

the Crossword

We bring the word of the United Methodist Church to life.

Issue

July/August 2012

Photograph by Ben Bishop

PASTOR'S COLUMN

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith..." Hebrews 12:1-2a

Have you ever heard of John Stephen Akhwari?

John Stephen Akhwari, is a marathon runner from Tanzania who finished last at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. In fact, no last-place finisher in an Olympic marathon history ever finished quite so last.

Injured along the way, he hobbled into the stadium with his leg bloodied and bandaged. It was more than an hour after the rest of the runners had completed the race. Only a few spectators were left in the stands when Akhwari finally crossed the finish line.

When asked why he continued to run despite the pain, despite being so far behind all the others, Akhwari replied, "My country did not send me to Mexico City to start the race. They sent me here to finish."

His attitude ought to be our attitude as Christians. There is a "race that is set before us," and we are to keep running until we reach the finish line. So many things often conspire to convince us to give up the race: losses, injuries, tragedies, setbacks, complacency, failure... But what we need to remember is that, in Christ, winning does not consist of simply being stronger than others, or in getting out in front; winning comes simply through keeping our lives moving, however we can eve-

ry day, toward Jesus – growing, repenting, forgiving, giving, sacrificing, loving.

Are you "running the race"? Or have you somehow given up?

This summer, the Olympic Games come to Great Britain. When you watch the games on TV, as you marvel at the strength and skill and perseverance of the athletes; think about your own life and ask: How is Christ calling me to get up and run the race of faith, today?

"It will be worth it all when we see Jesus, Life's trials will seem so small when we see Christ; One glimpse of His dear face all sorrow will erase, So bravely run the race till we see Christ."

In Christ, Rev. Clark Lynn Callender



On the Road Again....

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" (Psalm 121 vs. 1-2)

Greetings from the road! Here I am traveling throughout the USA, Westward bound.



I know you have me in Prayer...many a Friend and maybe even myself are surprised to know I found my way out of New Jersey! Teasing aside, what a beautiful trip it is - a gift - a Blessing! The sights, the sound of the wind, the soft breezes, the views - one more splendid than the other! What are you humming this time, you ask? Truth be told, so many songs and hymns have entered my mind filling my soul. From America the Beautiful (purple mountain majesties); to On the Road Again; to Country Road Lead Me Home. But my favorite? **How Great Thou Art.**

"O Lord my God! when I in awesome wonder, consider all the worlds thy hands have made, I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy

power throughout the universe displayed. Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee, how great thou art, how great thou art!"

For the Blessing of travel, for the Blessing of this magnificent Country, for the Blessing of you and of home...then sings my soul!

I look forward to seeing each of you soon - to catch up on news, to hear all about your

Summer, to seeing your smiles and to share those hugs!

Love, Hugs and Blessings!

Jody

Reminders from Maria..

Altar Bouquets are still open for: July 8th, July 22nd, Sep. 23rd, etc. Please sign-up on the poster in the Narthex. The cost for the (2) Altar Bouquets are only \$30 (for both).

Coffee Hour will be taking a summer break, beginning Sunday, June 17th, through September 2, 2012. Coffee Hour will resume on September 9, 2012.

"Come to the Table" Soup Luncheon, will be taking a summer break. It will resume on October 7, 2012.

Volunteers are always needed to help with Worship Services, such as Acolytes, Readers, Greeters, Ushers, etc. Please sign-up on the Sheets in the Narthex for dates that are convenient for you.

Manahawkin Methodist PRESCHOOL

The Manahawkin Methodist Preschool is happy to announce that 35 children graduated from our Pre-kindergarten program on June 11, 2012. It was the largest graduating class in the history of our school and we couldn't be prouder of how much they have accomplished during their time with us. We wish them the best of luck in kindergarten as well as best wishes for their entire educational career!

I am overjoyed to announce that our preschool is currently filled to capacity with a waiting list for most classes for the upcoming school year. Our team of educators and devoted families are to thank for this success. Most often new families learn about our school from previous students who rave about their experience at Manahawkin Methodist. We are so blessed to be able to serve so many families and begin so many children not only on their educational journey, but also with their relationship with Jesus.

Changes for Next Year: The administrative council has given permission for the preschool to use the large classroom from 9 to 12 Monday through Friday for music classes beginning next September thru May. This will allow for Fellowship Hall to be available to students when outside play is inappropriate. MMP is dedicated to providing opportunities that strengthen our student's minds, hearts and bodies. Having the space to play on rainy days is crucial in the development of our children. Also having a dedicated music classroom enables us to offer more music programming to families in the community. Our Half Notes program was a huge success this past year, helping us gain students for the preschool as well as visitors to the church. As always if you need the

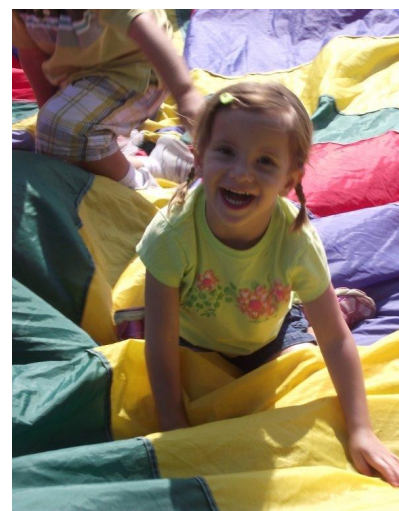
large classroom for a special event during our normal scheduled time, please don't hesitate to let myself and/or the church secretary, Maria Pignatelli, know and we will be sure to make other arrangements that day.

Summer Hours: The preschool will run its summer camp program on Tuesdays and Thursdays July 10th thru July 26th. Our hours of operation will be 9:30 to 1:30. August the preschool will be closed, but I will be checking voicemail, email, and stopping in weekly to address any other issues.

Back to school night for parents is scheduled to take place Tuesday August 28th at 6:30pm. New families to the preschool are strongly encouraged to attend as we will discuss school policies and teachers will be on hand to answer questions. Orientation for parents and students will take place Thursday September 6th & 7th. School officially begins Monday September 10th.

I wish all our MMP Friends and family a safe, happy and healthy summer. I would also like to say a special thank you to Bob Molinaro, whether it was cutting the grass in the rain before field day, replacing a light bulb or fixing doors, your time and hard work are sincerely appreciated by myself, the staff and our preschoolers.

Educationally yours,
Kelly Steinberg



New Position at MMP

MMP welcomes Ellie Lomauro as **Assistant to the Director** this fall.



If Ellie's name sounds familiar it should! Ellie has been an active member of MUMC for the past two years. Both she and her son Brent have helped with the SHARE Food Program and ran coffee hour for several months.

In addition Ellie recently ran the women's movement classes and youth cardio classes in Fellowship Hall.

Ellie started with MMP in 2010 as the 'Half Notes' music program teacher. Her role expanded to enrichment teacher as additional programs were added.

Ellie's strong background in food and beverage management, small business administration and youth programming makes her a perfect addition to the MMP team.



Greater New Jersey Annual Conference June 2012

"I envision a Church of the Pentecost in which the Holy Spirit is igniting, gifting and empowering God's children of all ages, backgrounds, colors and personalities to glorify their Creator as passionate witnesses for Jesus Christ," said Bishop Devadhar. "Such a church does not merely serve the poor, the left out, the different, but welcomes them warmly into its hearts, homes, and worship."

When you are a child, people tell you to "enjoy childhood for time goes very fast." I always ridiculed that as most of us couldn't wait to be an "adult." However when you get "older" it surely is true! So, here it was time to go to Annual Conference and it seemed like just a few months ago was my first nervous appearance at Valley Forge. So, off I went, hopefully with a little more knowledge than the first time. My first thoughts as I entered and read the schedule was who could ever get this event all together and working smoothly? For sure the Holy Spirit is there! The music ministry which was directed by Mark A Miller and the GNJ AC festival choir and vocals Cassandra Kellam, Julian Wamble, Marcus Johnson on percussion and Andy Mok on the guitar were so anointed there was absolutely no question the Spirit of God was truly in charge. Of course, there was business galore to be attended to such as reports, recommendations, rules of order, changes and amendments to name a few. Also recognition of service of retiring ministers and welcoming new Pastors and Deacons. All was done in order and accomplished. Tribute service Preacher Rev. Glen Comaway of Trinity UMC in Mullica Hill, opened with a story about a ten mile run he did. About the seventh mile, he, in runner's language, "hit

the wall” and was ready to quit. He heard a little old lady yelling his race number at him and shouting “You can do it. Don’t ever give up.” He said there is a cloud of witnesses who have been encouragers to our faith. We celebrate and praise God for those who have finished their faith. “Theirs is a story with eyes fixed on Jesus,” said Conway. “What about us? Are we going to run with the clouds and encourage someone; throw off our entanglements and pray the Holy Spirit will call us? Look around you, you are running with the clouds.” This was followed by a reading of pastors, clergy spouses, laity who have gone to their reward. We then all shared communion. Rev. Dr. Robert Williams shared a celebratory moment of recognizing the 175th anniversary of Annual Conference. As we go forward it might be a good idea to restudy our roots and there is much we can learn from early brothers and sisters in the Methodist faith. Bishop J. Michael Lowry from Texas challenged GNJ leaders to brave the storm and offer the drink that will quench life at its deepest. He referenced the movie Lawrence of Arabia and showed us some clips from the movie. “We’ve taken Aquaba but the struggle continues, Lowry challenged. “it’s time for us to brave the storm,” he said. “We must stop offering membership in the officer’s club and instead offer the



Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

“drink of life.” Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar opened his Episcopal address by stating that for the first time in 45 years we have a net gain of membership. He said, in this quadrennial, the U.M.C. started 60% more new churches than it did in the previous 4 year period, up-

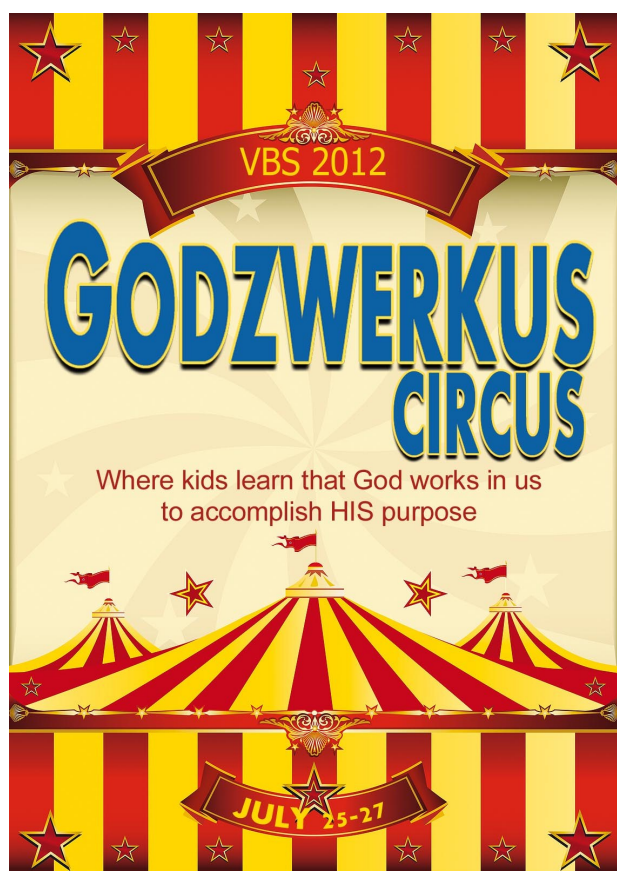
lifting several of GNJ’s own new church starts including Sharptown North, Waretown/Barnegat Anew and Cornerstone U.M.C.

I cannot close without telling you of the lightest fun time. Friday afternoon as we all entered conference room, we were given tubes of bubbles. At a certain point it was said we must never stop having fun. At that point we stood and all blew bubbles at each other. “A merry heart is like a medicine,” so it says in proverbs. I end with these words from our bishop, “The challenge for us, as individuals and together as an expression of the Body of Christ, is to embrace humility. Humility teaches us to rely on God. “While we may never again be the dominant denomination we once were, we will be a church of service and witness. We will be a creative minority, who with humble hearts seek to live out what it means to be the hands and feet of Jesus today.” He encouraged us, no matter who leads the conference to be a shining light of service and witness for Greater New Jersey.

Blessings

Dottie Silvestri

Lay Member to Annual Conference
Manahawkin United Methodist Church



VBS 2012

All students entering Kindergarten thru 6th grade are invited to our summer VBS program.

NEW this year, we are have a three (3) day program starting on Wed., July 25—Friday, July 27th. We start at 6PM and end at 8PM each evening.

What can you expect at VBS? If you're new to our program please keep in mind that we LOVE VBS! Our goal is to bring the scripture to 'life'. We start our evening in our sanctuary (aka 'Big Top'). During our opening each night we will learn what our evening focus will be. We'll be introduced to some great bible stories and lessons. From there our VBSers will rotate thru our three stations: bible stories, recreation and crafts. Of course we will add some fun into each rotation.

Miss Shelly, our VBS pro has some incredible ideas for us (we're not allowed to reveal them at this time...they must be BIG)! Our amazing team of volunteers include, Miss Ellie, 'Jungle Bob', Miss Rosemary, Randy & Vanessa, Miss Natasha, Miss Pauline, Mr. Jim, Mrs. Applegate and more....and of course our many youth volunteers!

REGISTRATION is open. www.manahawkinmethodist.org



This year's RFL team was filled with many 'old' and new faces. From cancer survivors to children of those who lost their battle with cancer, Methodist Magic team was proudly represented.

Each person carried with them a story of how cancer has effected their lives. Some walked in honor of someone battling cancer, some walked in memory of those who lost their battle and some walked

to simply say 'cancer, you need to go away.' Whatever the reason, our team showed their support for not only the American Cancer Society, but for each other.

Our team captains, Randy & Vanessa Estelow and Pauline McShea did an outstanding job of coordinating the

team as well as fundraising. Over \$1600 was raised by the team to fight cancer by selling luminaries and donuts (yes, donuts).



Bread for the World:

New Jersey “Offering of Letters” Workshop

Saturday, September 8, 2012, 9 AM – 12:30 PM

9 AM Registration, Refreshments, Resource Tables, Networking

9:30 AM Program

Where: Catholic Charities –

Diocese of Trenton

383 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08618

(convenient parking lot in back of the building – room on 2nd floor)

Who - Both Lay & Clergy church leaders interested in helping people who face hunger

Purpose - To enable leaders to lead Bread for the World “Offerings of Letters” to their members of Congress on behalf of people who face hunger. After the training, people are encouraged to lead Offerings of Letters in their churches, Sunday schools, youth groups, church organizations, meetings, college campuses, CROP Walks, dinners, picnics, confirmation classes, Bible studies, women’s or men’s groups, etc.

Sponsors (as of May 2012):

Presbytery of Monmouth

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton

Lutheran Office of Governmental Ministries of NJ

Trinity United Methodist Church, Highland Park, NJ

Sponsorship simply means the sponsor has pledged to invite people to attend.

Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation’s decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. By changing policies, programs, and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist, we provide help and opportunity far beyond the communities where we live.

Bread for the World is a 501(c)4 organization.

Christian churches around the country have partnered with Bread for the World, including the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). Donations may be made through UMCOR Advance #982325, visit online at <http://new.gbqm-umc.org/umcor/work/hunger/action/>

Bread for the World

425 3rd Street SW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20024

(800) 82-BREAD and/or www.bread.org

The United Methodist Relay

The United Methodist Relay is the official newspaper of the Greater New Jersey United Methodist Conference, published and distributed monthly except January and August. The most recent editions are posted on a web site for ease in viewing, downloading, printing and saving. To view the current issue or access archives go to:

<http://www.umrelay.org/>

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From

The Prayer Group

“God be merciful onto us, and bless us, and cause
His face to shine upon us.”

Ps. 67:1

DIRECTIONS: Take Route 72 East toward Long Beach Island;
EXIT Route 9 North; go through the intersection with the traffic
light (this is Bay Avenue) turn RIGHT almost immediately AFTER
the intersection onto the very first street (Stafford Avenue); The
church is two blocks on the left across from the firehouse.

Manahawkin United Methodist Church

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