

UMC *catalyst*

Igniting Ministries Through Communication

Volume 8, No. 6, February 2005

Observing Lent

(Ash Wednesday is February 9)

by Daniel Benedict

John Wesley urged “self-denial” as a way of increasing our liberty to respond to God’s grace. Families might adopt a Lenten discipline of saying “no” to something (TV, overeating, unnecessary spending, etc.) in order to say a stronger “yes” to God and to neighbor (times of quiet, serving a meal at a shelter, visiting a shut-in, etc.). There are helpful resources such as a booklet of meditations created by church members, or using Cokesbury’s *Sanctuary for Lent 2005*. Other resources for families and Lent include the following Upper Room books:

Living in God’s Time, by Margaret McMillan Persky

Parents and Grandparents as Spiritual Guides, by Betty Shannon Cloyd

Children and Prayer, by Betty Shannon Cloyd

At Home with God, by Broyles, Downing, Escamilla, and Oden

Daniel Benedict is the Worship Resources Director in the Center for Worship Resourcing at The General Board of Discipleship.

Note: see Bishop Weaver’s “Together in Christ” on page 2.

An Embrace of Grace

by Cheryl Gates, OSL

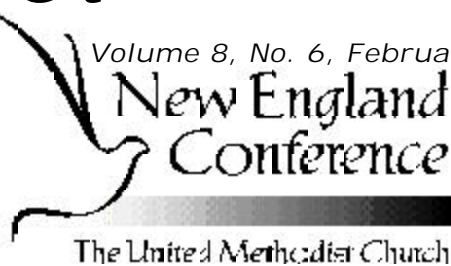
This poetic reflection is an expression of eucharistic piety that is infrequent in present-day Western Christianity. The author’s experience invites readers to share the experience and to reflect on the potency of the eucharistic encounter with Holy One.

— Dan Benedict

The Body of Christ, honey sweet and dry
Coarse grains finding places to hide in the mouth
as if to linger, too much to swallow yet leaving me
wanting more.

The Blood of Christ, burning on lips and tongue
Binding to sweet crumbs, softening and swelling.
”Just so, I am completed in you.”

Singing in silence, wanting to touch and be touched,
Accepting the unity and solitude of the encounter,



I retreat from the table to lift a word of thanksgiving.

It is finished. The table is cleared.

The candles are extinguished.

All settles into a silence and a waiting.

Before this emptied table I bend
the knee of my heart.

Encouraged by a cloud of witnesses I
dare to lean.

Forgive me for I know not what I
do.

Like an embrace of grace,
the Beloved offers forgiveness to
the lover.

Pure white atop penitential purple,
the cloths lie still.

I quietly kiss the place where the body once lay. But
where have they taken it?

My burning cheek presses against the spot, still
warmed by holy presence.

My lips ache to kiss the feet, to kiss the hands.

Arms outstretched, I long to receive the kiss of the
mouth.

But the sacrifice, so carefully consumed, leaves no
trace but my tears.

Turning from the table, my fingers curl to fists,
To stifle ageless moans of longing.

I kneel. I sit. I lift the skirts of the table and lie
beneath it.

Arms outstretched, again I weep, for even here I find no
kisses, no crumbs.

The empty table holds me captive until the Beloved
returns.

The author, Deacon Cheryl Gates, OSL
(cgates@bu.edu) is a member of the New England Annual
Conference and works at Boston University School of
Theology. She also has been worship leader for Annual
Conference sessions at Gordon College.

Find Lenten resources at http://www.gbod.org/worship/default.asp?act=reader&item_id=10205

Together in Christ

Bishop Peter Weaver

United Methodist Office

PO Box 249, Lawrence MA 01842-0449

BishopsOffice@neumc.org 978-682-9555



THE ASHEN

As Ash Wednesday approaches this year, the Tsunami devastation is a wrenching reminder that life is fragile, temporary, and vulnerable. Dust we are, and to dust we shall return. It can come in the unexpected sudden sweep of swelling water, sliding mud, or silent malignancy. As dazed parents wandered about searching for their children among the dead piled in a place of worship - turned morgue, a reporter noted the "ashen faces."

In this season of ashes, the face of all sensitive humanity has turned ashen amidst the low murmur of questions like: Where is God in all of this? Why are the poor so disproportionately the victims? How can we, who have so much, love our neighbors, who have so little, as much as we love ourselves? What sins of greed and gluttony do I need to confess that contribute to systems of economic injustice around the world? Why do our neighbors suspect that American gestures of goodwill cloak hidden military agendas? How am I following faithfully, Jesus - who is already with the oppressed and sorrowing?

It is Lent... A time for ashen pondering. A time to repent of our sin. A time to pray that the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world will have mercy on us all. A time for fasting, emptying out, sharing in the hunger of our world. A time to share in the fast of Isaiah 58 "to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free." A time to believe the promise of Isaiah 61, that there can be "a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning." A time to fully experience Lent as necessary to fully experience Easter.

This might be the time to start a special Lenten Bible Study in your congregation around the questions raised above. I invite you to join me in the Wesley fast (24 hours - from after supper on Thursday to before supper on Friday each week) during Lent. Volunteer in special ministries with the poor. Continue to contribute to UMCOR or other agencies committed to "Love in Action" relief for the long haul. And pray, pray, pray.

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Bishop: Peter Weaver

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Time to Submit Resolutions

It is now time to start submitting resolutions or suggested actions for our Annual Conference Session in June. Resolutions can be submitted by a conference committee/taskforce/board/agency, by a local church, by a cluster, or by an individual conference member.

Resolutions are due in my hands no later than March 1. If you can not have this material to me by March 1 please contact me to see if special arrangements can be made. Resolutions can be e-mailed to me as an attached file at:

blackadar@neumc.org or can be snail-mailed on a 3½" disk to John Blackadar, Conference Secretary, PO Box 249, Lawrence MA 01842-0449.

Conference News

Blackadar to be Appointed New Hampshire District Superintendent

Notice from Bishop Peter D. Weaver:

On June 30, 2005

the Rev. Jan Smith-Rushton will complete an eight-year term of exemplary service as Superintendent of the New Hampshire District.

After prayer and consultation with the New Hampshire District Committee on Superintendency and the cabinet, I am delighted to announce that the Rev.

John Blackadar will be appointed the new Superintendent of the New Hampshire District beginning July 1, 2005. Since 1971 John has served in congregations and conference offices with distinction. He is currently the Conference Secretary, Registrar for the Board of Ordained Ministry, and Conference Administrative Coordinator.

We give thanks for the faithfulness of the laity and clergy of the New Hampshire District and John's response to God's call. I invite you to be in prayer for the Smith-Rushton family, the Blackadar family, and all involved at this time of transition. As we were reminded by Sunday's Gospel and our own baptism, we are "God's beloved."

More about John...

John Blackadar has served as conference secretary and administrator of the conference office in Lawrence MA since 1999. Most of his ministry, however, has been in the local church – primarily in multiple charges. Blackadar is from Rochester NH. He went to college at West Virginia Wesleyan, and seminary at St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City. He was ordained a deacon in 1969, and an elder in 1971. His pastorates include:

- A 6-point charge in West Virginia, 1966-68
- A 4-point charge in Missouri West Conference, 1968-69
- A 3-point charge in Iowa, 1969-71
- Hannah Tenney UMC in Salem NH, and Ayers Village in Haverhill NH, 1971-72
- Hannah Tenney and North Salem NH UMCs, 1972-76



- Groveton, Stratford, and Stark NH UMCs, 1976-84
- Secretary of the NH Conference, 1976 – merger in 1994, and New England conference secretary since merger

- St. John's UMC in Dover NH, 1984-90
 - Keene and Marlow NH UMCs, 1990-99
 - Conference Secretary, Administrative Coordinator, and Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry in the conference office, 1999-present
- John, and his wife, Rita, currently live in Litchfield NH and will move to the NH district parsonage in Concord. John has three children: John, a nuclear chemist in New Mexico; Heather, a physical therapist in Dover NH; and Emily, graduating this year from high school and soon to enter the nursing program at the University of New Hampshire.

Speakers Announced for 2005 Pastors' Assembly

Contact: Rev. Sharon Jones, mesophia@comcast.net

The Board of Managers for the New England Conference Pastors' Assembly is pleased to announce the speakers for this event held annually in late August at Geneva Point Center on Lake Winnepesaukee in Center Harbor, New Hampshire.

In alphabetical order, our speakers include Tony Compolo, well known evangelist and educator; Tyrone D. Gordon, national revival preacher; and Marcia McPhee, artist and worship consultant. Our theme for the week will be *Growing God's Family: Biblical Foundations for Evangelism*. We hope all elders, deacons, diaconal ministers, and lay workers will consider participation in this annual continuing education event.

Rev. Tony Compolo is

Professor of Sociology Emeritus at Eastern University in St. Davids, PA. He is a frequent guest on television programs ranging from *Larry King Live* to Bill Maher's *Politically Incorrect*. He is the author of 29 books, the most recent of which is entitled, *Which Jesus?* As founder and President of the Evangelical Association for the Promotion of Education, Dr.



Campolo has worked to create, nurture and support programs for "at risk" children across North America, and has helped establish schools and universities in several developing countries. Dr. Campolo is married to Peggy (Davidson) Campolo, who will be traveling with

him. They have two children and four grandchildren.

After being educated in the public school system of Los Angeles, **Rev. Tyrone**

Gordon received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Bishop College in Dallas, Texas; and a Master of Divinity from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in 1984. He is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church and is a member of the North Texas Conference. During a fourteen-year ministry at St. Mark United Methodist



Church in Wichita, Kansas the congregation grew from 350 members to 2,500 members. It was also one of the most racially diverse congregations in the Kansas West Conference. He is now pastor of St. Luke "Community" United Methodist Church in Dallas, Texas. He currently serves as a member of the General Board of Discipleship and serves on the Coordinating Committee of Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century.

Traveling with the renowned theater and dance companies before her call to ministry, **Marcia McFee**



brings to her work of worship leadership a creative spirit that enlivens worship. Her "Worship Workshops Live" offer practical and manageable ideas for renewing your local services. She received a Master of Theological Studies degree at Saint Paul School of Theology with a concentration in Preaching and Worship, and is completing her

doctorate in liturgical studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. She has designed and led worship for a number of national and regional United Methodist gatherings, as well as other denominations. In 1995, Marcia received the Hoyt Hickman Award for scholarship in the study of liturgy and effective worship leadership. She has been a guest lecturer at five seminaries in the areas of creativity and worship and was the North Texas Conference (UMC) Consultant on Worship & the Arts before beginning her Ph.D. work.

We are very excited about this team of excellent leaders and encourage you to plan your calendar to include this year's Pastors' Assembly at the Geneva Point Center in Center Harbor NH, August 29 through September 1, 2005.

Certification in Christian Stewardship

- from Stan Cushing (chairperson Conference Stewardship Task Force) srcushing@hotmail.com

The beginning of the New Year is an excellent time to begin working on stewardship in your local church. Therefore, we want you to know that the New England Conference is offering *Certification in Christian Stewardship for Pastors, Lay Leaders, and churches*. Churches that enroll in this certification process will develop "how to" action steps that will nurture the spiritual health and growth in their local church throughout the entire year. We are inviting churches that wish to develop a deeper understanding of stewardship to consider receiving this certification.

We will provide the guidance and training necessary to help you complete all the steps to become certificated in Christian stewardship. The New England Conference Stewardship Task Force believes that this process will help any local church that participates to grow in their stewardship. If your church is interested in learning more about the certification process, please contact Peter P. Parady at 603-743-6665 (St. John's UMC, 16 Roberts Road, Dover NH 03820).

Online Sunday School: Helping Churches Bring Sunday School Home

Available on the New England Conference Website

New on the New England Conference website is an icon that links you to a resource called the "Online Sunday School" developed by Simply Christian, a non-profit organization and shared ministry of both the Western Pennsylvania Conference and Dutilh UMC of Cranberry PA. Their mission includes helping churches establish, maintain, or further, their Internet presence. The New England Conference has enrolled in their Online Sunday School program for a one year trial period during which any local church in our conference can access this resource from our website at no cost.

Online Sunday School (OSS) takes the weekly lectionary Bible reading and adds beautiful Christian artwork related to that reading. Next, a suite of interactive quizzes, puzzles, and games is added, based on the weekly reading. OSS is designed to reinforce, not replace, the lessons taught by your church's teachers and pastors during Christian education programming and/or weekly worship. OSS is a tool to enhance your current Sunday school program. Children can visit the site during the week from their homes and libraries and engage in activities that reinforce scriptural teachings.

Activities are graded, ages Kindergarten through grade 6. This resource will be most helpful to churches

using lectionary-based curriculum, such as Seasons of the Spirit, but has resources that all can use. The "Teacher Tips" section has information many will find helpful.

Visit www.neumc.org and click on the Online Sunday School icon and check it out! Please forward any comments or questions to Wanda Stahl, Director of Connectional Ministries, at stahl@neumc.org.

Reaching out in Love - One Church Helps Another

- by District Superintendent, Aida Irizarry-Fernandez, Metro Boston Hope District

Peabody (MA) UMC is a small congregation that is growing and serving the poorest of the poor in the community, which is active in mission in its community, but has been struggling financially.

In early January, their gas heat was cut because they have not been able to pay their bill. The pastor, Pam Smith-Paquette, asked for help in assisting her church from another church colleague, Rev. John Mueller, pastor of the Calvary UMC in Arlington MA. This church — out of goodness and commitment to Christ — not only paid the bill, but also gave them more, to help carry them through the winter.

I take this moment to express my deepest gratitude to Calvary UMC and its pastor, John Mueller, for reaching out in love. I pray and hope that this kind of partnership and love may be demonstrated in other congregations as well.

May God bless Peabody UMC and Calvary UMC, who are both incarnating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their communities.

National News

UM Giving Topped \$1 Million by January 4

The United Methodist Church surpassed \$1 million in online gifts in response to the Dec. 26 tsunami in the Indian Ocean, Bishop Peter D. Weaver, president of the denomination's Council of Bishops, announced Jan. 4. Weaver said every dollar given to the church's relief agency, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, goes directly to aid for the affected region. The United Methodist Committee on Relief is coordinating resources with international partners and organizations such as Action by Churches Together and Churches Auxiliary for Social Action, which have aid workers at the scene of some of the devastation.



Helping Hands...

Church volunteers unload relief supplies, including boxes of biscuits, at a Methodist church in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka. The supplies were provided by Action by Churches Together International through the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka. A UMNS photo by Paul Jeffrey, ACT International. Donations to ACT's United Methodist partner, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, can be made out to "South Asia Emergency" and placed in local church offering plates or sent directly to UMCOR, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 330, New York, NY 10115. Designate checks for UMCOR Advance #274305 and "South Asia Emergency." Credit-card donations can be made by calling (800) 554-8583.

Young Missionaries Needed

The United Methodist Board of Global Ministries is recruiting young adults for its mission intern and US 2 programs in 2005. Application deadline for both programs is Feb. 1. The age range is 20 to 30 years old. Both programs emphasize leadership development and focus on spirituality as it relates to social justice in today's society. Young adults live with and learn from communities that struggle with injustice. More information is available at http://gbgm-umc.org/who_we_are/mp - the board's mission personnel Web site. Applications are available online or by contacting the Young Adult Program Office at (212) 870 3660 or sending an e-mail to MIRYAP1@gbgm-umc.org.

National Communication Scholarships from United Methodist Communications

Three communication scholarships are offered annually:

1. For recent, or this year's, racial ethnic minority graduates - The Judith Weidman Racial Ethnic Minority Fellowship is awarded to one recent college / seminary graduate each year. The recipient will spend a year as part of a communication staff in an annual conference office in the United States, and will receive \$30,000 in salary and benefits. Candidates must be

United Methodist. (The first-ever recipient of this award was Larry Hygh, now Communication Director in the Cal-Pac Conference. His intern year was spent in the New England Conference.)

2. For graduate students - The Stoodly-West Scholarship is a \$6,000 award for a United Methodist student in post-graduate study at an accredited U.S. college or university who intends to pursue a career in religion journalism. Candidates must be United Methodist.

3. For racial ethnic minority undergraduate students - The Leonard M. Perryman Communications Scholarship - a \$2,500 scholarship for undergraduate study in religion journalism / mass communication. Candidates must be United Methodist.

To learn more, check <http://crt@umcom.org> or <http://crt.umc.org/rem>. For application forms, contact Wanda Stahl in Lawrence MA at Stahl@neumc.org.

Discipline and Resolutions Ready

The first copies of the English-language United Methodist 2004 *Book of Discipline* and the 2004 *Book of Resolutions* are in Cokesbury stores now. The United Methodist Publishing House prints both books every four years, after each gathering of General Conference. The Book of Discipline contains the church's law, and the Book of Resolutions collects all of the denomination's current statements on social issues. Both books also include the church's Social Principles. The books are available as a two-pack for \$29 and with the *United Methodist Directory* for \$39. For details, visit www.cokesbury.com.

Small But Meaningful Gifts

If you're looking for a gift that could change someone's life, check out these ideas from the United Methodist Committee on Relief. For a \$5 donation, a child can be immunized against tuberculosis, measles, polio, tetanus and other diseases (UMCOR Advance #982400). A \$15 gift will teach a woman in Nepal to read and write (Advance #229500). A church school class can provide materials to build a barn and supply a milk cow for a rural family in Bosnia for \$2,500 (Advance #333350). Or a gift of \$250 will help an immigrant family in the United States receive professional legal advice on how to navigate in post-9/11 immigration rules (Advance #901285). Donate to any project by placing a contribution in the offering plate at a local United Methodist church; sending a check to UMCOR, 475 Riverside Dr., Room 330, New York, NY 10115; or calling (800) 554-8583, where credit-card donations are accepted.

Prominent UM Political Leaders Die

by United Methodist News Service

The deaths of two political pioneers -- Shirley Chisholm and Robert T. Matsui -- are bringing outpourings of praise for their faith and service to their country and to The United Methodist Church.

Chisholm, the first black woman elected to Congress and one of the first women to vie for presidency, was also a devoted United Methodist who "cared deeply for children." She died January 1 at a nursing home near her home in Ormond Beach, Fla. She was 80.

U.S. Representative Robert T. Matsui (D) California, a former Japanese-American prisoner during World War II, died suddenly Jan. 2 following a rare blood disorder. Matsui was baptized in 1980 at Sacramento (Calif.) Japanese United Methodist Church. Though he lived on the east coast, Matsui and his family considered the Sacramento church their home church.

Bill Hinson, Confessing Movement Leader, Dies at 68

By United Methodist News Service

The Rev. William Hinson, a founder and president of the Confessing Movement, died December 26, a month after suffering a massive stroke. He was 68.

A leading conservative voice in the United Methodist Church, Hinson helped found the Confessing Movement in 1995 and was serving a two-year term as its president when he died.

Beyond his role in the Confessing Movement, Hinson led one of the denomination's largest congregations for many years, served on United Methodist agencies and was active in the World Methodist Council.

Last spring, he addressed the denomination's 2004 General Conference in Pittsburgh, when the assembly was abuzz with discussion of a possible split over theological differences, particularly with regard to issues of sexuality. Hinson and the Rev. Bruce Robbins, former top staff executive of the United Methodist Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, clarified the details of unofficial discussions that had occurred earlier that week between leaders with some of the church's advocacy groups.

Do we have your email address?

Help the conference keep in touch with you!

Please email your address to

communicate@neumc.org

or fill out the form at

www.neumc.org/Form_UMCatalyst.htm

Conference Event Listings

All Conference Events are found on the New England Conference website at <http://www.neumc.org/events.asp>. Submissions of events to these listings can be made from a link on that page.

Senior High Youth Rally at Mechuwana - Friday, February 4 - Sunday, February 6 in Winthrop ME - "All things bright and beautiful..." Come learn about God's creation and how to protect our environment. Rally form is online on the website. Hope you can join us if you are in Grades 9-12. Please register by January 28. Contact: mechuwana@aol.com, www.mechuwana.org/youthpage.html

School of Christian Mission - 1 Day Event - Saturday, February 5 in Enfield CT - At Hazardville UMC, 330 Hazard Avenue, Enfield CT, 9am-4:30pm. (Continental Breakfast begins at 8:15 am) Literature Sales begin at 8:15 am. Classes offered (each participant chooses one class only):

Concerning Prayer - Leeda Marsh, Study Leader

Cuba - Rev. Marilyn Robb, Study Leader

Registration \$35 (Luncheon included)

Please RSVP so that handouts and lunch will be available. Contact: LeedaM@aol.com, 978-840-0158

Youth Retreat Leadership Training - Saturday, February 5, 2005 in Winslow ME - At Living Water Spiritual Retreat Center - 9am-4pm, with optional Friday overnight. Training for adult leaders. This training is appropriate for clergy and lay persons who work with youth groups, and Christian educators for grades 6-12.

- an overview of what distinguishes a retreat from a rally or a workshop

- ideas for using scripture, stories, and music to relate the faith journey to everyday life

- reflective activities that work with youth

- ways to facilitate group sharing in a supportive and non-judgmental setting

Cost: \$35, \$60 if staying overnight Contact:

RMcNulty@neumc.org www.e-livingwater.org/UMC.htm

Response Team & Steering Committee Retreat - Friday, February 11 - Saturday, February 12 in Manchester NH - For more information, contact Rev. Jim McPhee Contact: mcphee@neumc.org, 978-682-7555 x260

Strategic Planning for Lay Leadership in Congregations - Sunday, February 13 in North Andover MA - An introductory evening especially for lay leaders - 4-9pm.

Holy Conversations is the name of a distinctive Alban Institute approach to strategic planning that emphasizes the special characteristics and dynamics of congregations. This introductory event will be especially helpful to congregations getting ready to undertake long-range planning work. Topics will include:

- Different types of planning needed in congregations, and how to decide what type we need now

- Phases in a planning process, and how to decide which phase is most appropriate now

- Ways to practice spiritual discernment through planning

See the flyer. Contact: thestaff@rollingridge.org, www.RollingRidge.org, 978-682-8815

Career Decisions: Listening to God's Call - Thursday, February 17 - Saturday, February 19 in North Andover MA - At Rolling Ridge, with Nancy Smith, Thursday at 4pm to Saturday at 3pm. Registration is \$150. Contact: thestaff@rollingridge.org, www.RollingRidge.org, 978-682-8815

Dialogue Day IV - for Cross Cultural / Cross Racial Ministry - Friday, February 18 - Saturday, February 19 in North Andover MA - Please join and share your unique experiences in Cross-Cultural /Cross-Racial Ministry in New England! - Sponsored by the Commission on Religion and Race (Snow Date 2/25-26) at Rolling Ridge Conference Center, North Andover MA, Friday 7pm -Saturday 2:30pm.

Sharing our Experiences, Theological Reflection And Celebrating Our Gifts and Each Other.

For more information, contact Yong Ja Kim, chairperson of Commission on Religion and Race at 207-774-1617(day), or 207-799-0290 (evening).

Register at the attached phone number or email address by February 4.

\$15.00 Registration fee. Contact:

TheStaff@RollingRidge.org, www.RollingRidge.org, 978-682-8815

Southern New England Chrysalis Girl's Flight - Friday, February 18 - Monday, February 21- Chrysalis is a once-in-a-lifetime retreat for youth ages 15 to 23 and having started their freshman year of high school. Visit our website. Contact: jniro@juno.com, www.gbgm-umc.org/newtnumc/chrysalis/

Pre-Retirement Seminar for NEC Clergy - Tuesday, March 8, 2005 in Biddeford ME - Sponsored by the Conference Board of Pensions, Board of Ordained Ministry and Preachers' Aid Society, it will be held at the Marie Joseph Spiritual Life Center in Biddeford ME. If you have not attending a pre-retirement seminar recently, or are located convenient to Biddeford ME, be sure to mark your calendar. Brochures will be mailed in January 2005. If you have any question, contact Cathy MacGovern. A few rooms will be available at Biddeford in case you need to travel on Monday. Contact: pascm@comcast.net, 413-736-5840

Maple Sugar Weekend - Friday, March 11 - Sunday, March 13 in Meredith NH - At Wanakee United Methodist Center - Friday at 7pm to Sunday at 2pm.

For grades 7-8. Leaders: Jen Mayo and Phil Polhemus Cost \$50, registration fee \$15.

Maple trees have provided us with great taste and wonderful sugar for centuries. It is one of God's sweetest gifts. This weekend we will tap trees, collect the sap, boil it into syrup and learn about the tradition of sugaring.

Jen Mayo, the owner of Arbutus Hill Farm, is a neighbor to our Homestead Retreat. She has worked with Wanakee for

more than 10 years as a resource person during our summer camping season as a Heifer Project International farmer. Contact: www.wanakee.org, 603-279-7950

Leadership Development Training Workshop - CMA District - Saturday, March 12 in West Acton MA - Workshop hosted by St. Matthew's UMC, West Acton MA. This is a follow-on event to the very successful workshop held in January 2004 for UM church committee leaders and member, new in their experience, as well as those with too many years to remember. The time is from 1-5pm. Following an opening session, we'll break into two sets of sessions where various topics such as specific committee training, program planning and leadership skills will be addressed. Additional planning details will be announced shortly. Please contact Ron Adams to express your interest get more details. Contact: ronald.m.adams@comcast.net

Renewal 2005 Conference - Saturday, March 12 in Manchester NH - Dr. Rose Sims will be at the Renewal 2005 Conference at the Executive Court Inn, Manchester NH, to speak on the topic New Life for Dying Churches. Dr. Sims is a recipient of the Circuit Rider Award, and speaks and writes about church renewal all across the country from her personal experience. Renewal 2005 begins at 8am with breakfast with Bishop Peter Weaver and is followed by worship led by Pastor Brian Souza and his worship team from First UMC, Woonsocket RI. The conference ends at 3pm.

Renewal 2005 is a conference of the Evangelical Renewal Fellowship. Complete details and registration brochure may be obtained from Pastor Tom Bentum. Contact: tbentum@clergy.net

Conflict as a Ministry Tool - Wednesday, March 16 - Friday, March 18 in North Andover MA - At Rolling Ridge, with Bonnie Marden, Wednesday at 4pm to Friday at 2pm.

When individuals and groups seek God's will, conflict is a ministry tool! But, tools can also be harmful and dangerous. In this workshop, participants will explore the following.

What is conflict and why do we typically avoid it?

Practice personal skills and responses to constructively manage conflict.

Learn group process strategies for assessing and coping with conflict.

Distinguish between harmful chronic conflict from creative opportunities.

How to help conflicted groups move forward without getting trapped in it!

When, how and who to call for help and support during conflict.

See the attached flyer. Contact: TheStaff@RollingRidge.org, www.RollingRidge.org, 978-682-8815

St. Patrick's Day Luncheon - Thursday, March 17 in North Andover MA - At Rolling Ridge, hosted by JimTodd. Starts at 10am. Registration fee is \$12. Contact: TheStaff@RollingRidge.org, www.RollingRidge.org, 978-682-8815

Middle School Rally at Camp Mechuwana - Saturday, March 19 - Sunday, March 20 in Winthrop ME - Middle School Rally - for Grades 6-8. "I Am Me and That's More than OK" - come join the Youth Council as they lead you in this weekend event. Registration form and event description can be found on the website. See you then! Contact: mechuwana@aol.com, www.mechuwana.org/

youthpage.html

Lay Speaking School - Metro Boston Hope District - Sundays: March 20, April 10, April 17 in Winthrop MA - Sundays, 1:30-6:30pm at First Church of Winthrop, UM, 217 Winthrop Street, Winthrop MA 02152

Phone: 617-846-0708.

Option 1: Basic Course (Pre-requisite for advanced courses)

In English - Ms. Wendy Page

In Portuguese - Rev. Juarez Goncalves

Advanced:

Option 2: Lay Speakers are Servant Leaders - Rev. Anthony Brima

Option 3: Lay Speakers Lead Bible Study - Rev. Russell Pregeant

Option 4: Lay Speakers Lead in Mission Outreach - Rev. Henry James

Option 5: Lay Speakers Lead in Stewardship - Rev. Karen Peters

Option 6: Lay Speakers Preach - Rev. Laurel Scott

Registration Fee: \$20 for the Basic Course: \$30 for Advanced Course. Please make check payable to the "New England Conference". Bring your Bible, book(s), & writing material to class.

Only those registered by February 20 will receive course books in advance of class. Contact the Registrar, Esther J. Chung, 10 Meadowbrook Rd, Hudson MA 01749; Phone: 978-562-0502 (home), 617-267-7777 (office). Contact: esther@koreaboston.com, 978-562-0502

Circles... - Wednesday, March 23 in North Andover MA - At Rolling Ridge - "Circles: Rediscover a Sacred Tool for Dialogue & Decision-making" - with Bonnie Marden, 10am-3pm. Registration is \$35. Contact: TheStaff@RollingRidge.org, www.RollingRidge.org, 978-682-8815

Lay Speaking Classes - CMA District - Sundays, April 3, 10, 17, 24 & May 1 in Westborough MA - Central Massachusetts District, 2-5pm at First UMC, 120 Main St., Westborough MA.

Courses Offered:

Basic - Instructor: Becke Drake

Advanced - Lay Speakers Lead in Worship,

Instructor: Cheryl Owoc

Advanced - Lay Speakers interpret to Others Our United Methodist Heritage, Instructor: Chuck Frasier

Cost: \$30. Make checks payable to New England Conference. Mail to David Tetzloff, 317 Pine St, Gardner MA 01440. Contact: calcarpenter@cox.net, www.cmd6.org, 401-723-6264

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