Conference is providing extensive support. For more information, contact your pastor.

Many of you may have met Rev. Mark Del Giudice of the First United Methodist Church of Walton as he has devoted himself to flood recovery for the past year. I am pleased to report that he and his wife Song are finally on vacation, having served more than a year without a break. In his absence we will welcome Lay Speaker Gene Knoth from Shandaken. I sincerely hope that your church, too, has invited one or more lay speakers to lead your summer worship.

As always, I look forward to connecting or reconnecting with you as we travel this journey together.

Peace,

Diane Meredith
District Lay Leader

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Preacher Ready and Willing to Serve

Rev. Al Liberatore, who “re-retired” this summer after many years of service at the Durham- Oak Hill charge, has asked us to share the word that he would be pleased to preach on Sundays when pastors are on vacation or away from the pulpit for other reasons. Al can be reached at *30 Pine Creek Drive, Catskill, NY, 12414 (518-943-6822)*

New District Appointments

Rev. Dr. Mark Chatterton has been appointed to serve First UMC, Middletown, Connecticut as of July 1, 2007. (Middletown has been served by Rev. Kwang-il Kim who used to serve the Woodland Circuit in our District. Rev. Kim has been appointed to First UMC, Brewster in the CT/NY District)

Five pastors on the Catskill Hudson District are re-retiring. They have served a church in their retirement, but are now going to retire “again”:

Phyllis Skidmore

Ellen Oliveto

Al Liberatore

Ken Rodgers

Howard Velzy

Rev. Jerrie Shepard Matney is ending her interim service at Athens Federated. She will now serve as an interim in a Baptist church.

Kingston:St. James UMC: **Rev. David Jolly**

(**Rev. Jeff Glassey** is appointed to Incapacity Leave but will be serving High Hill ¼ time and Athens Federated ½ time)

Rock Hill UMC: **Pastor Joaquin (Jack) Polin**

(**Pastor Steve Knutsen** is going to Pleasant Valley and Bangall in the CT/NY District)

Stamford and Harpersfield: **Pastor Robert Kersten**

(**Pastor Lawrence Charles** will serve Jamaica:First in the Long Island West District)

Jefferson and Blenheim Hill: **Rev. William St. John**

(**Pastor Frank Adams** has sought secular employment)

Mamakating: **Robert Moore** (Superintendent’s Hire)

(**Pastor Randy Yerkes** will be serving Town of Bethel UMC)

Bloomville: **Pastor Sallie Soltysiak**

(**Pastor Dick Lenz** will serve Windham-Hensonville & Ashland 2/3 time and Durham:Oak Hill 1/3 time)

Rev. Karen Monk will serve East Jewett ¼ time as well as her current ¾ time appointment to Kaaterskill UMC.

Olivebridge and Samsonville: **Rev. David Houston**
(**Pastor Anne Rossini** will be appointed to AIEM ½ time as a chaplain in Residence at Albany Medical Center)

Maybrook: **Ginny Esposito** (Superintendent's Hire)
(**Pastor Sallie Soltysiak** was appointed to Bloomville UMC)

Monticello: **John Thomason** (from the Texas Conference)
(Rev. Thomason is taking the place of **Gene Smith**, who died in May of this year)

EVENTS

August 7 & 9; 14 & 16: Catskill Hudson District Advanced Lay Speaking Course: "Visitation/Home and Hospital," offered by Pastor Dottie Morris at Grand Gorge UMC, 7:00-9:30 p.m. Announcement submitted by Rev. Joyce Wilkerson, Director of Lay Speaking Ministries

September 5: Pre-Charge Conference Meeting for clergy, 2:00 at Margaretville

September 6: Pre-Charge Conference Meeting for clergy, 2:00 at Saugerties

September 8: Pre-Charge Conference Meeting for clergy, 10:00 at District Parsonage

September 7: Conference-wide Candidacy Mentor Training at the Conference Center in White Plains, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm.

September 15: Orientation for all Pastors Serving a new Church or Charge. Christ UMC, New Rochelle, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm.

September 27: Boundaries & Dual Relationships Workshop at the Conference Center (*if you have not already attended this training, it is a mandatory training for all appointed clergy.*) 8:30 am to 3:00 p.m.

October 1, 2: Bishop & Clergy Retreat for Northern Districts at Mt. St. Alphonsus.

October 21: 4 p.m. Installation of new D.S. Jim Moore at Overlook UMC at Woodstock

Pastors: Remember to send a copy of your church newsletter to the District Office. If you already mail a copy, remember to change the name from Mark Chatterton to Jim Moore!

Please freely **post** and **distribute** this copy of the COURIER. Contact the District Office (cathudnyacholly@aol.com) if you would like to delete yourself from or add yourself to our database for receiving the COURIER online.

FLYER

New York Annual Conference
YOUTH MISSION AMBASSADORS TRIP 2008
Siquirres, Costa Rica

- PARTICIPANTS:** Two Youths (15yrs - 17yrs) from each district
- The Date:** February 13 -23, 2008
- The Location:** Siquirres, Costa Rica
- The Project:** To be determined prior to the trip with the help of the community we will be serving.
- The Purpose:** Bring Hope and support to the youth in the community.
Address teenage pregnancy through youth activities.
Provide youth ambassadors a cross-cultural experience.
Sharing and learning from different young people
- The Total Cost:** \$1500 (NYAC participants);
- The Funding:** Participants pay \$500 deposit plus any medical costs
District support \$300
Local Church and family support
through donations and fundraising \$700

Application and deposit Deadline is November 1, 2007

Full payment is due on December 1, 2007

For more information contact
Donna L Jolly, 1315 Lucas Ave Ext, Rosendale, NY 12401
jolly_donna@hotmail.com; (845) 853-8662

or

Rev. Joseph Ewoodzie, Conference Mission Coordinator
jewoodzie@nyac.com; (914) 615-2233