



# 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 • Volume 26, Issue 09 • October 2015

## Clintons come home to church



L-R: The Rev. Ginger Gaines-Cirelli, senior pastor at Foundry UMC, offers the benediction with Chelsea Clinton, Hillary Clinton and former President Bill Clinton, along with the Rev. Dawn Hand, executive pastor. The Clintons helped celebrate the church's 200th anniversary in September.

By ERIK ALSGAARD  
UMConnection Staff

**I**F YOU COUNT all the Senior Ministers that have served Foundry UMC in its 200 year history, the line begins with the Rev. Thomas Burch in 1817. They are all male until 2014, when the Rev. Ginger Gaines-Cirelli was appointed.

But on the Sept. 13 celebration of the church's 200th anniversary, not one male spoke from the pulpit. In fact, it was two famous Foundry women, Chelsea and Hillary Clinton, who brought the morning's message.

Clinton, the former First Lady, Secretary of State, Senator from New York and current Democratic candidate for president, told the packed sanctuary that she and Chelsea first came to Foundry on a very snowy Sunday morning in 1993. Before all the heightened security measures that are now in place, she said, she and her daughter simply walked, with Secret Service agents in tow, to the nearest United Methodist church from the White House: Foundry.

"From that moment until this, we have always felt so welcomed," she said. "This community – for that, indeed, is what it is – was the place where we worshipped, studied, contemplated, a place to be of service, get some good pastoral advice and step outside all the commotion of life in the White House. Here we were not the First Family, we were just our family and we relished and cherished that time."

The church owes its existence to Henry Foxall who, in the early 1800s, owned and operated an iron works – a foundry – in Washington. Born in England, Foxall was friends with Francis Asbury, Methodism's first bishop, and many other prominent Methodists in the newly-minted nation's capital.

Following the British invasion of 1814, Foxall's foundry was left unharmed. Giving thanks, he "provided for a new church for Washington Methodists," according to the church's history booklet.

Chelsea Clinton spoke briefly about what Foundry meant to her as she grew up in the White House. The church, she said, provided warmth and community for her during those teenage years.

"When we moved to Washington," she said, "I didn't think I would find a community that could be as

nurturing and supportive as what I had in my church in Little Rock. I am so grateful that I could not have been more wrong."

Chelsea Clinton mentioned the many opportunities the church gave her, not only in ways of learning and growing in the faith, but putting that faith into action.

"Faith has to be humble," she said, "because of our commitment to works. I am so grateful that through the Youth Group, we not only went on Appalachian Service Project trips, but we did a lot of work right here in Washington, D.C. We could never escape how intimately connected our faith should be, and must be, connected to our works."

Hillary Clinton recounted her Methodist up-bringing, saying, "I am Methodist by choice and by birth." She told how her mother taught Sunday School at the Methodist Church, mainly, she guessed, "so my brothers would attend."

But it was a youth minister in Park Ridge, Illinois, that opened her mind, her eyes and her heart, she said, and who "forced us out of our comfort zone."

Part of that experience, she said, was going to hear the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in Chicago, and that experience, Clinton said, changed her life.

"In place after place after place," she said, "the Methodist Church and my fellow Methodists have been a source of support, of honest reflection, and of candid critique – in fact, I got some advice from (former Senior Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Phil) Wogaman just this morning, ... who told me to be nicer to the press."

Citing Romans 12, Clinton spoke on how every person has been given gifts by God. "Everyone has gifts to be recognized and to be celebrated," she said. This was a lesson she learned from her mother. "No matter who you are, where you come from, what's your income, your race, your religion, your gender, your age, your ability, you have value, you have dignity, you have something to offer God and the world."

The Apostle Paul, she said, was very clear that we can't merely celebrate our gifts, we have to put them into action.

"We should be, in Paul's words, 'generous and diligent and cheerful in our service,'" she said.

Paul's letter to the Romans, Clinton said, also

See Foundry, page 5

## Bishop invites clergy to day apart

By ERIK ALSGAARD  
UMConnection Staff

**B**ISHOP MARCUS MATTHEWS is inviting all clergy in the Baltimore-Washington Conference to an Advent "day apart," on Tuesday, Nov. 17, starting at 9:30 a.m. The event will be held at First UMC in Hyattsville.

The day apart, the bishop said, is designed to give clergy a spiritual boost just prior to the busy days of the Advent and Christmas seasons. Bishop Matthews holds these special days with clergy twice a year: just before Advent and just before Lent.

The speaker for the day will be the Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, president of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. McAllister-Wilson has focused his preaching, speaking and consulting in an effort to revitalize the mainline Protestant church,



The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson

helping to encourage men and women to consider God's call to ministry and preparing them for leadership.

Registration is open online. Go to <http://bwcumc.org/event/bishops-advent-day-apart> for more information and to register. Cost of the day is \$15 for lunch.

Note: If clergy registered and paid for the Bishop's Lenten Day Apart earlier this year, they are automatically registered.



# ... well said

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

BY MANDY SAYERS  
Pastor, Covenant UMC, Gaithersburg

**D**EAR LITTLE ONE: Welcome to the world! I imagine it's a bit chillier and noisier out here than what you are used to, and that everything you experience is new. It's a lot to take in, I get that. Fortunately, you'll have precious few jobs beyond eating and sleeping and being loved on for a while, so you'll have time to process things. I'm supposed to give you advice, given that I have four decades or so of experience on you ... but rather than tell you things you need to learn, I want to share with you some things that I want you to always remember.

Remember your prior residence, in your mother's womb, was your place of growth and protection. God already knew all about you, even then, you know. Did you hear God's voice, all muffled, even there? When you feel all helpless, when you are sick or in the hospital, when you are grieving or in pain, may those spaces become like wombs, places you can grow and heal and be carried by God's love. Sometimes God calls us to float.

Remember being wrapped like a burrito and held close to a chest, and the thump-thumping of their heart. Remember how when you were scared and cold and felt like you were falling, there was the chest and the heart and the embrace. Remember the rocking and the swaying and the feeding and the sleeping. Remember the deep sleep of the Totally Reliant on Someone Else. God gives to God's beloved, sleep; that's in the Bible. When you are older, you may worry about things, but God's got you. Jesus is close to the Father's heart and so are you, baby. So much you will be afraid of, you don't need to be afraid of. Give it to the Lord in prayer and sleep like a baby.

Remember the wonder. Remember the first colors and sounds, and the first taste of mashed banana. This world is an amazing gift. Every day there is a sunrise, so full of God's Easter YES it makes you hear angels sing. Don't forget to look up to see it. Every day there is this precious moment, and the chance to see the holy in it. Don't miss the holy in the moments of your life. Love God and love others, learn how to be loved back. Take risks like Jesus. Find the gifts God has given you that make your heart sing and use them to bless others. That's why you're here. (Don't tell anyone I gave it away. Act surprised when you find out).

God's going to send all kinds of people and opportunities your way. Keep an eye out for them — people to teach you and forgive you and encourage you. Remember your baptism too, and be thankful...that gives you a family that's bigger than you can ever imagine. Welcome to the world, little one. Welcome to the family.

... well said

**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

**L**IFE OFTEN IS like an exotic trip, but sometimes we begin the journey without a map. So, I wanted to drop a note to Eleanor Burdett as a welcome to the world. Here are the three things I think you need to know to get started:

**You made it and you matter.** No matter what else happens in your life, you made it. You were picked by God to be here, and God does not make mistakes. You may be tall, short, thin, chubby, artistic, athletic, or have any number of other characteristics, and none of it matters because you are here. Being here is a privilege and a responsibility. When God created you, he created you to be just the way you are. Never let anyone tell you that you are not enough. From the beginning you were so much enough that the creator and sustainer of the universe took time out to make you just the way you are.

**Everything will not be easy, but don't give up.** While you are special, talented and loved by God and your family, that does not mean that every day will be easy. There will be days that you don't feel well. There will be days that people are mean to you. There will be things that are unfair, uncalled for and just plain wrong, but don't hang your head, hang in there. When you see things that are wrong or difficult that is the time for you to show why God put you here. God has given each of us the ability to make a difference in this world and make it a better place. So be prepared to argue sometimes, be prepared to fight for what's right sometimes, but never give up. You are stronger than you think you are and you can make a difference if you don't give up.

**God is real and he loves you.** Yes, there is a God. Some people will tell you this is not true, and from time to time you may question it yourself, but take it from me, God is real and he loves you. He loves you so much that he will even love you when you doubt him. He loves you so much, that he will even love you when you make mistakes, bad decisions and do things you are not proud of. God loves you so much that he will love you through low times, get you through tough times, and be there with you in the best of times. You are his own special creation. So when you get lost, and you will, when you get lonely, and you will, when you are filled with doubt, at times you will be, remember there is a God and he loves you unconditionally.

So, Ellie, welcome to the world. We have been waiting for you, and we are so happy you're here!

... well said



**EDITOR'S NOTE: Our Multimedia Producer – and the person who lays out this newspaper each month – Alison Burdett, gave birth to Eleanor Leigh Burdett on Oct. 5. We asked our "...well said" writers to offer a word of welcome to the new baby. I hope you brought extra tissues.**

## EVENTS

### WesleyNexus Discussion Salem UMC in Brookeville Oct. 17, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Gather for a discussion on "What Pastors Should Know About Science," with a focus on the Science for Seminaries Project. Learn more and register at [www.wesnexus.org](http://www.wesnexus.org).

### 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 surrounding church growth. Register at <https://arenaweb.bwcmc.org/default.aspx?page=3115&event=2477>.

### Financial Leadership Academy

Various locations

A year-long academy beginning Nov. 7

The Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation will host a Financial Leadership

Academy for Laity beginning Nov. 7. The four-session classes will be held in Hagerstown, Fulton and Solomons. The cost is \$140. Learn more at <https://goo.gl/t1XAfr>.

### 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 is at <https://arenaweb.bwcmc.org/default.aspx?page=3115&event=2529>. If you signed up for last year's Lenten Day Apart, which was cancelled due to weather, you are already registered for the Advent gathering.

### ROCK 2016 Convention Center, Ocean City, MD Feb. 5-7, 2016

Learn more at <http://bwcmc.org/rock>

## CORRECTION:

**In the September UMConnection, in a sidebar featuring the Rev. Sandra Taylor, we mistakenly reported her husband, David, had died. In fact, it was her son, Dave, who has passed away. We deeply regret the error.**

## UMConnection

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**This symbol appears with stories that show your apportionment dollars at work, making a difference in people's lives.**



# Bishop's legacy to be honored with Africa U. facility

By ERIK ALSGAARD  
UMConnection Staff

**A**T AFRICA UNIVERSITY in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe, when classes finish for the day, students have very few options for fun or recreation. Some of the students hitch a ride or take the bus into town, where temptations loom large. Some students stay on campus, in their rooms or huddled in the library.

What's missing is a place for the 1,200 students to gather for indoor activities, like basketball, volleyball, lifting weights, or simply having a lounge where they can grab a coffee, gather and talk.

Baltimore-Washington Conference leaders learned the urgency of this need last July when a delegation visited Africa University and met with Vice Chancellor, Professor Munahse Furusa. The BWC has been in a 20-year partnership relationship with the Zimbabwe Episcopal Area, which includes teaching at the ZEA Pastor's School and other ministries.

"Right now, there is no student union, no common area for the students to gather," said Furusa. As part of the school's master plan, a health and fitness facility will be built. Having facilities for recreation is an important part of a student's life, he added, and an important part of "selling" the university to prospective students.

Where the funding will come for the new building is where the BWC comes in.

Bishop Marcus Matthews, himself an avid runner and long-time supporter of Africa University, will be retiring on Aug. 31, 2016. As is normal when a bishop retires, gifts of love and appreciation are often given. Bishop Matthews, however, has been clear: no gifts.

Instead, the 2015 BWC Annual Conference Session established a legacy campaign in the bishop's honor with all gifts going to Africa University to build the health complex.

"Learn, Lift, Lead," as the love offering is called, will see that all gifts honoring Bishop Matthew's ministry go to this new building project.

When Bishop Matthews met in person with the Vice Chancellor last July, he said that "his dream has become our dream. The Baltimore-Washington Conference has stepped up to the plate at Africa University in many, many ways.



Bishop Marcus Matthews stands at the proposed site of the new health facility at Africa University.

We take this challenge knowing that God is able."

In a letter to BWC clergy, the Rev. Melissa Rudolph, chair of the Order of Elders, invited clergy to be among the first to contribute to the love offering.

"As a district superintendent and since becoming bishop," she wrote, "Matthews has continued to lead others to share in this work and capture the vision of all that Africa University can be."

At Africa University, she noted, because students come from 22 different countries and going home means thousands of miles of travel, students "make Mutare their home and rarely leave to go to their own countries. Having facilities for recreation will help to keep them healthy in body, mind and spirit."

As Bishop Matthews prepares to retire, he will be visiting each of the four regions in the conference for a time of farewell. Churches and individuals will be encouraged to

present their contributions to the love offering at these events, Rudolph wrote. The celebrations of ministry will be held, from 3 to 5 p.m., on:

- April 9, Epworth Chapel in the Baltimore Region;
- April 10, Middletown UMC in the Western Region;
- April 16, Westphalia UMC in the Southern Region; and
- April 17, Asbury UMC in the Washington Region.

**HOW TO GIVE: Visit [bwcumc.org/about/bishop-matthews-love-offering](http://bwcumc.org/about/bishop-matthews-love-offering)**

**Checks may be sent, marked "Bishop's Love Offering," to the BWC Treasurer, 11711 E. Market Place, Fulton, MD 20759.**

# Process for nominating episcopal candidates begins

By MELISSA LAUBER  
UMConnection Staff



**T**HE ELECTION OF bishops is one of the key responsibilities of the delegates to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference, which meets July 11-15, 2016, in Lancaster, Pa.

The first step along the road to this election begins this month, as the members of the Baltimore-Washington Conference are called to a time of discernment.

During October, lay and clergy members are asked to consider which ordained Elder in our conference, if any, they believe might be called by God to serve as a bishop in The United Methodist Church. Nominations for candidates to the episcopacy will be received by the BWC's delegation during the month of November.

Based on the discernment process, a candidate may nominate themselves or be nominated by another person.

The 24-member delegation and alternates will hold an interview with the candidates and bring a recommendation to the clergy and lay members of the 2016 annual conference about who, if anyone, they think might be called to serve as a bishop.

The annual conference members may vote to endorse a candidate(s), who will go forward to be on the ballot at the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference.

At a Sept. 19 meeting, the delegation members considered what qualities and characteristics they believe are most essential in a bishop.

They reviewed the requirements for bishops set forth in the 2012 Book of Discipline in paragraphs 414-416, on pages 330-332. After discussion, they developed five distinct requirements based on the kind of leader that might best lead the people and churches of the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

These include:

1. Biblical, theological, and spiritual groundedness is at the very core of the candidate's life and ministry and evident in the candidate's personal wholeness and authenticity; rooted in a personal relationship with Jesus.



2. Prophetic, visionary, courageous, relational, risk taker with a track record for galvanizing others to be the church — bringing together the evangelical and social gospels — in new and compelling ways, fueled by the Holy Spirit and informed by our United Methodist (Wesleyan) heritage.
3. A demonstrated commitment to removing systemic oppression and discrimination of any and all people (including racial/ethnic, sexual orientation, economic, theological, age, and ability). Additionally, a candidate must prove a track record of:
  - Racial/ethnic justice and reconciliation;
  - Full inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgendered and Queer/Questioning persons in accordance with BWC policy.
4. A proven track record of growing vital churches and/or ministries and making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
5. A non-anxious presence, gifted in conflict transformation, technologically comfortable and with the ability to manage complex organizational and financial systems.

These qualifications are expected to be used as guidelines for prayer and discernment.

In November, prospective candidates must submit a written statement of qualifications that does not exceed 500 words, to the delegation secretary, Jen Ihlo (JenGC2016@gmail.com). The deadline for submission is midnight on Nov. 30.

Questions about the nomination process for episcopal candidates can be addressed to the delegation's leaders: Delores Martin at [littleone\\_martin@verizon.net](mailto:littleone_martin@verizon.net), or the Rev. T.R. Chattin at [srpastor@stpaulssykesville.org](mailto:srpastor@stpaulssykesville.org).

Currently, the Northeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church is expected to elect one new bishop when it meets in July 2016.



# Cross-river partnership targets homelessness in DC

By ERIK ALSGAARD  
UMConnection Staff

IN WASHINGTON D.C.'s Ward 8, near what is now Brighter Day UMC, an abandoned apartment complex that once housed more than 1,000 residents sits empty. Parkway Overlook, with 266 apartments, has been vacant since 2007, when the property failed safety inspections.

This complex is not alone. They are called "abandoniums" and they dot the Washington, D.C., landscape, especially east of the Anacostia River. Some United Methodist and civic leaders, instead of seeing blight and decay, see opportunity, especially as it relates to alleviating chronic homelessness in the District.

And so it was that a group of interfaith leaders gathered in what used to be busy and bustling streets to pray just outside the fenced and locked gates of Parkway Overlook. They came following a worship service at Brighter Day that highlighted the need – and the opportunity – to be in ministry.

"We're trying to call attention to the need for affordable housing in our city," said the Rev. Earnest Lyles, pastor at Brighter Day. "This property has been vacant since 2007 and we want the city to move expeditiously in getting this property developed so that our citizens will have an affordable place to live."

According to the "Homelessness in Washington, D.C.," report (May 2015), 11,623 people were homeless in the nine regions that comprise the

Metropolitan D.C. area when the Jan. 28 "enumeration" was taken. This represented a 2.7 percent drop in one year, the report stated. In the District itself, homelessness declined by 6 percent from 2014, with 7,298 people listed as "homeless." Still, that number is 11 percent higher than the 2011 enumeration, the report noted.

"A lack of affordable, permanent housing opportunities remains the most significant and persistent obstacle to ending homelessness in our region," the report states.



The Revs. Earnest Lyles, top left, and Charlie Parker (to his left) participate in a prayer service at Parkway Overlook.

"Increases in the region's already-high rents make it very difficult for extremely low income households to find or maintain housing that they can afford."

For the Rev. Charlie Parker, senior pastor at Metropolitan Memorial UMC in Washington, the day's events were a way to keep the process moving. Metropolitan, which is in partnership with Brighter Day, has made ending homelessness in the District one of its ministry priorities.

"We started this two years ago," he said, noting that the mayor of D.C. and other government officials were present. "There was a lot of exciting, initial movement, and then it's sputtered since."

Parker and Lyles decided that an event of some sort was needed to "kick-start" the process again, and more than 100 people gathered that Sunday afternoon to worship and hear from former residents of Parkway Overlook about the need for affordable housing.

As a result, even before the worship service occurred, "as soon as the invitations were sent out to the mayor and the D.C. City Council," Parker said, "that week, the D.C. Housing Authority called and said that they had the pre-development work all finished." A meeting between former residents and city officials also occurred, Parker said.

Parker also stressed the importance of this event as highlighting what he called "cross-river partnerships."

"I really do think that this is a model that we would love to see other churches in our connection replicate," he said. "It's been a great, great gift."

# 700 emerging NEJ leaders meet to 'See Know Love'

By ERIK ALSGAARD  
UMConnection Staff



MORE THAN 700 United Methodists from around the Northeastern Jurisdiction gathered in Hershey, Pa., Oct. 2-4, for a first-of-its-kind event focusing on transformational leadership. "See Know Love" sought to target the church's youngest leaders, both clergy and laity, according to the Rev. Ann Pearson, retired Elder from the New York Conference and chairperson of the design team.

"We were trying to get us to the edginess that this generation is looking for," she said. "The young practicum leaders here this weekend are able to do their incredible ministry because no one said 'no' to them along the way. They're following their call and their ministry is extraordinary."

Pearson said that these leaders modeled transformation that the whole church could benefit from, and she's hoping the church will grow as a result.

Such a conference as "See Know Love" had never happened before in the NEJ, Pearson said. The Northeastern Jurisdiction is made up of nine annual conferences from Maine to West Virginia. In addition to the weekend event, on Thursday, Oct. 1, about 200 bishops, district superintendents and other Cabinet members came together from across the NEJ for a day of learning and

conversation.

"This weekend did all that we had hoped to accomplish," said Bishop Marcus Matthews of the Baltimore-Washington Conference. "We tried to provide an arena where leadership from this Jurisdiction could come together to learn and to study and to be transformed."

The bishop, chair of the NEJ Vision Table, the group that sponsored "See Know Love," said one continuous thread throughout the event was the reminder of the need to change. The current reality, Bishop Matthews said, is that the NEJ, because of a decline in membership, stands to lose one of its nine bishops.

"Unless we turn this ship around, we'll continue" to be in decline, he said. "How can we, then, begin to have a conversation so that we can talk about how not to let that happen?"

The only way to stem the tide, the bishop said, is to work collectively. One of the big pieces of "See Know Love," he said, was the chance for leaders to come together and learn from one another about what works, what doesn't work, and how to lead effective transformation.

Leaders were challenged on Saturday, Oct. 3, by the Rev. Nadia Bolz Weber, a Lutheran pastor from Denver, Colo., who is perhaps most famous for her many tattoos and the use of profanity during her sermons and speeches.

One of the key elements of transformational leadership, she said, was to be vulnerable and authentic.

Open and honest about being a member of Alcoholics Anonymous for the past 22 years, about her battles with drug addiction and depression, Bolz Weber said that in many of those recovery groups who meet in the church basement during the week, "sometimes, people are speaking more honestly there and connecting to God more there, and developing a life of prayer and connecting to a community there than they are in our sanctuaries."

Bolz Weber urged the church to increase its emphasis on witnessing to the faith.

"The Gospel is real," she said. "Testimony has power when it's based in the truths of our lives and how the Gospel relates to that."

The Rev. Albert Mosley, president of Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Ga., offered theological reflections following each keynote presentation. He noted that transformational leaders have to be truth tellers.

"When you are authentic," he said, "you can equip God's people to speak truth about issues affecting the community and the world. When we are vulnerable and open to our people, we can start the art of truth-telling."

Mosley also stressed the need for leaders to have a vision, not only for their ministry but for their life. Aspirations, he said, are not vision and transformational leaders need to be disturbed by God to have that vision.

"Transformational leaders encourage the congregation and themselves to reach out to the community," Mosely said. "If you do that, what could happen?"



Bishop Marcus Matthews offers a prayer during the 'See Know Love' event in Hershey, Pa.

The Rev. Lindsay Flick, a member of the New England Conference, said she was going to find out.

"I've learned a lot about how to encourage the people that I minister to who aren't necessarily in the same place I'm in," she said. "Instead of wanting to just be about hanging out with each other, (we can) reach out more and do more work in the community and having that be because of love of God, not just because they want to be nice people."

Fiona Haworth, former Director of Talent for Southwest Airlines, spoke about "vision" at the event, challenging leaders to always be curious.

"It's not the vision itself that's important," she said, "but what the vision does."

Also speaking at "See Know Love" were leaders of The Chapel, a United Methodist church in Brunswick, Ga., who offered insights into accountable discipleship making.

At the closing worship service on Sunday, Bishop Sandra Steiner-Ball of the West Virginia Area preached on World Communion Sunday.

"We are invited to a table that changes our lives," she said. "We are never the same again."

"In my 40-plus years of being a part of this Jurisdiction," Bishop Matthews said, "this is the first (event) to my knowledge where we pulled together bishops, district superintendents, treasurers and executive staff persons into an arena where we have a conversation about how we can take this stuff as leaders and make it happen."

As the various ministry groups meet beyond the event, the bishop said, it is the hope of the Vision Table that the experience of "See Know Love" continues to shape and grow the church. "The possibilities of what we can do together," he said, "are unlimited."



The Rev. Nadia Bolz Weber speaks during the 'See Know Love' event



# Foundry: 200 years of ministry in nation's capital

From page 1

carries a particular message and challenge to the nation at this time in our history.

"It's not enough just to use our gifts," she said. "We also have to make it possible for other people to discover and use their gifts, too."

The truth is, she continued, that there are too many people in the world who have "so much" to offer but who never have the opportunity to "live up to their God-given potential."

Noting some of the barriers that hold people back, including race, gender and sexual orientation, Clinton said it is the job of the "village, the community, the church and, yes, a country" to open doors that are still closed. "We can lift each one up and leave no one behind."

The Rev. Maidstone Mulenga, Assistant to Bishop Marcus Matthew, episcopal leader of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, represented the bishop at the service. Matthews was on renewal leave at the time of the celebration.

"We extend our heart-felt congratulations to Foundry on their 200th anniversary," Mulenga said. "We pray God's blessings on their past and present, and look forward to what God will accomplish here in the future."

As worship ended and the congregation spilled out into the sun-splashed porch in front of the church, the Rev. Joe Daniels, superintendent of the Greater Washington District, said that it was a "fabulous service for a fabulous church."

Daniels said that Foundry has done so much in the



**Chelsea Clinton speaks at Foundry UMC's 200th anniversary celebration. She thanked the church for giving her a place to be herself and for providing mission and service opportunities.**

District of Columbia that it would be hard to list it all. "Foundry has always been on the edge of major issues," he said when asked what made the church special. "They've always been unafraid to live in the tension of most issues

that people don't want to be a part of. They've always had an attitude, a DNA, of jumping in to controversy and trying to find ways of healing."

## BWC's newest faith community begins worship

By MELISSA LAUBER  
UMConnection Staff



**S**OME CHURCHES TAKE a while to create. Community with a Cause, which held its first worship service on Oct. 3, may actually have begun 30 years ago, when Don and Cindy Geller gave birth to their son Gregory.

Greg's seizure disorder and other disabilities created an unexpected kind of family full of daily challenges. A foundation of well-tempered hope forever changed the way Don thinks about God and God's church.

On Sept. 12, Geller's thoughts came to life when more than 60 people gathered in the fellowship hall of Lexington Park UMC for a preview of a new worshipping community designed especially for people with disabilities.

This church-within-a-church has been named Community with a Cause. It is an initiative of the Baltimore-Washington Conference's Vibrant Communities. It also has the blessing of the conference Committee on Persons with Disabilities.

In laying the groundwork for this endeavor, Geller conducted research on this mission field. In a Launchpad Training Report, he noted that approximately 64,000 people live within a seven-mile radius of Lexington Park in southern Maryland and approximately 7,000 of them have a disability of some sort.

Within this affinity group, he wrote, "the majority of those family members and caregivers are not worshipping at a local church because they were ashamed or embarrassed whenever their special needs son or daughter acted out." "Too often," Geller said, "individuals with disabilities are treated as

outcasts and their parents or caregivers are told they are no longer welcomed to worship at a given church. They are given the usual excuses such as, 'the congregation is not adequately staffed or equipped with trained volunteers who can meet the disabled person's individual needs.' They are urged to find some other faith community that might be better equipped to accommodate their special needs son or daughter, even though no such faith community exists in southern Maryland."

In his first sermon, Geller promised those gathered that the worship experience will be designed specifically with them in mind – relevant for and catering to people with disabilities, their families and caregivers.

"The vision of this new community will be to restore hope that God understands their struggles and has heard their prayers and to reassure them that God has not forgotten them nor their disabled family member," he said.

He stressed the touchstone

Scripture passages of every parent with a special needs child, "God works for good for those who love God," and "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

This was the first sermon Geller has preached. But then, he said, "everything we do here will be a first as we share the struggle with those whom God has gifted differently."

He encouraged those present to be willing to do things differently and be a new kind of faith community that truly welcomes and includes all people. "Let the spirit speak to you," Geller said.

Geller graduated last year from Wesley Theological Seminary and has been assigned to the new church initiative. He continues to gather all the knowledge and experience he can about leading a new faith community. But he is not without experience in this endeavor.

In February 2008, following a Walk to Emmaus retreat, Cindy and he formed the Agape Club at Lexington Park. The club is a ministry which provides a space, meal, activity and spiritual program for about 50 adults with a wide variety of disabilities.

Together with volunteers from Lexington Park UMC, the Gellers created an outreach ministry that has had a significant impact on people's lives. But it's not just those who are served who are affected.

"You have to see Christ on the faces of these disabled individuals in order to understand that we may actually be the ones with a disability," he said. "To God be the glory!"

Several people from the Agape Club came to the preview worship of Community with a Cause.

"What they want, what we all want, is for the world to love them just as they are," Geller said. "One in five people in the United States has a disability and most of them do not have a church family. Let's change that. ... Community with Cause will stand in the gap with Christ."

The next bi-weekly worship service of Community with a Cause will be held Saturday, Oct. 17, at 4 p.m., at Lexington Park UMC.



**Pastor Don Geller serves Communion to one of the inaugural worshippers at Community with a Cause.**



# Church in the public square

By MELISSA LAUBER  
UMConnection Staff

**W**HERE RELIGION AND the public square meet is a place of potential discord and great possibility. This space where faith and citizenship meet is rich in ideas and actions and it is this intersection that Wesley Seminary will explore during its Second Monday lectures this academic year.

The Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe, general secretary of the General Board of Church and Society, opened the lecture series, which is held each month, with breakfast at 7:30 a.m., lecture at 8 and dismissal promptly at 9 a.m.

Henry-Crowe, whose first doll was actually named “City Hall,” explored the “vexing and perplexing role of the public square in history and its changing role in our lives today.

Citing the United Methodist Book of Resolutions and the Board of Church and Society’s work on Capitol Hill and beyond, Henry-Crowe asserted that, “The church is not making political statements; they’re really Gospel statements,” she said. “Gospel statements have political impact.”

In future months, speakers will include seminary faculty and invited guests who will explore ethics for sojourners, political discourse, exile and trauma, healthcare, the military, race, and global citizenship.

The lectures, crafted to help those present explore new ideas and build their faith, are centered around Jeremiah 29:7, “But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”

This year, those who attend five of eight Second Monday lectures can earn .5 CEU.

Check out the whole series at <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/newsandevents/secondmondays>



The Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe stands with the Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson.

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Baltimore-Washington Conference

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David & Sylvia Simpson  
Imagine No Malaria Field Coordinators  
Baltimore-Washington Conference  
[imagineomalaria@bwcumc.org](mailto:imagineomalaria@bwcumc.org)

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### West River plants trees to save the bay



Students plant trees at West River Center.

**CHURCHTON** — In on-going efforts to “live green” and care for God’s creation, the BWC’s West River Center recently participated in the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake program, “Our Trees For Sacred Places.” On Sept. 16, camp staff joined with students from Broadneck and Southern High Schools, volunteers from the U.S. Air Force stationed at Ft. Meade and others to plant 200 trees on the camp’s property.

### One investment still helping churches

**FULTON** — Strawbridge Lounge in the BWC Mission Center recently resembled Pentecost as United Methodists speaking English, Korean, Spanish and Mizo gathered to receive awards to small churches from a fund of the Methodist Foundation. The fund had grown nearly three-fold from when Vivian Otto first contributed it as a memorial to her late husband.

Otto stipulated the gift be used for small churches, since as the then Washington West District education secretary for many years, that’s where her heart and attention focused.

The Rev. Miguel Balderas accepted the award for the bicultural Millian Memorial UMC in Rockville. He said it would be used for a musician at the Latino service.

The Rev. Biak Chuunga heads the 10-year-old Mizo Fellowship UMC that meets in Rockville. The congregation is made up of Mizo immigrants from Burma. “We will use the money for a Mizo summer school,” he said, “to help children in Mizo language and culture.”

Washington Grove UMC’s Council Chair, Howard Black, accepted its award. The grant was used to launch a multi-cultural Vacation Bible School this summer, the first time in 15 years, he said.

This is the second year of giving the small church grants, which are decided by a selection committee.

### Youth ready to S.E.A.R.R.

**WEST RIVER** — The Conference Council on Youth Ministry youth team held their fall retreat in September at West River Camp. Four of the six District Youth Leaders were present and led the spiritual lessons during the retreat. When the other two districts, Frederick and Baltimore Metro, identify a DYL, someone from there will be added to the CCYM team.

The retreat was a working time. Don Hauprich worked with the youth officers to develop the CCYM’s mission and goals during the retreat. The youth developed their mission statement and identified a cause they want to champion.

The mission statement was shortened to S.E.A.R.R. in order for the youth to remember and explain its purpose: Support, Educate, Advocate, Represent and Resource the local churches on the issues and needs related to youth.

CCYM meets on the third Saturday of each month from



Youth leaders from the CCYM play games during a recent retreat.

10 a.m. to noon at the Conference Center. All youth in 6th through 12th grades are welcome to attend and participate in CCYM activities.

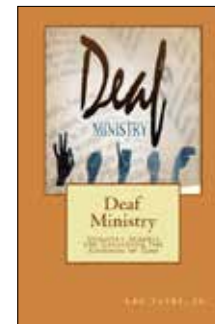
### Three local authors publish books

**LA PLATA** — “Is God poking you?” asks Dan Brennan, a member of LaPlata UMC, in a book he recently wrote. It is a compilation of weekly columns Brennan wrote for church newsletters over the course of the 10 years he’s been in church administration. His observations include humor and elicit the reader’s reflection.

“Is God Poking Me?: Observations From the Church Office.”

is available on Amazon and in the Kindle Lending Library.

John Mayden, pastor of Mt. Zion UMC and a



prospective foster/adoptive parent resource trainer with the Baltimore City Department of Social Services recently published the book “The Victorious Life: Prayers for Every Season of Life.”

And Leo Yates, a pastor at Calvary UMC in Frederick, is also the author of a new book on Deaf Ministry, also available on Amazon.

### New Goucher bust to travel to Korea



A newly commissioned statue of the Rev. John Goucher was recently blessed at Lovely Lane UMC before it goes to its new home in Korea.



# Celebrating the ministry of administration

By PAM MULLAY

CENTRAL MARYLAND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR



**W**E DON'T ALWAYS need a special occasion to celebrate. Each morning, as we welcome God into our hearts and minds, it is an opportunity to celebrate. But in the ministry of administration, it is sometimes hard to find reasons to celebrate.

Unfortunately, administration is sometimes an overlooked ministry. You often hear the phrase, "They are just a secretary," or "They are just an assistant."

This view of administration has been portrayed on television as a character who fetches coffee and waits to be told what to do. But in reality, Webster's dictionary defines administration as the activities that relate to running a company, school, or other organization.

I view administration as the gift of being able to provide excellent customer service; to go above and beyond in regards to organization, planning and the execution of projects and other administrative needs.

When I joined the Baltimore-Washington Conference

in May 2010, the role of district administrator (DA) was unlike any other position I have ever had in my 20-year administrative career. After a few weeks on the job, I realized that I needed to be open to allowing God to help me find grace, patience and wisdom.

Luckily, I was open to receiving his word and I began to understand that it was okay to ask for help when I need it; to be patient when things weren't always on my timetable; and to put on some scuba gear and grab an extra tank of oxygen when I felt like I was under water.

Gradually, over time, my ministry began to flourish. And when I say over time, I mean after the first year. What I needed to do was go through an entire calendar year of the church/conference just to get my bearings and to be able to begin doing well. After that first year, I was finally able to let God center me and begin to celebrate my ministry.

As stressful as this job can be sometimes, it truly is amazing. Every phone call and e-mail are part of my ministry. Every problem I can solve, and solution I can strategize about before it becomes a big problem, is an opportunity for learning and growth and is exciting.

I work with 76 churches in the Central Maryland District. Two of them are St. Paul's UMC in Laytonsville and Mt. Carmel UMC in Brookeville. Joanne Burroughs has given 40 years of service to St. Paul's (and Mt. Carmel when they became a charge in 2009) in her ministry as the office administrator. Her church says that she has patiently, wisely and lovingly led them through their required tasks and obligations through many changes and challenges and has kept them on track all these years. Just last month they celebrated her ministry with a luncheon in her honor.

At the end of the day, we are the glue. We have to know a little bit about everything and if we don't know something, we need to know how to get the answer. We have to smile even when we are having a bad day. We have to answer the same question over and over again, and not get frustrated.

I know it isn't April, when we normally celebrate Administrative Professionals' Day, but I ask that each administrative professional throughout our Conference take a few moments to celebrate their ministry today and every day. We are God's vessels doing God's work; what a great thing to celebrate!

## Young Adult Ministry: Part of the Church we often ignore



By DANIEL BARNETT\*



**I**T WAS SEPT. 3 at the Baltimore-Washington Conference Center. We were in the Fiesta Room, five young adults gathered around the tables, agendas in front of them. The business began with the Vision and Purpose of the Young Adult Council.

"The mission of the Young Adult Council," read the Young Adult Council chair, "is to be a movement of young adults growing in Christ and community."

*(Please note: This is what most, if not all, young adults crave, desire and hope, that the church will be a community, a group of people, who share common beliefs, characteristics, or interests and who perceive themselves as distinct from the larger society.)* The chair then went on to talk about the vision of the Young Adult Council (YAC for short).

"The first goal of the YAC is to provide training on the full spectrum of young adult ministries," read the chair. *(Please also note: This means that the council is there for you and for the churches you represent. They would be happy to come to your church, your district or region and talk to you about young adult ministry.)*

The chair then read the second goal of the YAC: "Resource local churches with curricula and other materials to enhance young adult ministries." *(Again, we note: This means that the council has resources for your church regarding young adult ministry, whether it be curriculum for young adult*

*Bible studies or books regarding young adults and ministry with them. The YAC wants to be a resource for you and your church.)*

"The third goal of the YAC is to advocate for young adult participation and leadership at the Conference level," read the chair. *(A note you'll have heard many times before, but need to remember: Young Adults are not the future church, nor the next generation church, they are the church of the present, the church of the now.)*

Next, the chair went on to read the fourth goal, "Connect young adults and young adult ministries throughout the Conference through clear and consistent communication on young adult events, activities, and resources."

*(As a personal note: When I first came to The United Methodist Church a few years ago, one of the things I was told was, "The United Methodist Church is a connectional church." But I have seen time and time again, some pastors staying on their own church islands and not coming to district clergy gatherings, and churches refusing to work or partner with other churches for the good of their ministries.)*

Finally, the chair read the fifth goal: "Sponsor conference-wide ministries and support jurisdictional-wide events that include and/or are geared toward young adults."

After reading the goals of the council, the council voted on two different requests (yes, only two requests) for funding.

*(And one special note you should not ignore: Yes, the council has and disburses money for young adult ministry to those who apply. If you would like to apply for a grant/money for young adult ministries, please contact Cheryl Cook at [ccook@bwcumc.org](mailto:ccook@bwcumc.org).)*

Finally, the chair opened the meeting for discussion and the council members spent the rest of the evening talking about young adults and racial reconciliation and closed in prayer.

*\*Daniel Barnett is a co-chair of the Young Adult Council. He writes, "This article is dedicated to my father, who was my mentor, my friend, and my guide. He lost his life to cancer this past month." Contact Barnett at [dbarnett@wesleyfreedom.org](mailto:dbarnett@wesleyfreedom.org).*



Daniel Barnett with his father, Aaron Barnett.

## Visit to Korea provides new insights for BWC pastor

By MICHAEL PARKER

PASTOR OF AMES MEMORIAL UMC



*"Where God leads me, I will follow!"*

**T**HIS WAS A song that I learned as a child growing up in the Ames Memorial UMC. Even as a child, I could sense that these words weren't just lyrics but prophetic reminders of what God had in store for my life. I could feel that God was leading me somewhere, but never in a thousand years did I imagine God would lead me to places across the world to be in and learn from ministry.

After all, growing up in my neighborhood, the now infamous Sandtown-Winchester community and center of the 2015 Baltimore riots, traveling to places outside our community wasn't realistic. Most of those in my

community suffered from the effects of urban blight and the pains of urban crime and drug activity. As a result, dreams of being able to see the world were almost as unrealistic as not being impacted by the surrounding issues. However, in the midst of this, God sprung up hope. I have been a recipient of that hope.

As I prepared for the journey to Korea, my prayer was that God would allow me to experience God's presence in new ways and that God would birth new, fresh, and innovative ideas for ministry back in my ministry setting.

Even greater, I was excited to reconnect with the pastor I had the joy of hosting last summer. As I tried to spiritually center myself for the journey, I found myself consistently being pulled to the Great Commission and felt like even in this learning experience, I would have an opportunity to make disciples.

One of the best moments for me in Korea was teaching the children at my first host church several American


Christian songs, many of which were songs that were part of my spiritual formation. Watching God's precious children sing those songs with such conviction and joy was refreshing, and it was often the moments with them that refueled me throughout the trip.

I love to preach and to be blessed to share God's Word not once but three times in Korea, each in a different church, was life changing. In those moments God reminded me that I was called to reach people everywhere and be in ministry, indeed, to all the world.

It was also in those moments that I got a new perspective on partnerships in ministry, as I relied on interpreters to assist me in the preaching moments. This reminded me that we each bring something unique and special, and that God desires for us all to come to the table.

I was grateful for the opportunity to be part of this journey and am appreciative for the experience. My ministry has not been the same since.





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Send your contributions, marked Bishop's Love Offering, to the Conference Treasurer at 11711 E. Market Place, Fulton, MD 20759, or give online at [bwcumc.org/about/bishop-matthews-love-offering/](http://bwcumc.org/about/bishop-matthews-love-offering/).

## Seven young girls empower a church building project

By MELISSA LAUBER  
UMConnection Staff

**A**T SHARP STREET UMC in Sandy Spring, someone forgot to tell the girls of the church that they are made of “sugar and spice and everything nice.” They believe they’re created in the image of God, with power, strength, purpose and hope. And now, they’re acting on that belief.

The seven girls, who range in age from 10 to 17, started meeting together in January for Sunday school. They decided they wanted a larger space to meet.

And so they began a \$50,000 building campaign.

On their own.

In secret.

They just thought \$50,000 was a good amount, they said on a Sunday morning in September. They kept their plans secret until one morning last June when, during worship, they presented their pastor, the Rev. Kecia Ford, with a check for \$600.

Flabbergasted and delighted with the girl’s actions, Ford found herself in tears as she received the check. The Board of Trustees was also moved and pledged to begin to support the new campaign.

By Sept. 13, the girls had raised \$16,750 by holding line dances, bake sales, a walkathon, and inspiring gifts from generous donors in the congregation.

Meeting in the small kitchen next to the sanctuary, their exploration of faith, prayer and the Bible is often interrupted by the joyful noises that drown out conversation when the congregation sings a lively hymn. The church’s counters also use the space to sort and tally up the offering.

For a while, the girls would just go outside to the church lawn and have Sunday school. But their adult leader, Tanya Holt, encouraged them to action.

Last year, the girls were part of a larger fellowship

of children and youth. But they “longed for fellowship and something tailor-made for them,” Ford said. In January, when Holt, who Ford said “has a heart for this ministry,” agreed to lead and support the girls and help them find their own agenda, this ministry took off.

“Just being in the house of God, we want to give back. We wanted to do something for the people encouraging us and supporting us,” the girls said.

When they’re together and excited, the girls talk almost in unison, finishing each other’s thoughts and building on each other’s enthusiasm. It’s easy to imagine them as a force of nature.

Individually, they are Dallis Holt, 15; J.T. Lockman, 17; Deja Twyman, 15; Aniyah Haskins, 11, Mikayla Haley, 14; Rachel Smith, 10 and Dana Minor, 12.

But when the girls originally thought of the idea of creating a building fund, there was some reluctance, they admit.

“As kids, at this age, we want to be on the phone, be in the bed, go out, do stuff. Going to church and giving back to God wasn’t the thing that we wanted to do,” they confessed. “But, once we started doing it as a group, it was actually fun.”

The group named itself “Walking with Confidence.” Holt made them T-shirts with the name on the front and their favorite numbers on the back.

Instilling confidence is important, she said.

“These girls are at a hard age,” Holt said. “They live with bullying, wanting to fit in, constant cell phones and cyber this and cyber that, worrying about grades and a host of things.”

In fact, national statistics show that seven in 10 girls believe they are not good enough or do not measure up in some way, including their looks, performance in school and relationships with family and friends. Seventy-four percent of girls in the U.S. say they are under pressure to please everyone. One in

four girls, physicians report, suffer from either depression, eating disorders, cutting, anxiety, or a combination of these disorders.

Belonging to church doesn’t change these challenges. But being together and centered in God, is “definitely worth the time.”

Ford hopes the girls learn that “when you start off with faith and then act out of that faith, God can do anything.”

That lesson is beginning to sink in.



Girls from Sandy Spring “walk with confidence.”

“It makes all of us more confident to know and have someone to talk to and pray with,” the girls said. “Knowing God is with us makes things easier. During the struggle and stuff we can just talk to him.”

They have no real idea what their \$50,000 will buy, and each has different ideas about how the new space might be designed. But for now, the joy is in the effort, in coming together and “giving back to God and just being in the House of God.”

To other girls out there, who may be stuck in “sugar and spice,” they have lots of wisdom. “But mostly,” the girls from Sharp Street UMC say, “be confident. Share your ideas. It’s easy to make a group. When you’re all on the same page, listening to each other’s ideas, just keep walking with confidence and you’ll get them.”