

# UMC*Connection*

Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church • Becoming fully alive in Christ and making a difference in a diverse and ever-changing world • [www.bwcumc.org](http://www.bwcumc.org) • Volume 26, Issue 07 • August 2015

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## Zimbabwe partnership strengthened



Bishops Marcus Matthews, left, of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, and Eben Nhwatiwa, right, of the Zimbabwe Episcopal Area, prepare Communion at the closing worship service for the 2015 pastors' school at Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe.

BY ERIK ALSGAARD  
UMC*Connection* Staff

**A**S A VISIBLE sign of a growing partnership, 26 members of the Baltimore-Washington Conference travelled to Africa in July to teach and offer resources for the Zimbabwe Episcopal Area's pastors' school.

Begun in 1997, the partnership between the two Areas has meant a strengthening of ministry in both regions, said the Rev. Joe Daniels, superintendent of the Greater Washington District, pastor at Emory UMC in Washington, D.C., and chair of the Zimbabwe Partnership. He and Bishop Marcus Matthews, along with the Rev. Maidstone Mulenga, assistant to the bishop and Director of Connectional Ministries for the BWC, led the delegation.

On the first day of pastors' school, held at Africa University in Mutare in eastern Zimbabwe, members of the BWC delegation had an opportunity to meet the school's new Vice Chancellor, participate in worship and lead times of small group sharing.

Bishop Matthews opened the pastors' school on July 13 by reminding the 350 clergy in attendance from Zimbabwe, "We need each other to face the issues that clergy face today." No pastor, the bishop said, is supposed to operate as a "Lone Ranger."

"We are a connectional church," Matthews said. "We are all a part of the body of Christ."

The bishop thanked Zimbabwe Episcopal Area Bishop Eben

K. Nhwatiwa for providing the leadership that creates an environment of hospitality and welcome. Matthews especially congratulated the ZEA for its Ebenezer Conference, where more than 65,000 people came together in August 2014 for times of praise, worship and teaching.

Matthews also congratulated the Area for its new East Conference Center, which the BWC delegation toured on Saturday, July 11. The BWC provided funding for the new roof of the building.

The bishop, who has been to Africa University numerous times, said that pastors can't face the issues they face these days alone.

"You continue to be faithful and obedient to your callings," Matthews said. Sharing a story of a man who was told by God to push against a giant boulder in his front yard, Matthews said that there are times when we will grow frustrated.

"In the story, the man pushes and pushes and pushes against the boulder, but it doesn't budge," the bishop said. "There are times when the devil comes around and tempts him to stop. But he doesn't; he keeps pushing."

The point of the story, Matthews said, is that, at no point did God ask the man to move the boulder. "He was called to push against it," the bishop said. "Your calling, our calling, is to be obedient and to be faithful to what God has called us to do."

And in being obedient, the bishop said, that means we ought to have a story to tell, to each other, to the congregations we serve,

*See Zimbabwe, page 4*

## Rules Committee seeks feedback on Circles of Grace

**D**URING THE PAST two years at the Annual Conference Sessions, members of the Baltimore-Washington Conference have created and participated in a new kind of discernment process called Circles of Grace. Over the course of this year, the Rules Committee will consider and respond to suggestions to refine the process.

This new tool for considering social justice and mercy-related resolutions enables holy conversations, involves more people in the discussions and avoids the usual three for/three against debate. The Circles of Grace process allows for a vote on the resolutions

discussed, but does not allow the resolutions to be amended. In 2014 and 2015, the Annual Conference passed, by more than a two-thirds majority vote, a Motion to Suspend the Rules in order to use this process.

In 2014, the resolutions decided by using this process were all related to human sexuality; in 2015, they related to human sexuality, and faith and science.

The evaluations of the Circles process were overwhelmingly positive. Some of the words used to describe the process that were recorded on toy boats, used as talking sticks, included: Acceptance • Agape •

Civilized • Eye-Opening • Fruitful • Grace-full • Holy • Hopeful • Inclusive • Respectful • Safe • Spirit-filled • Stimulating • Struggling • Thoughtful.

As a result of the positive reaction to the Circles process and to avoid the need for an annual Motion to Suspend, the Rules Committee in 2015 offered a resolution [<http://bwcumc.org/circles-of-grace-resolution/>] to codify the Circles process. An amendment [<http://bwcumc.org/proposed-amendment-to-circles-of-grace-resolution/>] was offered by Matthew Sichel, a lay member from

*See Circles of Grace, page 6*



# ... well said

(a chance to express what that word means to you.)

By MANDY SAYERS  
Pastor, Covenant UMC, Gaithersburg

EVERY SUMMER, I forget that I'm no longer a student and that I have a year-round job to go to. There's always a little part of me that is convinced that in the summer, I can play: I can go to the pool every day; I can lose myself in the sheer open possibility of time. And then I remember, "Oh yeah, that's right, I have a job." (Then when I remember I have a job, I tend to forget that I also have children, who are home for the summer, and I have to find something to do with them.) Still, inside of me, there is something that rebels against the status quo of hard work and exhausted rest in these languid summer months. My heart insists on time for play, too. Play is not explicitly mentioned a whole lot in the Bible, but we do have whales made to play in the great seas (Psalm 104:25-26) and children playing in the streets of a restored city (Zechariah 8:5). And the act of creation, I think, can hardly be done without a skip in the step and a twinkle in the Divine eye. Once upon a time, in some summer church long ago, the choir rustled its way to their "one service because it's summer" feet and did an anthem about creation. It featured whistling. Happy whistling. As in God, our mighty creator, was whistling as God fashioned humanity from earth, as God shaped rivers and seas, making creation out of a place of profound joy. (Almost like the ultimate in "godly play.") God didn't just work on those six days...God played. Anyone who's seen a platypus or a giraffe has got to see that some levity was at work there. Enjoying God, delighting in God, giving thanks to God for all God's good gifts — these concepts are made most real in many ways when we play. Savor these days of summer, friends. If David can dance before the Lord, and if women can run, their throats full of joy, from an empty tomb, then part of what it means to be faithful is not just to work and collapse in rest, but also to play.



Ancient church mothers and fathers often greeted one another with the phrase, "Give me a word." This greeting led to the sharing of insights and wisdom. Today we continue this tradition with this monthly column.

By DARYL WILLIAMS  
Pastor, St. Paul UMC, Oxon Hill

THERE'S AN IMAGE that some people have of the church that is simply not flattering. They look in from the outside and they see rules, regulations, rituals and they want no part of it. They see stern faces, judgmental stares and a lot of kneeling and standing. They see people dressed uncomfortably in their "Sunday best," doing their best to get through Sunday services and showing up again next week. It leaves the outsider asking the simple question, "Why so serious?" Why are we so serious in the church? It is almost as if we think God would be offended if we let our hair down and had a little fun. Yes, we are in a serious business. Yes, lives are on the line when we are making disciples. Yes, we want to be good and faithful servants to God. All of these things are true, but we also want people to see that being a disciple is fun. If we convince people that following Jesus automatically makes you a stick in the mud, who can't have any fun, then all of our serious work is for naught because nobody signs up to be BORING. This summer, let loose and play a little. When we were kids we looked forward to summer because it was the time that we really got to play. It was the time that we could run free, explore and have a great time. That does not have to end just because you are over 18 and a disciple of Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact, Jesus said he came so we could have an abundant life. An abundant life includes time to just let loose and play a little. So, take the time to open that top button and laugh a little. Take the time to wear some funky shoes that make people laugh. Take the time to have a sack race to the altar for Communion or a conga line for the recessional. It will remind you that we serve a God who takes delight in seeing His children have a good time, the same way we take delight in watching our children play. So loosen up, take off your church clothes and put on your play clothes. You'll have a great time.

... well said

## EVENTS

**Historical Society Annual Meeting**  
Asbury UMC, Washington, D.C.  
Sept. 26, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The film, "Building the Beloved Community: Race, Reconciliation, Reconnection," will be shown. The film examines the relationship between Foundry UMC in Washington, D.C., and Asbury UMC, a congregation formed by African-Americans who left Foundry in 1836. The filmmaker, John Coleman, and the film's producers and pastors will take part in a panel discussion. The event also includes a catered lunch. To register go to [www.lovelylanemuseum.org/contact](http://www.lovelylanemuseum.org/contact).

**The Bishop's Dinner for Scouting**  
BWC Mission Center in Fulton  
Oct. 14, 6:30 to 9 p.m.

The United Methodist Church is one of the largest supporters of Scouting in the United States. This dinner celebrates this important ministry in our Conference. Early bird registration is \$18. Register at <https://arenaweb.bwcumc.org/default.aspx?page=3115&event=2490>.



**10 Prescriptions for a Healthy Church**  
Glen Mar UMC, Ellicott City  
Oct. 24, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The BWC Vibrant Communities ministries and Glen Mar UMC will host a workshop on the Top 10 issues that tend to be addressed by church growth consultants. It will be led by Bob Farr, a sought-after speaker who works as director of congregational excellence in the Missouri Annual Conference. The cost is \$30. Register at <https://arenaweb.bwcumc.org/default.aspx?page=3115&event=2477>.

**Bishop's Advent Day Apart**  
First UMC, Hyattsville  
Nov. 17, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, president of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., will be the speaker. The cost is \$15. Online registration for clergy opens soon.

**Plan to Attend: 2016 Annual Conference Session**  
Wardman Park Marriott,  
2660 Woodley Road NW, Washington  
June 1-4, 2016

A Pre-Conference Briefing will be held April 30, 2016, at First UMC in Hyattsville.

**CORRECTION:** In a photograph on page 4 of the June UMConnection, the person being commissioned is incorrectly identified as Andre Briscoe. It is Enger Mutekeke. We regret the error.

## ROCK 2016 Youth Video Contest

Youth are invited to submit their videos. These videos should be 2-3 minutes long focusing on Phillippians 2:3, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves."

Submit videos by e-mail to [ROCKretreatOC@aol.com](mailto:ROCKretreatOC@aol.com) between Sept. 15 and Dec. 15, 2015. Winners will receive 5 free tickets to ROCK 2017 as well as 5 free T-shirts for ROCK 2016.

The winning videos will be shown at ROCK on the big screen.

All videos must be directed, filmed, edited and scripted by youth. Your church must be registered for ROCK 2016 to be eligible to win. Please be sure to include your church's name, youth leader and email on the submission. E-mail any questions to [ROCKretreatOC@aol.com](mailto:ROCKretreatOC@aol.com)



## UMConnection

<b>Bishop Marcus Matthews</b> <b>Maidstone Mulenga</b>	Resident Bishop Assistant to the Bishop
<b>Melissa Lauber</b> <b>Erik Alsgaard</b> <b>Alison Burdett</b> <b>Linda Worthington</b> <b>Kayla Spears</b>	Director of Communications Managing Editor Multimedia Producer Communications Associate Communications Associate

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# The gift of vision: one doctor’s eye-opening ministry

BY MELISSA LAUBER  
UMConnection Staff

**F**AITH IS ABOUT vision. It’s about seeing, with eyes wide open, and sensing the presence of Christ. But for Dr. Stephen Waller, this talk of faith and sight is much more than metaphor.

For Waller, an ophthalmologist who attends Metropolitan Memorial UMC in Washington, D.C., faith is often about seeing need and responding with the gifts he’s honed over 34 years as an eye doctor, specializing in cornea replacement.

He has performed surgery on people’s eyes in 20 countries where poverty and politics often align to deny people much needed medical attention. “Each of the unique places brings me closer to understanding what it means to be one of God’s children,” he said.

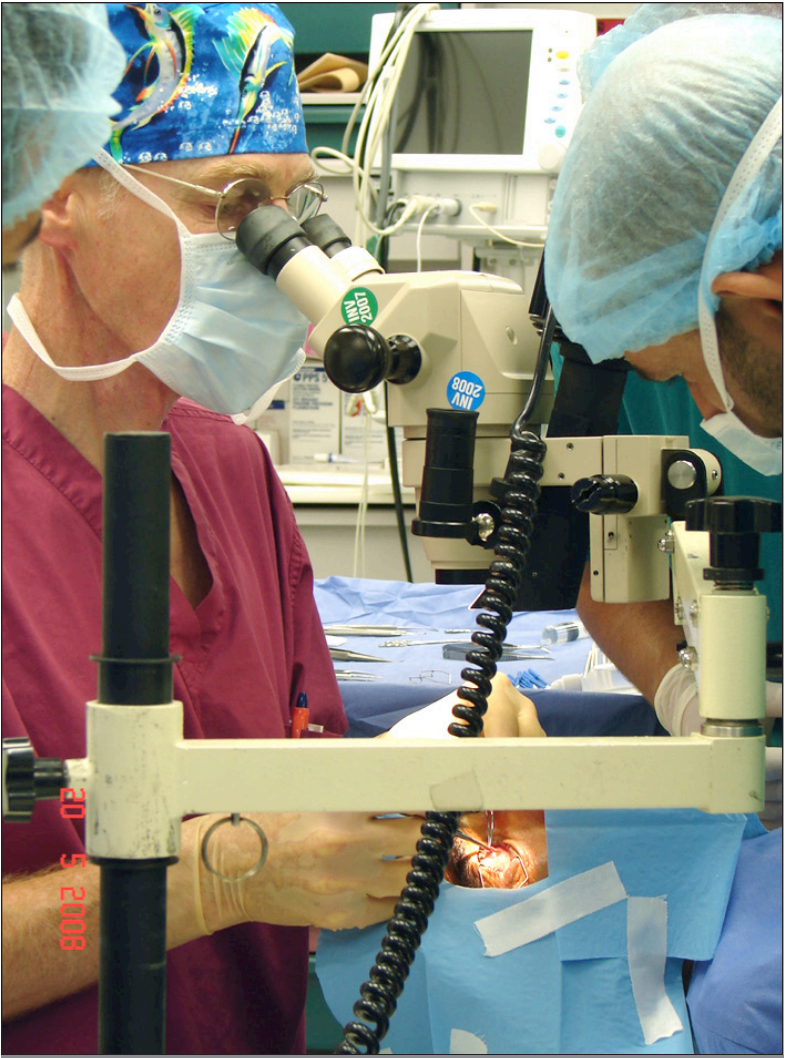
It also supplies him with interesting human connections that many people “lose track of in our busy 21st-century lives.” The work and these connections have broadened and deepened his spiritual life, he said.

At Ali Base in Iraq, where Waller visited in May 2008, an Iraqi medical administrator, Mountadher Tahir, said of Waller and his team, “they come from the heaven to work here in the hell.”

But Waller doesn’t see it that way. Worldwide, poor vision is the number three cause of disability and approximately 75 percent of global blindness is curable and preventable, Waller said. He takes the words of Luke 12:48, that “to whom much is given, much is expected,” to heart and feels compelled to lend a hand.

“It’s what I hear Jesus telling me to do,” he said, “to treat everyone as a brother, to pay back and give back for the benefits and privileges I’ve had.”

That doesn’t mean it’s always been easy. While in Iraq, for example, the threats of violence were “permeating and overwhelming.” Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) seemed to be everywhere and a rocket landed a quarter of a mile from his quarters. He marveled at the people who lived there facing such threats “24/7/365.”



As an expression of faith, Dr. Stephen Waller performs eye surgery on people who don’t normally have access to such operations.

The same was true when he did pro bono work in Bangladesh 20 years ago in the midst of civil unrest. The corneas he carried with him had a limited shelf life and he was unable to wait for calm, choosing instead to sneak out with local doctors and do surgery.

But the reward is always worth having to step outside of his comfort zone, Waller said. His patients often go from being unable to tell whether the lights in the room are on or off to being able to read a newspaper.

“It creates a lot of joy. After the procedure, people look around the room with great curiosity and pleasure,” he said. “It can change the world.”

It’s also a joy for the doctor, Waller confesses. “In the 40 years I’ve been doing this, it still takes my breath away. Taking off a scarred, opaque cornea and putting a new cornea that’s like a clear, clean window into place, continues to blow my mind. It’s astonishing. I consider it a high privilege.”

In addition to helping the patients, Waller helps train the doctors and medical personnel in the places he visits. In Guyana, the Kaiteur News reported in March 2014, that public and medical officials there attributed the dream of creating an Eye Bank facility that stores eyes for cornea transplants and research, to Waller.

Waller and his wife, Dr. Jane Ward, who is also an ophthalmologist, specializing in pediatric and neurological ophthalmology, began their work helping those less fortunate who needed their specialized medical skills, when they served in the Air Force in the Philippines. It was a simple invitation to help that started them on their path.

Today, Waller issues a similar invitation to all lay people who have skills from their work that they could put to use for others. He cautions about making excuses, and urges everyone to find the time and initiative to take the first step in volunteering.

Waller shares the story of his father, who worked in agriculture and accompanied his wife and him on a mission trip to Mexico. He dispensed eye glasses and grinned ear-to-ear, Waller said.

“It’s worth it,” he said. “Giving of yourself to others in need around our world widens our connections and broadens your perspective. It’s a game changer for individuals. It helps you focus on what’s important in the world. You’ll make God’s world a better place.”

## Learn More

### A Gift of Vision: Cornea Donation

Donate Life Maryland  
[www.donatelifemaryland.org/](http://www.donatelifemaryland.org/)  
Washington Regional Transplant Community  
[www.beadonor.org/](http://www.beadonor.org/)  
Donate Life West Virginia  
[www.donatelifewv.org/](http://www.donatelifewv.org/)

For those who wish to donate their corneas, it is important that families are aware of these wishes. Their consent is critical.

# Mission u continues life-long learning emphasis

BY LINDA WORTHINGTON  
UMConnection Staff

**F**OR THREE DAYS, July 31 to Aug. 2, the nearly 200 women and a handful of men attending Mission u were “Learning Together for the Transformation of the World.” Part of their focus was on “happiness,” defining the elusive emotion and asking themselves, “what must one do to be happy?”

“Created for Happiness: Understanding Your Life in God,” was the textbook for the spiritual growth study at the annual event, formerly called the School of Christian Mission. Other studies were “The Church and People with Disabilities” and the geographic study, “Latin America: People and Faith.”

Concurrent with the assembly was a parallel event for 22 registered youth, led by their dean, the Rev. Michael Parker III, pastor of Ames UMC in Bel Air. They met in separate classes but ate their meals with everyone else.

Leading their plenary sessions was Pastor Alexis Brown, lead pastor at Van Buren UMC, and the study on Latin America was taught by Gail Douglas-Ryan from Brooklyn, New York.

In the final worship service, the Rev. Frankie Revell, pastor of La Vale UMC and dean of this year’s event, summed up the teachings in the disabilities class as he preached on Jesus’ appearing to the disciples after his death on the cross. He referred to Jesus as being “differently abled” when he appeared with the nail holes in his hands and side.

“Luke shows a resurrected Jesus as a disabled God,” he said. “We should refer to ourselves as the temporarily abled,” since all of us at some time will become weak, unable to do what we’re accustomed to, needing the assistance of others. “Could it be we’ll see Jesus in heaven with nail scars in his hands and side?”

Mission u, sponsored by the United Methodist Women

and the Conference Board of Global Ministries, picks a geographic area to focus on every year, not just for the event, but for UMW studies throughout the year and for churches to plan programs and mission emphases around. Each year there is one study in its second year (Disabilities) and one new study (Latin America). The spiritual growth study is presented through the three plenary sessions. By the time participants leave after lunch and a closing worship service on Sunday, they’re thoroughly grounded in, and fully inspired by what they have learned.

The participants are given the task of not only making changes in their own lives, but taking the information and inspiration they’ve received back to their own churches and UMW groups. The purpose for the studies, said the Rev. Tony Love, Director of Vibrant Communities for the BWC, who led the three plenaries on happiness, is first to find your happiness, then to frame it, then to fulfill that happiness vision. Each day participants were given “homework” to help frame their happiness, and to reflect more deeply on the topic.

There were five different classrooms for the Latin America study, each having 20- 25 participants. Kate Mackereth, director of Operations at Mount Vernon Place UMC in Washington D.C., emphasized social justice in Latin America. She asked the group, “What is the future of justice that you see God is leading us to?” Each person had an opportunity to think, reflect and share her

answers. The question was also answered by the sharing of biographies of four Latin American women authors from different countries who had experienced inequality and injustices in their life journeys.

Just before the final Sunday lunch, the Rev. Carletta Allen, pastor of Asbury UMC in Annapolis, volunteered to pray the meal blessing. She hit a chord with the attendees as she prayed for children who eat from trash piles and several other references to places of injustice. She said afterwards that the exercise of writing her own prayer, as all were asked to do at the end of the first plenary, caused her to think deeply, and using St. Francis of Assisi’s prayer model caused her to think.

In his introductory remarks, Revell said, “I pray that you will find our worship to be inspiring, our studies to be engaging, and the overall experience that is Mission u to be life-changing.”

His prayer was fulfilled. As the group prepared to depart for home Sunday afternoon, they sang, “It is Well with My Soul.”



Some of the 25 youth at Mission u receive Communion from the Rev. Sandi Johnson.



# Zimbabwe: Partnership finds similarities in ministry across th

From page 1

and to your community.

Members of the BWC delegation heard an amazing story before the pastors' school officially began, when they met with the Vice Chancellor of Africa University, Professor Munashe Furusa.

Furusa, who arrived at Africa University in July 2014, shared his vision and passion about the school which was begun by The United Methodist Church 20 years ago. Today, with more than 6,500 graduates and an enrollment of 2,500 students, A.U. is a pan-African university with students from 31 African countries.

"Our students go back to their countries as leaders," he said.

Furusa said that there are several challenges the University faces, not the least of which is the ongoing economic crisis in Zimbabwe. As a private college, the school does not receive any money from the government.

"This is God's project, this A.U.," he said. "This university is going to be transformative on this continent."

The Vice Chancellor, an office equivalent to that of a university president in the United States, shared some of the major projects for future growth at the school.

One of those projects, especially interesting to members of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, is a sports complex.

Furusa said that, right now, there is no common room, no "student union" on campus; there is "no place for students to just meet and build community," he said. A sports complex would be that place, he said, where students would gather for recreation and games, especially basketball and soccer, that help build community spirit.

The 2015 Baltimore-Washington Conference Session, meeting last May, learned how Bishop Matthews, for his retirement in 2016, did not want any gifts in honor or recognition of his ministry. Instead, the bishop was clear that any gifts go to building this sports complex.

"His dream," the bishop said, speaking of Furusa's vision of the sports complex, "has become our dream. The Baltimore-Washington Conference has stepped up to the plate here in many, many ways. We take this challenge knowing that God is able. We'll meet this goal with God's help."

At pastors' school, a dozen plenary sessions spread over the week addressed such diverse topics as

especially after members of the BWC delegation rose to sing "Happy Birthday" to her before she began speaking.

"I always find it difficult to be a visiting preacher," she said. "It's hard to preach to people whose stories you don't know."



Schlieckert, visiting Africa University for the first time, said it was especially difficult as a white, North

American woman to come into the

sermon wondering, "What word of God do I have to share?" The answer: Pastors' experiences are the same, she said.

"The challenges of ministry are the same," she said. "They may take a different shape in Zimbabwe and in the United States, but are similar in place to place."

Schlieckert said that once she realized this, the sermon came together quickly.

"Once I got over my need to feel important in my preaching and to preach a real awesome sermon, the message 'God is not through with you yet' came through," she said.

Schlieckert said she served as secretary in her breakout group.

"My group spoke Shona," she said. "I told them I would serve as secretary only if they would speak in English."

Her attitude, both for the preaching and the breakout groups, was to be mindful that "I was a guest," she said. "I didn't come in and try to assert my role. I think that might be why I was so well received. We had fun, we told a lot of jokes."

"I expected to come to Zimbabwe and be exposed to all of the great differences in ministry," she said. "Even as we were preparing for the trip, we were told, 'In Zimbabwe, things change.' But my experience has been the opposite of that. There are always differences, even from my church and the United Methodist church down the road. A primary learning, for me, will be about the immense similarities given the great differences between cultures."

For Daniels, coming to Zimbabwe and being at pastors' school always brings moments of learning.

"With all the times we've been invited to come and teach," he said, "the reality is, when we leave, we're the ones who have learned."

Daniels, who has been to Africa nearly 20 times, said that in Zimbabwe, the "giants are huge, the

challenges are great." Daniels had preached on the story of David and Goliath in one of the days' opening worship services. "And yet, the faith, the depth of joy and the depth of expectation is phenomenal."

Daniels said that it is always humbling to preach in front of clergy, and more so at pastors' school.

"Coming here, as often as I have, God has given me an ability to just kind of feel where the people are and try to speak to them," he said.

Where the people are, Daniels said, was evident when he preached at a UMC in Harare, the nation's capital, on July 11. Each clergy member in the BWC delegation, including Bishop Matthews, preached in a UMC near Harare that Sunday. In a congregation with more than 200 young adults, many of whom had college degrees, hardly any of them had jobs, Daniels recalled. That area, he was told, had unemployment rates hovering near 90 percent.

Across the street from Africa University sits the Fairfield Children's Home, an orphanage for children up to age 18. Several members of the BWC delegation toured the facility



July 14, which houses 78 children. Each child is housed in a

home with up to 9 other children. Each home has a "Mother" who lives with the children and becomes, in fact, those children's mother, said Cecillia Thobani, the acting administrator at the Home.

In a country where being an orphan carries a life-long stigma, Fairfield provides a real family for the children that lasts a lifetime.

"The mother in the home becomes the children's mother for life," said Thobani. "The other children in each house become their brothers and sisters."

clerical vestments, human dignity, prophecy and faith healing and "procedures in disciplining a lay member."

Following each 60-minute session, pastors then assembled in 10 "breakout" groups for a time of questions and answers. At least two of those groups – one led by Mulenga and another led by the Rev. Raphael Moore-Koikoi – used the "Circles of Grace" process, complete with talking sticks.

Other members of the BWC delegation served as secretaries or facilitators in these small group times.

The Rev. Sarah Schlieckert, pastor at Arden UMC in Arden, W.Va., had the opportunity to preach at pastor's school on her birthday.

"It was really cool," she said,



Every child goes to school, she said. "We don't let them leave here until they have something to do; until they have a job."

The Home is supported



# ne miles

through Global Ministries (Advance #11713T) and is totally supported through donations.

Members of the BWC delegation who visited the home included Asher Rudolph, who, at the age of 11, joined in a friendly game of football (soccer) with other children from the Home.

Innis Matthews, 10, and the grandson of Bishop and Barbara Matthews, also toured the Home, and was fascinated by an old water pump, still in use, that irrigated the large farm the Home uses to help with the food supply.

One of the members of the delegation was Erin Hawkins, General Secretary of the General Commission

on Religion and Race, located in Washington, D.C.

“I came to Africa University to help me connect the work of the General Church with the work of annual conferences and local churches in a way that has been transformative,” she said.

During her time at A.U., Hawkins had the opportunity to meet with Furusa and discuss similarities and differences in race relations in the two countries.

“My conversations with the Vice Chancellor were an attempt to make the

discussion a global one,” said Hawkins. “We think about the issues of oppression and racism and xenophobia from a purely U.S. perspective, or we think about it in terms of human rights violations. But it’s important for the church to know that there is fear of the other, fear of differences that exist on every continent and in every country.”

This was Hawkin’s third trip to Africa University, and she said that each time she has come, she’s been re-affirmed in the fact that, even in the midst of cultural differences, there’s a lot we share in common.

## Zimbabwe Partnership: Alive and Well

“We’ve always had a strong partnership, from day one,” said the Rev. Joe Daniels, chair of the BWC’s Zimbabwe Partnership. He’s been to Africa nearly 20 times.

“To see that, every time we come, progress is made, accomplishments are achieved; the partnership is very much visible,” he said.

Daniels said that the pastor’s school is just one sign of the partnership. Projects that the BWC has been working on over the past several years are also bearing fruit.

Gwese UMC, for example.

In 2013, members of the BWC delegation hand-shuffled bricks up and down hills to help build a new church in this remote, rocky area southwest of Mutare.

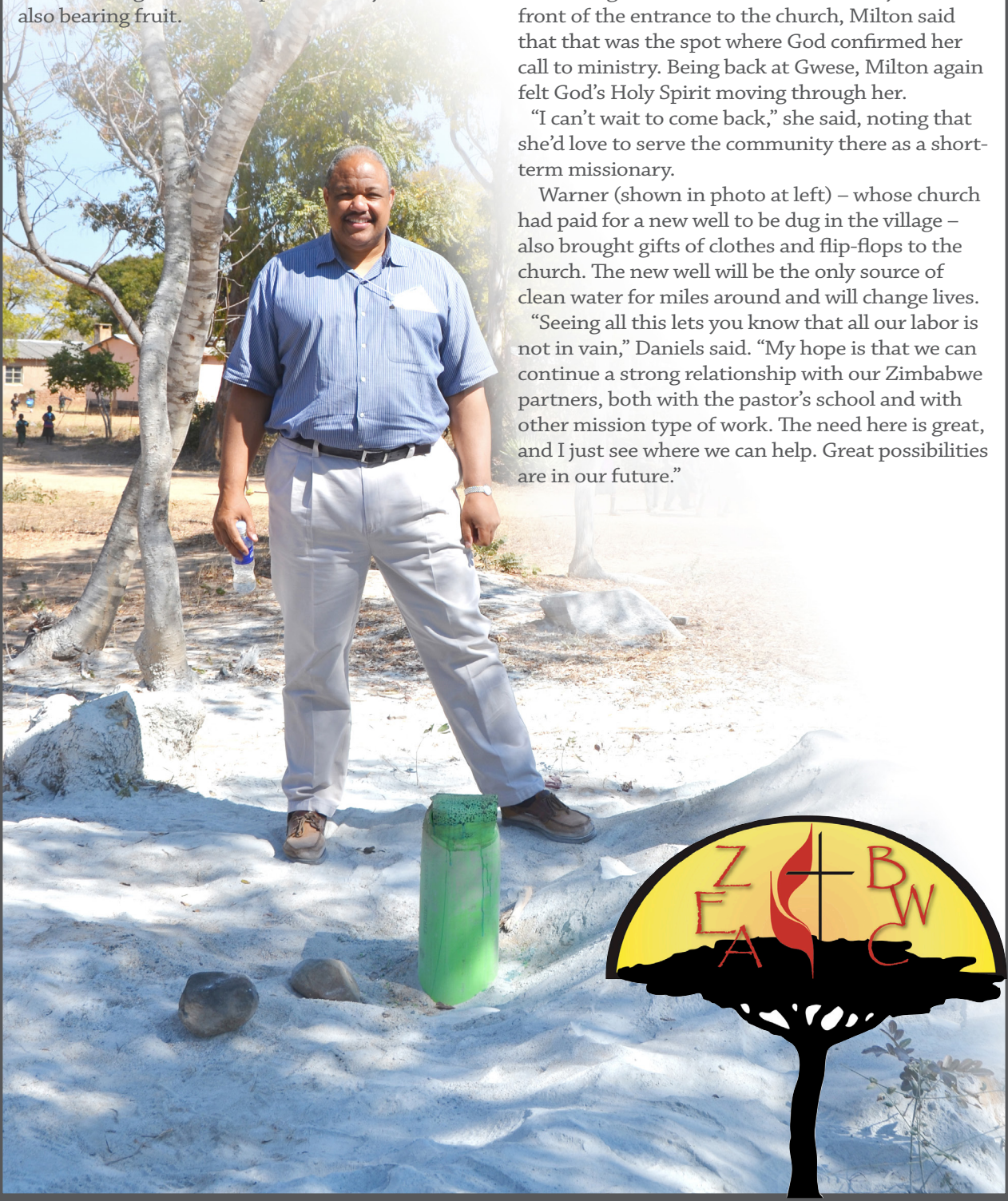
In 2015, Daniels, the Rev. Tim Warner, pastor of Emory Grove UMC, and Sharon Milton, staff member at First UMC in Hyattsville, went back to Gwese to see the completed building.

Pointing to a foot-worn, smooth rock just in front of the entrance to the church, Milton said that that was the spot where God confirmed her call to ministry. Being back at Gwese, Milton again felt God’s Holy Spirit moving through her.

“I can’t wait to come back,” she said, noting that she’d love to serve the community there as a short-term missionary.

Warner (shown in photo at left) – whose church had paid for a new well to be dug in the village – also brought gifts of clothes and flip-flops to the church. The new well will be the only source of clean water for miles around and will change lives.

“Seeing all this lets you know that all our labor is not in vain,” Daniels said. “My hope is that we can continue a strong relationship with our Zimbabwe partners, both with the pastor’s school and with other mission type of work. The need here is great, and I just see where we can help. Great possibilities are in our future.”



Photos inspired by Erik Asgaard

“There’s a lot that we can be doing together,” Hawkins said, “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. I’m always really re-affirmed by experiencing our common humanity even in the midst of our diversity.”





# Circles of Grace: Town Hall meetings scheduled

From page 1

Wesley UMC in Hampstead. The amendment would allow resolutions to be amended when using the Circles process.

The amendment, Sichel said, would allow for the Circles of Grace process to begin consideration of a resolution and then the conference’s Parliamentary Procedure, as outlined on pages 572 through 577 of the 2014 Conference Journal, would also be used before a vote was taken. These traditional rules allow for amendments to legislation and a time of debate on the amendments.

“Some people really like the Circles process and some people really like debate. I was hoping to provide everyone with both so that we could all have our cake and eat it too,” Sichel said in an e-mail.

Based on the Annual Conference discussion that followed, Sichel and Jen Ihlo, chair of the Rules Committee, agreed to withdraw both the original resolution and amendment. Ihlo promised the Annual Conference members that the Rules Committee would hold town hall type meetings in order to allow a time for reflection and information gathering regarding the Circles of Grace process.

As reported by Erik Alsgaard in the June 2015 edition of the *UMConnection*, Ihlo told the Annual Conference that the Rules Committee would “commit to having a working resolution on the Circles of Grace by mid-fall,” and to post that on the BWC Website.

“Hopefully, by Jan. 15, we will have a resolution on the Circles of Grace that embodies the spirit of the Circles process but addresses the concern about perfecting resolutions,” she said.

Sichel told the Annual Conference that he “would much rather sit down and have a conversation, get everyone’s thoughts, and reach common ground.”

“The Rules Committee has met about this a couple

of times since Annual Conference and we’ve met with Matt,” said Ihlo. “We developed a number of ways for folks to give us their thoughts about the Circles process and we hope folks will participate and give us their thoughts.”

### Will you participate? Here’s how:

A “Circles of Grace: What do YOU think?” blog has been posted on the Conference website. Share your thoughts about the Circles process and what, if anything, you would change. Posts are encouraged to be 300 words or less but will be limited to 500 words. Visit <http://bwcumc.org/considering-circles-of-grace>.

Attend a Town Hall meeting. Four are scheduled; one in each region:

- Aug. 29, 9 a.m. to noon: N. Bethesda UMC, 10100 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda;
- Aug. 29, 2 to 5 p.m.: Otterbein UMC, 108 E. Franklin St., Hagerstown;
- Sept. 12, 9 a.m. to noon: Timonium UMC, 2300 Pot Spring Road, Timonium;
- Sept. 12, 2 to 5 p.m.: West River UMC Camp, 5100 Chalk Point Rd., West River.

All are welcome to attend whichever meeting is most convenient. Please RSVP to [rules@bwcumc.org](mailto:rules@bwcumc.org), so that the Rules Committee will know how many to plan for at each location.

Or, you can share your thoughts by sending the Rules Committee an e-mail at [rules@bwcumc.org](mailto:rules@bwcumc.org).



Matthew Sichel and Jen Ihlo speak about Circles of Grace.



Members of the 2015 Annual Conference Session participate in a Circle of Grace.

Photos by Tony Richards

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### 65 members commissioned for mission service



Teams from New Hope UMC are commissioned to serve as short-term missionaries.

**BRUNSWICK** – New Hope UMC welcomed Bishop Marcus and Barbara Matthews to a pot luck meal and commissioning service for more than 65 members who would be participating in mission work in July. It was the first visit ever by any BWC bishop to the 160-year-old church.

Matthews, the Revs. Katie and Chris Bishop, and the Frederick District Superintendent, the Rev. Edgardo Rivera, anointed and commissioned the 65 servants into three different mission fields, said Terry Alger, the church’s communications chair.

The first were the youth of New Hope who spent part of their summer at Camp Hope in Frostburg, where they built and installed a wheelchair ramp; the second multi-generational group of 40 members, including families and grandparents, went to Berkeley Springs, W. Va., to do home repairs for two homeowners battling cancer; the third team of 15 servants, went to Furcy, Haiti, for a mission trip where they fed children, provided clean drinking water and fulfilled other needs in the community.

### Young UM woman honored by ecumenical group

**BIG POOL** – Among the five young women recognized by Church Women United of Washington County was Danielle Shives of Mount Carmel UMC.

Besides the United Methodist, the other awardees were from Presbyterian, Lutheran and Vineyard churches. All of them were nominated by their local church and praised for their community service.

Shives, who has been blind since age 3, has taught at the Potomac Charge Vacation Bible School, and serves as lay leader at Mt. Carmel. She is also liturgist once a month. She’s dedicated to her church, has been secretary to the administrative council and as chairwoman of the evangelism committee. Her achievements also include completing the lay certified speaking curriculum.

Shives has a master of education degree from Frostburg State University.



Danielle Shives of Mt. Carmel UMC, center, was honored for her ministry by Church Women United.

Church Women United is a racially, culturally and theologically inclusive ecumenical Christian women’s movement that celebrates unity in diversity and working for a world of peace and justice.

### Zimmerli’s ministry honored

**BOOTHBAY, ME** – The Rev. Mary Jo Zimmerli, a former district superintendent in the Baltimore-Washington Conference who died in February, was honored this June at the official groundbreaking of the Zimmerli Pavilion at St. Andrews Village in Boothbay, Maine. The new Zimmerli Pavilion, which will have 12 beds dually licensed for longterm care and skilled nursing care, is scheduled to be completed early next year, expanding the capacity of the Gregory Wing at St. Andrews Village by 40 percent.

At the ceremony, Zimmerli’s ministry in the field of health care was remembered and her energy and dedication to serving the community was praised. Present at the ceremony was the Rev. Robert “Bob” Zimmerli, also a former district superintendent and her husband of 61 years.

### BRIEFS

**BALTIMORE** – The Rev. Mary Worrel, recently retired, was elected President of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Bible Society for a three-year term. The Society, at 200 years old plus, is the oldest continuously operating local Bible Society in the country. It has changed over the years, but has new visibility on the

Internet with a new web page and pod casts. “It is an exciting time to be serving and sharing in this way,” Worrel said.

**MARRIOTTSTVILLE** – Congratulations to the Rev. Barbara Sands, pastor of West Liberty UMC, who has been named to head the Howard County Office of Human Rights by County Executive Allan Kittleman.

**WASHINGTON** – Wesley Theological Seminary in Northwest Washington was recently listed as a seminary that “changes the world” by the Center for Faith and Service at McCormick Theological Seminary. The ecumenical listing of 27 includes four United Methodist seminaries. The seminaries were chosen based on a “commitment to invite, welcome, support, train and launch individuals into the world as community leaders.”

**JESSUP** – Asbury-Jessup held a Trustee Clean Up Day in the spring. It was “a huge success,” said Pastor Gay Green-Carden. “We were blessed with great weather and were able to fellowship throughout the process.” The women cleaned the kitchen and Sunday school rooms, while the men cut the grass, trimmed tree branches, removed a fallen tree, painted parking bumpers and repaired the ramp.

THE NORTHEASTERN JURISDICTION PRESENTS:

REV. NADIA

FIONA

LEADERS FROM

DR. ALBERT

BOLTZ-WEBBER

HAWORTH

THE CHAPEL

MOSLEY

IT'S  
NOT  
CHURCH AS USUAL

SEE know LOVE  
LEAD AUTHENTICALLY & WITH PURPOSE  
CREATE A NEW GOD-INSPIRED VISION  
BUILD UPON YOUR POTENTIAL

LEADERS WILL GATHER IN A  
UNIQUE SETTING TO EXPLORE  
TOGETHER HOW TO BECOME  
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS  
AND EXPERIENCE CHURCH AS IT  
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# Local pastors deserve our full respect and support

By MARK TEASDALE\*

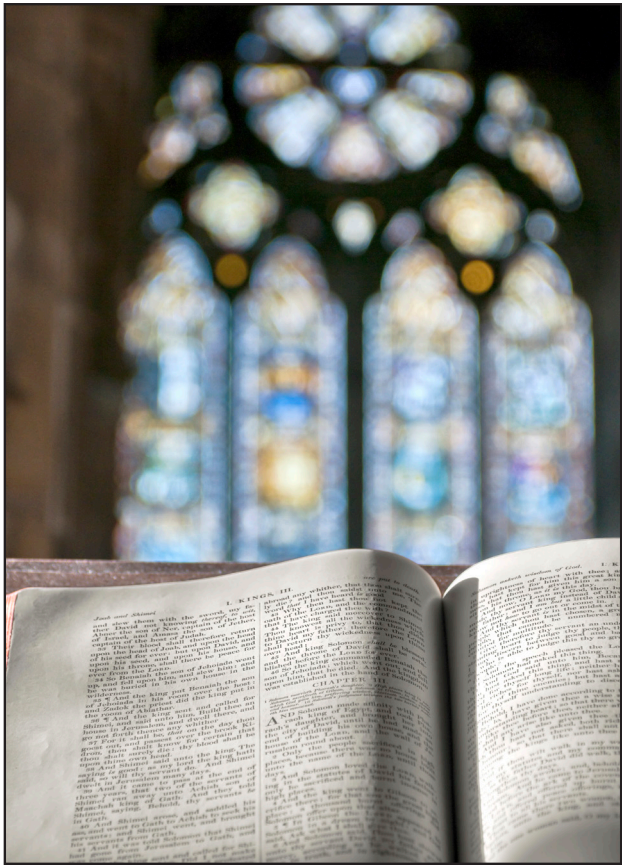
I HAVE JUST FINISHED teaching my sixth year in Course of Study (COS), providing the required education for people to be licensed local pastors (LLPs) in The United Methodist Church. Over this time I have taught in two different United Methodist seminaries in different parts of the country.

The LLPs I have encountered are committed both to the Christian faith and to the denomination. Many have entered the ministry with a deep sense of calling and at great personal sacrifice. All of them are in their second career or bi-vocational, requiring either the nest egg from their previous career or the additional salary of a second career in order to offset the low wages they receive from the congregations they serve.

In spite of the meager pay and lack of benefits provided by the church, LLPs face the same demands as ordained Elders, including preaching, administration, pastoral care and maintaining the connection with the district and the conference. However, they do these without the same authority and support as Elders. Lower minimum salary packages, strictures on voting in the Annual Conference, and the lack of assurance of having an appointment year-after-year are some of the differences.

While there are reasons for the polity differentiations between those who are licensed and ordained, I am concerned that Elders see LLPs and the congregations they serve as an underclass of the denomination because of these differences. Over the years I have heard LLPs affirm this. They speak of being passed over in conference discussions because they can vote neither as clergy nor as laity. They share stories of how they have been ignored or dismissed at unofficial gatherings of UM clergy, especially at Annual Conference Sessions, where their non-blue name tag ribbons are so visible.

Pamela Holliman, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Pastoral Psychotherapy at Garrett-Evangelical, spoke to this in a Ministry Study Symposium held at Garrett Nov. 18, 2009. “Is the denomination taking advantage of some candidates for local pastor? The need is great for people willing to serve small parishes and who will do so for a low wage, insufficient support and lack of resources. I found this to be particularly true for ethnic minorities. ... Most were on a road to early burnout and heart disease.”



- I offer four steps to begin addressing this concern:
- 1. Do away with the colored ribbons** that announce our formal title or rank at annual conference.
  - 2. Seminaries treat COS as equal to their other degree offerings.** COS is set off from the regular faculty and course offerings, as though the education offered at COS is of lesser quality than what is offered through other programs. The core of what I teach, and what is expected from the denomination, is the exact same in both my MDiv and COS courses. The education should be valued accordingly.
  - 3. Elders should connect with LLPs in their daily ministry** as well as during annual conference, recognizing that we are all commonly called through our baptism. I encourage every Elder who reads this to take at least one LLP to lunch before next annual conference in order to connect with a fellow UM pastor.
  - 4. The annual conference meetings and conference news service needs to acknowledge regularly the hard work of the LLPs,** which is often remarkable given the scale on which they operate.
- LLPs are grateful for the opportunity the church gives them to live out their calling. As a denomination, we should support them in the sacrifice and work they do as they faithfully carry out that calling. As one LLP explained to me “we are not competitors nor usurpers of (the) authority or status (of) ordained Elders in our tradition. We too are called, often late in life and only desire to answer that call to serve alongside them in the fields of the Lord. Not ahead or above, nor below or behind.”

*\*The Rev. Mark Teasdale, and Elder in the BWC, is E. Stanley Jones Associate Professor of Evangelism and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL.*

# Pride: The original deadly sin appears as online shaming

By ALISON BURDETT  
UMConnection Staff

MY LAST ARTICLE was about the sin of vanity as it pertains to social media. This article expands on vanity’s original form, the sin of pride, especially as it pertains to social media. Isn’t it interesting how our changing technological advances present easier ways for us, as Christians, to sin? You’ve heard the phrase “hide behind your computer,” and it’s such an easy thing to slip into, but here’s the thing: you can’t hide from God.

“Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them?” declares the LORD. “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” (Jeremiah 23:24)

First, let me start by giving you the definition of “pride.” Dictionary.com defines pride as “a high or inordinate opinion of one’s own dignity, importance, merit or superiority.” Now, in my mind, there are two versions of pride. The first being the definition above, and the other being a feeling that you respect yourself and deserve to be respected by others. I don’t believe the latter to be sinful on it’s own. It’s about how you treat others as a result.

For example, you can feel proud that you were able to successfully complete a 5K walk or run; however, it becomes a sin when you hold yourself in higher regard than those who finished with a slower time.

Let me give you another definition of pride, specifically how it’s defined as the original of the seven deadly sins: “Believing that one is essentially better than others, failing to acknowledge the accomplishments of others, and excessive admiration of the personal self.” This excessive love of self creates the danger of growing into hatred of one’s neighbor.

So where does this tie into pride through social media? Well, I’ll tell you.

Recently I was attending an event with a live Twitter feed. As presenters were on stage, attendees could use the twitter hashtag to comment on what was being said. Most of the comments were those of affirmation. Even those that weren’t affirming could use the hashtag to present their disagreement. It gave a voice to those

who couldn’t be up on stage, but had input to share on a given topic. As I followed the Twitter feed, my heart broke. Attendees were using Twitter to point out mistakes and even make fun of those who had put in hard work, time and effort to give these presentations and share valuable information with the crowd.

Dictionary.com also defines pride as “pleasure or satisfaction taken in something done by one’s self or believed to reflect credit upon one’s self.”

These attendees were taking pride in the fact that they found a mistake and were publicly making fun of the presenter and pointing their digital finger at the presenter and laughing. Not only that, but they were using their 140 characters to encourage others to take notice of how dumb or silly that “expert” up on stage was.

This type of pride seems compounded. The tweeter themselves felt pleasure in knowing there was a mistake made, but also by tweeting it, in an instant, gave a crowd of people that same sense, that they were smarter than the presenter.



What broke my heart even more was that a stenographer was provided by the event to benefit those who where hard of hearing. I have to admit, being a live stenographer has to be one of the hardest jobs on the planet. They have to intently listen to people who do not all speak in the same way, and do not always enunciate clearly, and they have to type as fast as that person is speaking, without missing a beat. Well guess what? A word or two was missed or misunderstood, or misspelled. And no sooner was a mistake made, than someone from the crowd tweeted it.

It makes me wonder, those who feel it is their place to point out every little mistake being made, on a public forum: is that person really listening to the content being provided? Are they really helping or trying to find a solution? Or do they simply want the rest of their social network to believe that they are better

than whomever they are posting about? This person’s 140-character tweet effectively distracted me from the presentation. And I now find myself wondering if I fall into the sin of pride, by being so disappointed in how those certain attendees conducted themselves.

It’s easy to see this sort of “hiding behind your computer” on social media. How often do you read on Facebook about some celebrity, for example, and feel you then have the right to comment on what a terrible person they are. Yes. That is pride. I fear it is becoming the norm these days to log on, read about something, and make a judgment about another person, whether you know them or not. It also seems to be the norm that when you feel an error has been made, to post it on your social media page looking for sympathy or to grow your army of peers who will stand with you and say, someone else made a mistake and therefore you are better than they area. You may think of it as simple harmless venting, but think about what you’re really putting out there.

It is good to remember that perhaps the best-known example is the story of Lucifer. Pride, his desire to compete with God, was what caused his fall from Heaven, and his resultant transformation into Satan.

Ever heard the verse, “Pride goeth before a fall”? (Proverbs 16:18) We can be pretty certain that’s what happened to Lucifer. Maybe your fall or mine won’t be as drastic as Lucifer’s, but remember that God wants us to be humble and that overconfidence often leads to faults. “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” (James 4:6)

So do I hold myself in a higher regard than those tweeters? Maybe. And that is my sin to sort out. But I’m writing this article because I want to use my position as a Christian, as a follower of Jesus, and as a staff member of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, to use the opportunities God has given me to share a message. Be careful how you use your social platform. Be careful how you use your words. And as William J. Toms said, “Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some person ever reads.”

*\*Alison Burdett is the Multimedia Producer for the Baltimore-Washington Conference.*



# A return to Uganda brings new outlooks on joy, faith

By Lazarus Cardwell

*When he was 15, Lazarus Cardwell was adopted by the Cardwell family. His father, Stan, is pastor of Community-Trinity Cooperative Parish in Crofton. Last Christmas, he went back to visit Uganda. He shares his reflections here.*

WHEN MY JOURNEY back to Africa was about to come to fruition, I had mixed feelings. I didn't know what to expect. I was ecstatic, but at the same time I was also scared. I was happy, not only because I was going back to see where I grew up, but I was also going to see friends and relatives. It had been five years. My biggest fear was what to expect and the aspect of what was to be expected from us. I anticipated that everything would be so different, but to my surprise, at the end of the 11-day trip, everything had returned to my memory, and Uganda was the same as I had left it.

There were butterflies in my stomach when we landed in Entebbe. At that moment, I knew there was no turning back for any reason. But having my dad, mom, and sister with me helped me to manage my emotions. When we walked inside the Uganda airport – the smell in the air, the atmosphere, the people – I instantly started noticing differences and right there and then, my head went racing, dredging up all the memories that had long been pushed to the back of my mind.

Driving down the road on our way to our motel, I couldn't help but notice all the differences on the



Visiting his homeland and spending time with loved ones stirred up poignant lessons for Laz Cardwell, right, whose father pastors Community UMC in Crofton.

sides of the roads. Memories flooded back. It was nothing like the U.S. – the rutted roads and the people walking on foot everywhere, the chaotic traffic with no lanes or traffic lights, animals just roaming around freely, everyone waving at you and how it seemed so overpopulated because people are always outdoors. It was so different, and in a way it almost seemed

like a reverse culture shock. My mom tried to get me ready for it mentally but obviously, I had shrugged it off. Everything seemed so much smaller than I had remembered. The people, the buildings, the roads, the towns, had all seemed so much more vast to me when I lived there five years ago. Not this time. The buildings in the towns, all covered in dust, that to me had seemed as tall as skyscrapers, suddenly looked like old, tiny houses that had been built and designed by architects who didn't know what they were doing.

I couldn't wait to meet my friends — the ones I had lived with at the NGO-sponsored home. I had been in touch with some of them on Facebook and most of them knew I was coming. We were going to play a game of soccer. My college coach at Alderson Broaddus University had donated old soccer jerseys that the team wasn't using anymore. We hustled our tails off chasing one ball under the hot sun of the equator, with so much joy and a sense of reunion again.

Despite all the changes and differences, a lot of things were still the same to me, like I was there yesterday. The biggest one of all was the obvious simplicity of life. When you think of Africa in general, the first thing that usually comes to one's mind is probably the wild animals just running about. However, the people of Africa are simply amazing. Regardless of their poverty, people are still able to have beautiful smiles. Regardless of how hot it is outside, you will not miss the sense of passion for life among everyone.

The elders in the village were so welcoming and were such gracious hosts. The kids, most running around naked with nothing to wear, just surround you with warm cheer, laughter, love and pure joy. You can almost sense the presence of God in these faces.

Though the buildings and the towns had seemed miniscule, the concept of life was still the same. People hustling around early in the morning doing their small business under the hot sun of the equator, trying to make ends meet, was all the same. People going to church every Sunday in an attempt to live up to the Godly ways while under very hard and harsh circumstances was the same. It's almost as if you can feel the presence of God in this country.

At the end of our excursion in Uganda, my sister and I were fortunate that our parents took us on a safari. That helped me to see the beautiful scenery of Uganda. It caused me to realize that Uganda has so much natural beauty – animals, waterfalls and mountains. Five years ago, I didn't see anything but poverty, famine and disease. I didn't see any hope.

In the period of 11 days that we were there, everything had come back to my memory. And there I was standing in the middle of the slums thinking, "Wow, this is really the Uganda that I left?" The only difference



Soccer and memories still unite Cardwell with old friends.

now was my perspective. My view has broadened and now I know Uganda is not that awful. And somewhere along this discovery I learned gratitude, the opposite of entitlement. I understand now that "opportunity" is not a "guarantee," but I need to accept and be thankful that I have a chance here. With hard work, dedication and consistency, I control my own destiny and can become whatever I want here in the United States.

Going back to Uganda was a great opportunity, an eye opener for me. I learned to appreciate life more and to be thankful for what I have, not covet what I don't. I have learned contentment and joy – that isn't about what I possess but who I love and who loves me. All those little kids who followed us around had beautiful smiles, and they had no reason to be happy whatsoever. And everyone, everywhere we went, was cheerful and positive towards life despite all the poverty that is around them.

Secondly, it gave me a chance to sit back and think about my story. All those poor little kids walking around with round bellies, wearing no clothes, and nothing to eat – they are just like I once was. If it's fate, why is it that I was the one who was brought to the U.S. and not one of them? Why was my fate better? Or why was I luckier or more blessed than any of them?

I couldn't help but think if there's anything that I can do for them some day, I will. I have been adopted for a reason even if I do not yet know what that is. It's hard to see and understand God's doings and His work. But if I could talk to Him right now, I would ask him one question: "What is my purpose in life and where is my story going to lead me?" I believe to whom much is given, much is required. I am here to let God use me – His plans, His big plans for my life!

# Prescription for clergy health calls for more grace

By Ed Moore\*

WE'RE ONCE AGAIN living through that great United Methodist migration – otherwise known as the itinerancy – the season when lots of pastors are settling into to new appointments and congregations are welcoming them. Let's agree this is a stressful time for everyone involved, pastors and their families as well as local churches. Gracious response to the waters poured out upon us in our baptisms asks that everyone involved in these transitions move through these difficult days as faithfully as possible. Some findings from Duke Divinity School's Clergy Health Initiative could be helpful.

The Clergy Health Initiative (or, as those of us on the staff cleverly abbreviated it, CHI) was a seven year project funded by The Duke Endowment (the Dukes were faithful Methodists) and administered by Duke Divinity School. It researched the health – physical, mental, spiritual – of about 1,200 United Methodist pastors across North Carolina, and created interventions designed to help clergy lead more healthful lives. When all was said and done, we at CHI had amassed the largest set of data ever acquired on the health of pastors. We now know what some of the stressors of the itinerancy are and can offer suggestions for ameliorating them.

One finding that surprised us was that, as pastors prepare to move to new appointments, their individual stress actually decreases, while that of their families increases. Anecdotal evidence from pastors suggests the decrease in their own stress when itinerating may be due

to the relief of leaving current parish problems behind and beginning a new ministry with a clean slate.

As one pastor commented, "I can usually count on one year of grace from a new PPRC." Clergy families, on the other hand, face significant challenges in an appointment transition. A pastor's children are often forced to change schools, traumatic especially for middle and high school folk; a spouse may be asked to find new employment, which can be difficult in the present economy; and the entire family may lose relationships with friends, with medical professionals and with others. We won't even talk parsonages.

A second finding from CHI is that United Methodist pastors experience depression at about twice the rate of their parishioners. The measure we used for depression is broadly accepted in clinical research and asks respondents to report symptoms they've experienced in the past two weeks. Each time we ran one of our long surveys, the percentage of pastors reporting symptoms consistent with clinical depression was between 10 percent and 11 percent, while the national average for Americans is about 5 percent. Frankly, we were amazed not only at the high percentage for pastors, but also at the consistency of our survey findings. Given that the surveys ask for symptoms in the two weeks preceding, it is safe to assume that each measure gave a snapshot of a different cohort of pastors. In other words, some clergy who were depressed in the first survey were not by the second, and vice versa. We were confident that, on any given day, between 10 and 11 percent of United Methodist pastors in North Carolina were experiencing

at least mild depression.

The implications of these data for congregations and for those making decisions in the appointive process are significant. First, we should assume that, across years of ministry, most United Methodist pastors may experience periods of at least mild depression; this should be understood as normal, not exceptional, and should be treated gracefully, not punitively. Second, SPRC's can play a significant role in identifying stress or depression in pastors and in designing ameliorative measures. Where the SPRC understands its role as primarily administrative, its helpfulness will be limited; where there is deep theological grounding for the SPRC's ministry – and SPRC is first a ministry – the possibilities for caring and for healing markedly increase.

CHI developed a curriculum for SPRC's, pastor and parish, which has proven highly successful in local congregations. It begins with baptism, not with the technical requirements for the Committee (number of members, frequency of meetings, filling out the forms), and asks that SPRC members to understand their work first as a ministry in response to the grace God poured out upon them at the font. Yes, it's very Wesleyan, as were all the intervention measures we developed for CHI. Duke Divinity School is United Methodist, after all.

So, the great United Methodist migration happens once more. Let's all be gracious to one another.

*\*The Rev. Ed Moore is an Elder in the BWC. He has worked for the past six years in extension ministry with Duke Divinity School's Clergy Health Initiative.*