

## while making embracing the future



*Phil Thayer, a member of Adirondack Community Church who greets visitors warmly, enjoys a laugh during the fellowship hour at the back of the sanctuary.*

the keys over to them ...”

“Those of us who wrestled the keys away from the [generation] before us want to be more open ...” said Newhart.

“But we respect that we need each other,” said Lundin.

One of the younger members taking a leadership role in the church is Jason Leon. He is part of a small group of 20- and 30-year-olds, a group that ranges in size from 10 to 50 people that meets to study and discuss their faith and their lives.

“It started off as a way for folks to get together and

have conversations,” Leon said. “It’s open to everyone, but most who come are people from our church and who worship with us. There have been others from other churches who attend, and we’ve had exciting conversations. No one ever walked away feeling unwelcomed.”

In addition to the young adult study group, which meets on Tuesday evenings, there is a study group that meets once a week in different people’s home.

“It’s a chance to get together, to study together, to be in relationship with each other,” said Newhart.

There is also a knitting group that meets on Tuesday evenings. “People have started to come to church because of this group,” Clausen-Lundin said. “We don’t push, we don’t proselytize. They just feel welcome.”

There are other study groups and a Saturday night worship service as well, offering many opportunities for people to get involved.

“My original goal to get everyone involved in a small group was foiled,” Demers laughs, “but [eventually], they did it their own way. These groups function as small group classes—and that’s the difference between managing something and letting it happen. The 20- and 30-year-olds have taught me that. I don’t need to manage it. It’s happening. It’s a movement of the spirit, and if it isn’t, it will stop.”

“We’re not doing church,” said Linda Preston. “We’re letting it happen.”

That spirit fills the church.

“There’s joy in this place,” said Newhart, “and I don’t see that in a lot of places. Where do I want to spend my time and energy? With joyful people.”

Leon, who admits he had done a “fair amount” of church shopping before coming to Adirondack Community Church. “The minute I walked in, I felt this was where I belonged. The service seemed more dynamic, there was an air of authenticity, of exploring, of going beyond traditional ritual. I wanted to share

the journey, to find out the answers together, to ask the question.

“There was a connectedness,” he said.

Lundin agrees. “It is very much sharing God’s love, and having said that, we need to open the doors,” he said.

Demers will be leaving Adirondack Community Church at the end of June to become the pastor of First United Methodist Church in Burlington, Vt. When he first came to the Lake Placid, he said, he came with different expectations, but soon began to recognize that he needed to change his own way of think.

“As I started looking at what I was doing as a pastor, I began asking, ‘is this helping people experience the power of Jesus?’ The first transformation was realizing that I did not come to Lake Placid to [simply maintain a church].”

He expressed his hope during worship that after his 14-and-a-half years as their pastor, the members of the congregation were “more in touch, more in love with God then you were when I came?”

Demers will leave behind a revitalized congregation with strong lay leadership committed to its vision and mission.

“It has been critical for many people that we talk about church and what is working and what isn’t working seven days a week,” said Steve Preston, the current Lay Leader of the church. “It is constantly put before God.”

“Conversations about the church happen everywhere, even the grocery store” said Clausen-Lundin. “In this church you make the decision for Christ, not a denomination.”

“We are a Methodist church, but we strive to be a community,” said Newhart. “When we come to the table, you don’t have to be a member, it doesn’t matter where you come for—you are welcome.”



*Surrounded by traditional Gothic architecture and stained glass windows, Sunday morning worshippers prepare for a relaxed, vibrant and non-traditional service at Adirondack Community Church in Lake Placid.*

## Mission of Peace to India

# Trip offers glimpses into lives of poverty and joy

By Lillian Coletta and Kenny John

The Mission of Peace (MOP) is an annual journey of Shalom to developing countries. From Dec. 27 to Jan. 13, 27 youth from the Northeastern Jurisdiction, Kari Balogh of Calvary-Latham United Methodist Church in New York, Kenny John from Emmaus United Methodist Church in Albany, N.Y., and Lillian Coletta from Williston Federated Church in Vermont, embarked on MOP to India.

As we travelled through five cities meeting a countless number of Indians, and as we now reflect on the experience a quote continuously resonates through our minds: Even though we all have a different story to tell of our experience, we all have something in common—we are now a family. As family, created while in another country, we travelled to places that tourists would not.

We travelled through Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mysore and Mangalore and visited numerous churches, orphanages, hostels, hospitals, and markets. The people of India brought the culture to life—everywhere we went there were smiling faces to greet us and huge brown eyes full of energy.

The Dharavi slums in Mumbai, India, were memorable. Many of the exact alleys we walked through were in the film *Slumdog Millionaire*, but didn't capture the joy, contentment, excitement and happiness that filled the slums. Our main purpose in visiting the slums was to spend time in three Community Outreach Program schools located in the heart of various parts of the slums. Travelling from one school to another was just as rewarding as visiting those in the schools themselves. The boys' faces while playing soccer in the only open space of the slums, the three children sitting in an empty room smiling with nothing but their hands to play with, the mothers washing their clothes inches away from the rotting pile of trash, and each pair of huge brown eyes smiling at us with happiness taught us something we wouldn't have learned without seeing it for ourselves. The people living in the slums were not unhappy, lazy or desperate, but rather they were glowing. They have never



Lillian Coletta of Williston, Vt., sits with a young girl in one of the CORP schools in the Dharavi Slums. Coletta was one of 27 youth who traveled to India in late December, early January as part of the Northeastern Jurisdiction's Mission of Peace.

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*India is a land of contrast, of some very rich and many very poor people. Of modernism and medievalism...India is not a poor country, she is abundantly supplied with everything that makes a country rich, yet her people are very poor.*

— Nehru, India's first Prime Minister

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known anything but the life they are living, and therefore have no desire for the "more." God has blessed these people of the slums with the ability to live so simply and so contentedly.

In the slums we interacted with the children mostly. In each school we entered the children were gathered together—sometimes singing, sometimes

simply silent, and sometimes laughing. There were so many questions running through our heads as we travelled from school to school, but the biggest question throughout the trip was "what could we do for these children?" This is one of those questions that there is no simple answer to, but thinking over it changes your perception of the world.

Visiting another country alone is eye-opening and memorable. As we travelled with a large group we called our family to parts of India that most tourists would never pass through, we learned lessons in life that forever changed our outlook on the world and specifically the lives each of us live every day.

## United Methodist students invited to apply for TAC scholarships

Undergraduate and graduate students of Troy Annual Conference may be eligible for one of three scholarships available to active United Methodist students.

The three Troy Conference funded scholarships are:

- Merit Scholarship: Available to students attending a United Methodist Related School with career goals related to a Christian commitment of service to God and others. The student's church must in the annual Student Day special offering from which these funds are

made available.

- Lottie Brown Grants: Preference for these grants is given to students entering some form of Christian service.

- Ethnic Minority Scholarship: Available to a person from an ethnic minority background attending school, United Methodist-related institution or otherwise. Preference is given to a member of a United Methodist congregation within the boundaries of the Troy Conference.

Most scholarships are between \$500 and \$2,000, and between seven and 10

scholarships will be awarded. Priority goes to United Methodist students. Each scholarship requires an official transcript of grades (sent by the school) and a letter of recommendation from a United Methodist pastor or leader in his or her local United Methodist (or affiliated United) Church.

More information, the scholarship application and letter of recommendation form are available for download at [www.troyac.org](http://www.troyac.org), or contact Rev. Megan Stowe at Shenendehowa United Methodist Church, 971 Route 146,

Clifton Park, N.Y. 12065-3645; (518) 371-7964.

For more information on other United Methodist loans or scholarships, check out *The Handbook of United Methodist Related Schools, Colleges, Universities and Theological Schools with a Guide to United Methodist Loans and Scholarships* from the Division of Higher Education, General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. Information, addresses, deadline dates, and phone numbers are contained in this resource.

## From the Archives

by Karen Staulters

### TAC to host NEJ archivists, historians in Vermont

By Karen Staulters

The Northeastern Jurisdiction of the Commission on Archives and History (NEJCAH) will meet at the Hilltop Inn in Barre, Vt., May 11 through 13. The event will be sponsored by the Troy Annual Conference, which will divide along state lines in July, with the New York churches becoming part of a new conference in Upper New York and the Vermont churches joining New England Annual Conference.

According to the NEJCAH newsletter, from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s, Vermont east of the Green Mountains was its own annual conference, which has inspired the theme: "Beyond the Green Mountains—A Journey Through the Old Vermont Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The program will review the history of the old Vermont Conference and participants will be able to visit a number of churches which played a significant part in the history of the conference including Trinity United Methodist Church in Montpelier, Grace United Methodist Church in St. Johnsbury, the Newbury Community Church, Bradford United Methodist Church and Hedding United Methodist Church in Barre. During the meeting, trips will be taken to Wolcott United Methodist Church, gathered and built by the Rev. George S. Brown, the first African American pastor in both the Troy and Vermont Conferences. Brown re-enactor Clifford Oliver will be on hand to share the story of Brown's ministry along the Green Mountains and Adirondacks.

Participants will also visit Mother Peckett's grave in Bradford.

The meeting will also spotlight the stories of a number of Vermont women who played a significant role in the development of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society in Boston, Mass., in 1869, and "listen" to some individuals who were involved in the North Barre Italian Mission, which ministered to the Italian granite cutters who emigrated to Vermont to work in the Rock of Ages Quarry in Barre.

#### Enduring Flame looks at history of Troy Conference

The Troy Conference Commission on Archives and History, looking ahead to the June 30 dissolution of Troy Conference, has arranged for the publication of book, *The Enduring Flame*, to record the last decades of conference history. The book also includes a history of the camping program of the conference, from the camp meeting days to the present. The book looks at denominational life in upper Northeastern New York and Vermont.

Written by the Rev. Ralph Marino, a retired Troy Conference pastor, has focused on the major decisions that had been made by the conference and explores the ways the conference has responded to major forces in society during the last few decades. The book emphasizes not only what happened but also, using reflections from people involved, what the actions meant on a personal level.

The editorial team includes Jacqueline Marino, copy editor and Rev. William Pattison, editor of photography. Like the author, Pattison was present for conference actions and activity through the years. Additional materials have been prepared by Karen Staulters, Conference Archivist.

Topics covered include highlights of conference history from 1760 through 1982, efforts to combat racism, the reconciling conference movement, worship at annual conference, the Walk to Emmaus, urban ministries, the impact of technology and final transitions. The camping materials focus on transitions from camp meeting days to summer camps for youth and the modern camps and include an extensive chapter of personal reminiscences.

Publication is scheduled for early May, so the book will be available for the Annual Meeting of the Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History in Barre, Vt., May 11 through 13, at the clergy and closing sessions of Troy Conference in Saratoga and Glens Falls, May 21 and 22 and at the Uniting Session of Upper New York Conference, Syracuse, June 19. The special pre-publication price is \$15 plus shipping of \$3.

To order a copy, send a check made payable to Troy Annual Conference, and send to Karen Staulters, Archivist, Troy Annual Conference, 396 Loudon Rd., Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866.



### Vermont churches organize for mission

By George Klohck

The Vermont churches of the Troy Annual Conference are organizing for mission. As the United Methodist churches in Vermont prepare to become part of the Vermont District in the New England Annual Conference in July, a Vermont District Global Ministries Committee has formed and is planning an April 10 mission fair.

The idea began with a push from Jay and Cathie Dunkleberger, Troy Conference Volunteer-in-Mission (VIM) Coordinators, who hope the conference's strong VIM program will continue in the new conference configurations. After conversations with David Stackpole, the New England Conference VIM Coordinator, about the new opportunities that will open when the Vermont churches join the New England Conference, Jay Dunkleberger asked George Klohck, chair of the Troy Conference Committee, to gather Vermont VIM team leaders together to meet with David Stackpole.

The first meeting was held at the Williston Federated Church on July 30. Fifteen VIM leaders were there, 11 from Vermont and four from the New England Conference.

As George Klohck tells it now, he expected to preside at a friendly gathering that gave Vermont and New England VIM members a chance to get to know one another. The meeting soon evolved into something more.

A second meeting was set for Sept. 17 at Rutland United Methodist Church, and with the support and encouragement of the VIM leaders in New England, including Director of Connectional Ministries Jim McPhee and Stackpole and his wife Shirley, a Vermont District Global Ministries Committee is already forming. Klohck will serve as the acting District Secretary of Global Ministries. The committee's vision is to inspire, enlist, and support more Christian action by people moving out from all of our churches.

A Mission Fair for all Vermont churches will be held at the Rutland United Methodist Church on Saturday, April 10. Greg Forrester, Northeastern Jurisdiction VIM Coordinator, will be the keynote speaker. Forrester will bring an update on the United Methodist Committee on Relief's (UMCOR) work in Haiti and what outreach ministries are available there. Leaders from the New England Conference will also be present and share information about partnering with them in mission.

Vermont churches are being encouraged to share stories of mission outreach and bring displays to the fair. Prizes will be awarded for a church's chosen ministry based on the winning church's participation.

### Vermont United Methodist Mission Fair

Rutland UMC

Saturday, April 10, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Can you see yourself enlisting now for a VIM trip to the Gulf area or the Mid-West, or other urgent work around New England and the world? Learn about opportunities to help support work in Haiti and around the world at the

Key note speaker

### Greg Forrester

Northeast Jurisdiction Volunteer-in-Mission Coordinator

- Share stories and displays about your congregation's mission outreach
- Hear about VIM opportunities across the street and around the world
- Meet VIM leaders from the New England Conference
- Bring a loaf of bread and an item to add to a soup pot for lunch and a nonperishable food item for the Rutland Community Cupboard
- UMCOR Health Kits are welcomed
- Prizes will be awarded based on church participation

Registration is requested. The cost is \$10. Send registration to Rutland United Methodist Church, 71 Williams St., Rutland, Vt. 05701-3491.

For more information, contact George Klohck, 1536 East St, Bridgeport, Vt. 05734; mgklohck@gmavt.net; (802) 758-2062

## News Notes

News about Troy Conference churches and people



Members of Grace United Methodist Church in Bradford, Vt., joined people in the community in a prayer vigil, calling for progress in the Copenhagen climate talks held in mid-December. The vigil raised awareness of the need to reduce carbon emissions to below 350 parts per million.

On Dec. 11 through 13, millions of people held rallies and candlelight vigils in over 130 countries, calling for progress in the Copenhagen climate talks. Concerned Bradford, Vt., area residents met at **Grace United Methodist Church** for a sidewalk candlelight protest and a prayer vigil. Handouts encouraged people to form carbon reduction accountability groups (through **Vermont Interfaith Power and Light**), and sign the **350.org Survival Pact**; which allies signatories with those whose lives are at risk now due to climate changes around the world. The message continues in the life of the church in the weeks to come.

Supporters were asking for all countries to urgently sign a climate agreement that is: fair by securing \$200 billion in climate financing for poorer countries; ambitious, by peaking global carbon emissions by 2015 and returning atmospheric carbon dioxide levels below 350 parts per million; and binding.

Retired chaplain the Rev. **Martin Fors** of Lyndon Center, Vt., recently presented a total of 300 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Count* to Lt. Col. **Charles Purinton**, chaplain of the **86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team-Mountain Division of the Vermont National Guard**. Money for the purchase of the books was raised by Fors and the Rev. **Melvin Bridge**, pastor of **Wesley United Methodist Church** in Waterbury, Vt. In all, 600 copies of the devotional have been presented to one-third of the 1,500 troops being deployed from the Waterbury Army.

For years, the large pine tree standing in front of the **Moors Library** in New York has not been lit up for the holidays. But for the holidays in 2009, the story changed. Through the combined efforts of **Jack Dragoon**, a member of **Moors United Methodist Church of Dragon Farm Equipment**, Librarian **Edie Morelock**, members of the library



Moors member **Charlie Sturniolo** perched in the cherry picker decorates the large pine tree in front of **Moors Library** while member **Jack Dragoon**, right, keeps an eye on his company's crane, operated by **Christ Bulriss**.



Completing a course offered by the Rev. **Ralph W. Howe** at **Hedding United Methodist Church** in Barre, Vt., are newly certified lay speakers, back row from left, **Renee Flint**, **Mary Ann Ritchie**, **Tim Boltin**, **Richard Beach**, **Brad Young**. Middle row, **Vivian Hooks**, **Kelly DeFelice**, **Rena Flint**, **Skip Davison**, **Hale Ritchie**. Seated, **Charlene Calcagni-Boisvert**, **Becky Mackin** and **Jim Archer**.

board and volunteers from the church. Pastor **Al Johnson**, **Charlie Sturniolo** and **Ted Kolff van ooster wyk**, the tree was adorned for Christmas with bright, energy-efficient led lights.

On the Sunday after Thanksgiving, the organ at **Mayfield United Methodist Church** in New York, was dedicated in the memory of **Ted and Helen Montgomery**. The dedication was followed by a recital.

A proclamation by Schenectady **Mayor Brian Stratton** declaring Dec. 6 as **Stanford United Methodist Day** in the city and special afternoon worship service were part of the celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the church. Helping to celebrate the anniversary during the worship were the **Guided Footsteps** from **Emmaus United Methodist Church** in Albany, N.Y., the **Schenectady City High School's Sayles School of Fine Arts**, and the **Stanford Church Choir**.

**Bishop Susan W. Hassinger** delivered the message "Looking at the Future through the Eyes of the Past." **Bishop Hassinger** and Rev. **David Heise** presided over the confirmation of four youth as they were received into the **United Methodist Church** and the **Stanford congregation**.

Among the guests attending the celebration were Albany District Superintendent the Rev. **Jim Fenimore**, Troy Conference Minister the Rev. **Holly Nye**, other **United Methodist** pastors, as well as pastors and members of the congregations from **Duryee Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**, the **Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church**, clergy from the **Hamilton Hill Clergy Prayer Group** and the **Central State Street ecumenical churches**.

The congregation of **Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church** in Schenectady, N.Y., put out a call for help on Facebook, via e-mail and by

telephone asking for donations for **UMCOR Health Kits**. Over 40 church members and friends bagged and boxed the over 3,400 items donated to create a total of 282 health kits. Another \$1,100 was contributed by members and friends to cover supplemental supplies, the \$1 per kit for the purchase of toothpaste and help pay shipping costs. **Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church** is just one of many congregations throughout the conference donating health and other emergency kits and money.

As of Feb. 16, **Troy Conference** members had donated \$69,748.40 to the **United Methodist Committee on Relief Advance #418325** for Emergency Relief to Haiti, with an additional \$1,400 in cash donated to purchase toothpaste for health kits and pay for shipping. Treasurer's Assistant **Leah Robinson** reports that another \$7,468.04 was sent from Troy Conference churches directly to **UMCOR**, bringing the total donated to \$77,216.44.

Disaster Relief Coordinator **Hank Coghill** reported that he delivered 712 health kits to Mission Central in Cortland, N.Y. Conference staff estimates that since **Coghill** picked up the first delivery, an additional 2,000 kits have come to the conference office to be sent on to **UMCOR**.

After a year of prayer and consideration, the Vision Team from **Highgate United Methodist Church** in Vermont responded to a need in the communities of Highgate and Rice Hill. Working with **Rice Hill United Methodist Church**, they opened a community center in the church's unused parsonage. The parsonage is being renovated to house the pastor's office and sleep quarters, a food shelth, thrift store, craft sales corner, Christian lending library, a community room and a Teens and Tweens Room. "The vision [of the churches] has been

**Notes** continued next page