

CONNYECTION

CONNECTICUT/NEW YORK DISTRICT

BISHOP ERNEST S. LYGHT, BISHOP
REV. JANE ALLEN MIDDLETON, DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT
JUNE 2004

FROM THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

My dear Friends,

What does the Lord require of us? To do justice, to love kindness, to walk humbly with our God. How often in our history as God's people have we been plunged into chaos out of which had come new life? The flood, the exodus, Babylon, the crucifixion of Jesus, the early church and many, many times since!

The New York Conference is in a time of chaos as we move to six superintendents while retaining eight districts - sort of! As you probably know by now we have reassigned churches for administrative purposes for the coming year. About half of the churches now assigned to me will be assigned to George Engelhardt. In addition, I will begin supervising about 50 churches now assigned to Dennis Winkleblack and Mark Chatterton. This will create a district which begins in Norwalk and extends toward the north along the New York border to Red Hook and Rhinebeck and to the west from Newburgh to New Milford, New York.

Three district committees, which will follow this new configuration, are: the Superintendency Committee, District Committee on Ordained Ministry, and the Parish Development Committee.

All other committees including the District Committee on Ministries elected at our District Conference in April by the current Connecticut/New York district will remain. The DCOM will focus on the Bolivian mission, district training days, and other ministries, which will not be available to all the districts. Our District Committee on Lay Speakers will continue to plan the outstanding training program, which has had such a positive impact on the lives of our churches.

All Charge Conferences this year will be group charge conferences, with 3 to 7 churches meeting together. We will have a good time sharing the journey together and I pray we will find this new way of doing conferencing to be a blessing.

It has been such great joy to come to know the clergy and laity and churches, which will no longer be assigned to me. How precious you are and how much I rejoice in the faithful and sacrificial ministries I have been privileged to share.

Just as some of you will now have the opportunity to appreciate the gifts of George Engelhardt, I will have the opportunity to come to know and value a new set of churches. I hope you are beginning to see the possibilities that this "chaos" offers for the Spirit of God to move in new ways among us. We need to keep our eyes and hearts and lives focused on God's deepest yearning for us: to do justice, love kindness and to walk humbly with God. Surely we can trust that God is in our midst, even now, creating a new thing!

Grace and peace,
Jane

CONNECTION NEWSLETTER TO TAKE NEW FORM

This is the last issue of the *Connyection* as edited by Barbara Stinson. We will probably continue some kind of newsletter because we must continue to communicate with the laity and clergy and churches, but not in the same form. It is with great thanks that we express our gratitude to Barbara for her faithfulness in this special ministry. With great love and appreciation, Barbara! (It has been my pleasure).

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VIM TO BOLIVIA JANUARY 28, 2005

The fourth Volunteer in Mission trip to Bolivia will take place January 28 to February 12, 2005 when we once again travel to this country to do whatever is required. Past teams have built churches, directed Vacation Bible School, trained day care workers and, in general, been transformed by the power of Jesus Christ and the witness of our brothers and sisters in Bolivia.

You are encouraged to prayerfully consider whether you are being called to be part of this team. The cost is \$2000 which is all inclusive of expenses and also includes funds for supporting the mission work we will be engaged in. Limited scholarship help is available and often local churches have helped support those participating.

Contact team leaders, Bob and Ginny Stevenson at manofnotes@snet.net for an application and for more information or contact Jane Middleton at the district office.

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MISSIONARIES ON CALL

AMAZON RIVER - PERU MISSION TRIP

Who: Anyone 18 or older - need not speak Spanish. Will be working with the native population, mostly children.

WHAT: The local mission project strives to teach children to take care of the ecosystem and learn to appreciate nature through art, music, dance and song. We will be working alongside indigenous teachers in small schools in the jungle. We will be teaching children about health care and will need to take toothpaste toothbrushes, school and art supplies.

WHEN: End of August 2004.

WHERE: Fly from JFK to Lima, Peru. Connect to Iquitos on the Amazon River. The work sites are I the villages of Santa Maria de Fatima, San Juan and Yagua.

COST: \$1,500 per person for 9 day stay

HOW: For more information contact "Missionaries on Call", 29 Sachem Lane, PO Box 4434, Greenwich, CT 06830; (203) 550-2222 or missionariesoncall@aol.com.

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COSTA RICA TRIP

WHO: Volunteers in Mission

WHAT: Building project (School wing, Church or House)

WHEN: October 11-October 21, 2004

WHERE: El Peje, Costa Rica

COST: \$1,500 all inclusive (airfare, food, lodging, exit tax, local transportation, building materials, tips, etc.)

CONTACT: **Missionaries on Call.** (see info above)

LITURGICAL ARTISTS RETREAT

“Revitalizing the Art Spirit” with Nancy Chinn will be held at Sky Lake United Methodist retreat Center in Windsor, NY, October 5-7. The retreat is designed for “those who create art for sacred spaces, make spaces sacred , for those who make spaces sacred and for those who are just getting started in liturgical art.” For a brochure contact Ann Pearson apearson@nyac.com or call her at 888-696-6922 Ext. 230.

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GLOBAL JUSTICE VOLUNTEERS YOUNG ADULT MISSION OPPORTUNITY SEPTEMBER- DECEMBER 2004

This program connects young adults between the ages of 18-25 with opportunities to serve in mission with partners around the world who are working for change in their own communities. Volunteers travel in small teams of young adults (2-4) and live and work in communities around the world to engage in change at the grassroots level.

The next class of Global Justice Volunteers will take place September 13 through December 12, 2004. PHASE1: ORIENTATION (approximately five days in New York City); PHASE 2: THE VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT SITE (typically eight weeks); PHASE 3: REGROUPING (approximately five days in New York City); PHASE 4: FOLLOW-UP (there are minimum expectations for action/integration of experiences).

POSSIBLE VOLUNTEER SITES: Possible volunteer opportunities include partnering with organizations working with:

- migrant worker and economic rights in Hong Kong
- community health in Nicaragua
- conflict resolution training in Mozambique
- children’s rights in Brazil
- poverty elimination and community organizing in Granada.

HOW TO APPLY AND COST OF PROGRAM:

Applications are available on Global Justice Volunteers website (www.giv.info) or by calling GJV office, c/o Board of Global Ministries, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 330, New York, NY 10115 Toll free: (877) 882-4724.

Volunteers are asked to contribute a minimum fee of \$200 US per month of participation to a general stewardship fund for the program. In addition, volunteers may have out-of-pocket expenses for some food, ground transportation, and keepsakes. Such expenses for the pilot team ranged from \$180 to \$800, averaging \$550.

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ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING GOD

The Northeastern Jurisdictional Convocation of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts will be held in Williamsport, PA from August 1-6, 2004. This convocation is designed to help participants explore how worship can help our congregations experience a relationship with God and help them live more faithfully as Christian communities; how music and other worship arts can inspire us and empower us to go forth into the world and encounter God in the least, the last, and the lost. For a brochure e-mail Ann Pearson - apearson@nyac.com.

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CONFERENCE DENMAN AWARD RECIPIENTS

The 2004 recipients of the NY Conference Denman Award went to Melodye Merola, a lay woman from Golden Hill UMC, Bridgeport, CT and the Rev. Wayne Lavender, pastor of the New Milford UMC, New Milford, CT.

As Director of Outreach Ministries at Golden Hill, Meloyde’s warm and engaging personality welcomes all who come to worship and take part in the ministries of the church. Each person is treated as a child of God as she ministers to both church

members and friends from the community.

Wayne Lavender has always given missions top priority both in his church as well as in the community. He has made several mission trips to Mozambique. He and his wife, Pam, have adopted a son who Wayne met on one of his trips.

Both Melodye and Wayne live out the ministry of Jesus to "feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for sick, and visit those in prison." They set a wonderful example for all of us. Congratulations and thank you from everyone in the CT/NY District.

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NEW BOUNDARIES FOR CT/NY DISTRICT

New boundaries mean change for the NY Conference Districts. We now have six District Superintendents serving eight districts. The boundaries have been changed and each District Superintendent will have many more churches to pastor. The churches in the Rev. Jane Allen Middleton's District are: Beacon, Christ; Bellvale & Sugar Loaf; Brewster, First; Buchanan, Trinity-Boscobel; Carmel, Drew; Central Valley; Chelsea; Cold Spring & South Highland; Cornwall; Darien; Dover; Dover Plains & South Dover; Fishkill; Fort Montgomery; Gaylordsville; Goshen; Greenwich, Diamond Hill; Greenwich, First; Greenwich, Round Hill; Highland Falls; Highland Mills; Holmes & Lake Mahopac; Hyde Park; Katonah; LaGrangeville, Trinity; Mahopac, Mount Hope; Millbrook Federated; Millerton; Monroe; Mount Kisco; Mountainville; New Canaan; New Milford, NY; Newburgh, First; Newburgh, Gardnertown; Newburgh, Grace; Newburgh, Trinity; Norwalk, East Avenue; Norwalk, First; Norwalk, Norwalk; Norwalk, El Camino; Norwalk, Rowayton; Pawling & Poughquag; Peekskill; Pine Plains; Pleasant Valley & Bangall; Poughkeepsie, Community; Poughkeepsie, Mid-Hudson; Pound Ridge Community; Purdys; Ramapo Valley; Red Hook & Milan; Rhinebeck; Ridgebury, Grace; Shrub Oak; Sloatsburg; South Salem, Stevens Memorial; Stamford, First; Stamford, Korean; Stamford, Ridges & Roxbury & Springdale; Tompkins Corners; Vail's Gate; Van Cortlandtville, Community; Verbank; Wappingers Falls; Warwick; Wicopee; Wilton, Zion's Hill; Yorktown Heights.

FAREWELL RECEPTION FOR BISHOP & MRS. LYGHT

The Committee on the Episcopacy invites you to attend an Afternoon of Appreciation on Sunday, August 1, 2004 for Bishop and Mrs. Lyght. The reception will be from 3-5 p.m. at Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Avenue, White Plains.

A Book of Mementos of the Bishop's Journey with the New York Conference is being compiled. If you would like to contribute send your selection to:

Diane Hornaday
515 Huckleberry Hill Road
Avon, CT 06001

Bishop Lyght serves as Chairperson of the Africa University Development Fund. What a better way to honor Bishop Lyght's dedication and service than to make a donation to Usahwira Scholarship Fund in his honor.

Please send donations by July 23, 2004 to:
Ernest L. Swiggett, Conference Treasurer
20 Soundview Avenue
White Plains, NY 10606

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Keeping in Touch:

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