

UMMA UpDate 50th Issue Anniversary, February 14, 2007
e-bulletin of the
United Methodist Missionary Association
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"Linking mission workers worldwide and moving forward"

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- [1] **MISSION GATHERING & FORUM** in a nutshell by *Newscope**, Feb. 9

The "Bridges of Hope" Mission Gathering and Forum will take place August 5-8 at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill. According to an announcement of the event, "The gathering will critically analyze the changes in communities impacted by Christian mission, while affirming justice ministries and ministries of presence as legitimate forms of mission." Workshops and panels are scheduled on a variety of topics ranging from mission in situations of conflict to medical mission, from the challenges for mission of U.S. foreign policy to the links between evangelism and mission. For information, visit <http://www.umma-global.org> **Newscope* is a concise, weekly update on news of interest to United Methodist leaders. Read, fill & send Application Form at end of this e-bulletin.

- [2] **Special Features of the Mission Gathering & Forum** by Norma Kehrberg

Roundtable discussions will be one of the special features of the Mission Gathering and Forum. These afternoon sessions will provide opportunities for participants to explore mission topics in a smaller informal setting, thus encouraging discussion and dialogue of people with like-minded interests.

One of the topics to be explored relates to the popular **United Methodist Volunteer in Mission program**, in which almost 100,000 members of local United Methodist churches participate annually. In the November issue of *New World Outlook*, Dana Robert, professor of mission at Boston University included a statement by Robert Wuthnow, a sociologist at Princeton indicating that short-term mission trips lasting two weeks or less have become the spiritual formation experience of choice for middle class North American Christian youth, often replacing the camping and conferencing of previous generations.

"The American middle class is pouring billions of dollars into its own personal experiences, money that used to be channeled through mission boards and into long-term

mission or partnership commitment. Shifting loyalties are a result, both on the side of those going on mission trips and those receiving foreign assistance. There are now multiple players in mission relationships and the days are gone when everything could be channeled through a centralized mission board,” according to Robert.

The Mission Gathering and Forum allows an opportunity for some of these players to discuss these phenomena and seek ways of building on the tremendous enthusiasm of the Volunteer in Mission program. Robert stated this would “regain a fuller understanding for mission for the entire denomination”. The participants at the Mission Gathering and Forum will include UMVIM participants and leaders, professors of mission, mission agency staff, local church enthusiasts and longer-term cross-cultural missionaries, thus providing an excellent place for dialogue of this important interface in mission in our church today.

Roundtable discussion topics related to UMVIMs include: Leadership Training for UMVIMs; Jane Dunn, Teresa Miller and David Harsh will share leadership in a session on UMVIM Health Missions. Lorna Jost, Administrator for the UMVIM-NCJ programs will lead a session for individual VIMs. There will also be a plenary discussion on Volunteers in Mission with Jost, Nan McCurdy and Miguel Mairena, GBGM missionaries in Nicaragua.

Other known roundtable discussion topics include “Earthkeeping and Christian Witness”, by Rich Darr, member of the board of Trustees of Garrett-Evangelical and pastor in Northern Illinois Annual Conference. Al Streyfeller, former missionary in Zimbabwe and Senegal will lead a session on “Evangelism at the Heart of Mission/On Being Ecumenical and Evangelical”. Other topics will be included as they are finalized and participants are invited to suggest a topic in which they would like to lead a session.

Of general interest to all will be a **book review session** in which participants can share information about books they have written or books they have read that inspired them. Participants are invited to share and even informally offer for sale, books they have written.

Another feature of the Mission Gathering and Forum are **missionary reunions** for Southeast Asia, the Philippines and India. Missionary reunions are times to gather, renew collegial friendships and share common interests and concerns of the areas where they served as missionaries.

Yes, there will be time for prayer and witness and walks along the lake.

[3] OUR READERS WRITE

Thanks, Richard for information about the Mission Gathering and Forum. I hope there will be a mission gathering we can participate in after we leave Japan in 2008. Thanks for all this good information! Warm regards to you and Caring, Hazel Terhune

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Thanks UU #49! I miss my contacts with UMMA. Lots of fond memories, though! Blessings! - Sally Wisner Ott, (Church & Community Workers Rep. at UMMA gatherings)

* * *

Dear Friends: Picked up this short note in latest issue of *Newscope* about Helen Dwyer, one of our own in Hamburg and thought I would forward.

Helen Dwyer, a missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries, led a 20-voice international and ecumenical choir on Dec. 7 to open the Advent Sing of the Forum of International Churches in Hamburg, Germany. The event took place at the Lutheran Central Church of St. Peter. The "All Nations Choir" draws its membership from several Ghanaian Christian congregations, including the Methodist Eben-Ezer Society, as well as the English-language International UMC in Hamburg. Helen, a Chicago native, and her husband, James Dwyer, a clergy member of the North Indiana Conference, have served UM ministries in Europe since 1984 and in Hamburg since 2003. – UMNS P.S. Jim: Please give kudos to Helen. – Norma Kehrberg for UMMA friends

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Dear All, **Enjoy Chinese New Year** on Feb 18 -19. **GONG XI FA CAI!** - Evelyn Fong
Editors Note: Evelyn is the daughter of the late Burr & Tek Lin Baughman, pioneer career missionaries to Sarawak, Malaysia. Nice to have missionary kids write us. Anyone for an "MK Korner" section?

* * *

Ric, Thanks for sending this message: "Summer gathering to bring United Methodists together around mission." – Charles Germany

* * *

Dear Dr. Richard, Thanks for your consistency in sending info. More blessings this New Year, Chaplain Rudy Juan, Philippines

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Dear UMMA Friends, We are settled in Wilderness, South Africa and we're loving it. Re: my message delivered at the Fall GBGM Board Meeting and printed in UMMA UpDate #46, Oct. 24, 2006, though my reference was to cross-cultural missionaries, I implied that all Christians should keep some critical distance from all cultures (being in the world, but not of it, Rom. 12:2). I drew from that affirmation the logical corollary that democratic citizens must retain the right to disagree with current political and military policies. The IRD claimed that my theological reflections concerning the first point were interesting, but called me a "ranter" when I wished to apply that point to encourage Christians to think freely concerning present policies. In other words, they like pious talk about Christian freedom to obey Christ alone, but think that that should not interfere with nationalistic idolatry. I suppose most of the German Christians in Hitler's time wore similar blinders, and could even appeal to Luther's two kingdom teaching to fortify their lack of courage. Whose ranting is partisan? I hope mine is not. - Ron "Ranter" Ray

* * *

Hi All, As of Feb.10, 2007, we have 44 registrations for the Evanston 2007 Mission Gathering. These include: 3 NADAM; 2 NCVIM; 38 UMMA; 11 India, 13 SE Asia; 8 Philippines. Our speakers are in addition to the above. Some folks fit into more than one category. Please accept the invitation at the end of this newsletter, fill the form and send to me. Talk up the Reunion events with friends and join us for this momentous event. - Dick Vreeland, registrar

* * *

Dear Ric, Thanks for news... Among other things I am in a church conference task-group working to develop a partner relationship with the East Angola UM Conference and Mary Ann and I are already registered for the Angola Reunion in MN this July. I am participating in a 'Circle of Support' ministry of Trinity UM Church working with prison inmates returning to the community. Major continuing concerns are the mid-east debacle and global warming and the impact of each on future generations. Let's be thankful for each blessed hol-y-day ALL the rest of '07!! - Fred Brancel

* * *

We are saddened at the death of sister deaconess, Celeste Paraso Cerezo, Class 1940 of Harris Memorial College. Manang Celeste was one of the outstanding deaconesses in the Philippines UMC. Many deaconesses, pastors and young people have gone into the ministry because of her influence. She had among her Sunday school pupils three who became bishops of the UMC: Bishops Emerito P. Nacpil, Jose Gamboa and Daniel Arichea. - Liwliwa T. Robledo, President of Harris Memorial College, Manila

* * *

Dear Richard, I checked into the Terry and Muriel Henderson Mission web site at www.gytte.org It is really well done. Do you think that we could find someone Stateside who could put together a web site like this for Mujila Falls Agriculture Center? It would be far easier if I could simply add and remove stories as time went by and highlight current activities with stories and pictures. If I had a webmaster who could set it up for me, I think that I could maintain it for the most part. I don't think it would take too much time beyond the time taken to set it up. What do you think?

It has been raining almost every day for months now. This is shaping up to be the wettest season on record here. The military had to come in with helicopter and engineering teams as several bridges in the area have collapsed or are in danger of collapse. Luckily, I think the VIM team can still get here, though we will have to travel slowly. - Paul L Webster & Tshala Mwengo, Mujila Falls Agriculture Centre. *Editor's note: Hopefully, someone reading this will volunteer or give suggestions. Please look at the following "Tech Tools" article.*

[4] TECH TOOLS GET MISSION-MINDED

Church's New Web Site Fosters Online Community, Jan. 30, 2007 by Linda Green, UMNS with the following excerpts from <http://umns.umc.org> :

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) - UMC.org, the Web site of The United Methodist Church, has been retooled to incorporate innovative technologies to bring together people around the world in new ways.

The pioneering site is home to the first large-scale social networking community developed by a mainline denomination for people of faith. The redesign was unveiled Jan. 29 during an online news conference with media and other audiences.

"UMC.org is more than a Web site. It's about relationships," said the Rev. Larry Hollon, chief executive of United Methodist Communications. "Now, information about spiritual enrichment is as easy as the click of a mouse."

Designed to be user-friendly and relevant to daily life, the new design aims to meet the needs of a large, diverse audience and to make people feel welcome, as if walking into a church... "The new UMC.org is about community," Hollon said, noting that the site reflects denominational founder John Wesley's belief that the world was his parish. Hollon called UMC.org "a doorway" to The United Methodist Church and its ministries, accessing church resources, presenting the world "through the lens of faith" and offering visitors a closer look at who United Methodists are as a faith community...

Through it, visitors can hold online conversations about diseases of poverty, malaria and HIV/AIDS. They can "volunteer globally" through the Our World section, which presents how the denomination and individuals are responding to global issues and making a difference. Members can keep each other up to date on events and church news, stay connected with friends in other parts of the world, and keep in touch between worship and church gatherings...

Similar to but offered as an alternative to MySpace and Facebook, the new social network is open to people of all faiths and accessible day or night. Visitors to www.umc.org/community can establish personal profiles with photographs and personal information, establish networks of friends and "blog" about a number of subjects. Unlike other social networking sites, however, members of this community can list their skills and gifts and share how they want to help make the world a better place. The idea is to connect those with needs with those who are equipped to help... Click on <http://umns.umc.org> for other features. For ideas on Web Ministry 101 Click on <http://web.umc.org/interior.asp?mid=572>

[5] POINTS to PONDER

“The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.” Galatians 5:6

“The Age of the Sage in Mission” – by Rebecca Beard of *CWM News*

As more people are retiring at an earlier age and living longer, many are making use of their extended years in mission in places from Russia to Brazil, said missionary and Bible scholar Del Chinchin in the July issue of *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*. “They are teaching English and engineering in China and training young pastors in biblical principles and theological truths to name but a few endeavors,” Chinchin said. “We are in the age of the sage in missions not only because so many senior missionaries are on the field but also because Africa and other places in the world highly value their age, wisdom and experience.”

In Africa, more mature missionaries can slip easily into the inner circle of top decision-makers quickly because their age means they are near the top rung of the ladder in society, he said. “Because age elevates one in status and position it can become a valuable source of integrity and credibility.”

Chinchin said that the trend for missionaries in Africa is to go home when they are 40 to 50 years old is too soon. That is when they are beginning to have the most influence and acceptance. He suggested mission organizations need to find ways to encourage them to stay on.

“Shameful Priority”

by Wayne Lavender, a VIM Peace organizer passingthepeace@charter.net

Submitted by Carolyn Belshe Cowen

Tragically, a child dies somewhere around the world on an average of every 3 seconds from a preventable or treatable disease. Using this three-second interval of time, one can see where our priorities lie. Period of Time Event:

3 Seconds A child dies from a preventable or treatable disease

3 Seconds The United States spends \$49,467.27 for military purposes

3 Seconds The United States spends \$1,522.07 for humanitarian aid programs

"Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity." - Horace Mann

[6] **JIM'S JOTTINGS** by James Dwyer, UMMA chair

Fifty issues of Update is something to celebrate! Thanks in no small part to the editor, writers and proofreaders of the UMMA Update, our Association has been able to be in regular touch with its membership and broader constituency and provide important input for our church. Our intent has been to serve all missionaries and the mission of the whole church of Christ within the structures of our United Methodist Church's General Board of Global Ministries.

Thank you, Richard Schwenk, for your tireless efforts to forward the cause of Christ and to help the church take note of the special points of view which experience and calling have given "standard support" missionaries. Such persons have served extended periods in cross-cultural ministries of one kind or another outside their home countries. Our celebration of the particular insights of these cross-cultural missionaries in no way diminishes the depth of service or the immediacy of the call of God to many other persons doing mission as Church and Community Workers, as Deaconesses and Home Missioners, as "VIM's" or in volunteer positions in their annual conferences and local churches or in independent action in the world. Each of us needs to bear witness to the love of Christ as we have experienced it and add our voices to the mix of praise and song which rises to the throne of God.

In providing the UMMA Update, Ric has often had to deal with daunting challenges. In the earlier days of e-mail, some missionaries could not receive the whole newsletter at once on their limited bandwidth. Ric carefully "pre-chewed" the nourishing news into bite-sized chunks and sent them out over a period of days, so as not to overload communication networks to remote areas of the world. Still others of the living generation of missionaries never made the transition to e-mail or have since put aside their computers. Gil Bascom first and then Gene Matthews – took over the task of printing and mailing "hard copies" to those who could not otherwise receive the Update. Various contact persons in retirement communities have also done hand distribution to include as many as possible in the conversations which the Update represents.

Thanks, Ric and helpers – including faithful unsung editorial assistant Caring Schwenk for all your efforts. We hope you may find the strength for another 50 issues and whatever new communications challenges await us along the way.

Meanwhile, UMMA Update #51 may well deal with the election of a new chair, since I have been invited to join the staff at "headquarters" and will soon become Regional Secretary for Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and Southern Asia in the Mission Personnel Program Area.

[7] **Coordinator's Corner "New Year - New Opportunities"** by Fred Price

Saint Valentine's Day is intended to remind us of self-giving love. For those of us who have been privileged to serve as missionaries, we have seen the world's greatest love story unfold as people in various cultures, speaking different languages, living in different circumstances experience the love of God in Jesus Christ. Thank you for your part in sharing God's love.

May I share two brief things with you. First, for those who have not already sent in their 2007 UMMA dues, I would be only too happy to receive them—and to very

sincerely thank you for them. Second, this year's UMMA Gathering will follow at the conclusion of the Mission Gathering and Forum in Evanston, IL. So please put it on your calendar and plan to join us from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM on Aug. 8 for the annual UMMA meeting.

Membership dues for 2007 are only \$25.00 per person for Full Membership which includes the right to vote for Steering Committee members, or \$15.00 per person for Affiliate Membership which does not include voting rights. The second opportunity will come shortly as we hold our next round of elections. You will hear more details by email or by snail (regular) mail. We will again be electing persons to the Steering Committee. For active missionaries, this will be by geographic region. Retirees will vote as a single body.

----- Please fill out now, cut off here, and send to the address below -----

Your Name: _____ Spouse's Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Individual Member = \$25.00, Couple = \$50, Affiliate Memberships = \$15.00

Please make checks payable to: "UMMA" and mail to:

Fred W. Price, Coordinator, 165 Grandview Avenue, Pitman, NJ 08071 USA

[8] *This is your invitation to come join the -*

MISSION GATHERING & FORUM

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60201

August 5 – 8, 2007

Opening plenary Sunday evening, August 5 at 7:00 PM in the chapel at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. Music by Joline Bestounes and Stephen Edwards of Community UMC in Naperville followed by Bishop Roy E. Sano speaking on "Biblical Basis for Mission". Program ends at 12 NOON August 8. The annual UMMA meeting is scheduled from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

Housing:

Loder Hall Dormitory Housing on Campus Forty-five rooms at \$186 for three nights for single or double occupancy (Thus, 2 persons would divide this and pay only \$93 each. If only one in the room the room rate is still \$186). No AC. Bathrooms down the hall. (dormitory style housing). Reservations for dormitory are made on the form below.

Best Western Hotel: Garrett Event Rates \$99 per night plus taxes (about 15-20 minute walk). Parking additional. Limited number of reserved rooms available until July 1, 2007. Call Best Western Hotel at 847-491-6400 and ask for the Mission Gathering and Forum group. Airport Express to the Hotel \$22; Taxi, approximately \$35.

Hotel Orrington: \$119 per night, plus taxes (about six blocks from campus). Limited number of reserved rooms available until July 1, 2007. Parking additional. Call 847-556-7987, contact Group Reservations and ask for the Mission Gathering and Forum at Garrett-Evangelical. From O'Hare call American Taxi at 847-673-1000 – Cost \$25.

Other Hotels in the area may be less expensive but farther away.

Wheelchair participants will have an elevator to reach chapel meetings.

Travel: By train: Blue line from airport to downtown, then red line and then purple line to Evanston City Center. Garrett is about eight blocks away from the train station. If driving, parking at Garrett is limited and will cost at least \$5 per day.

Food: \$105 for full three days (\$35 per day). Includes entree for evening meal, continental style breakfast and executive style bag lunches. Limited options for food preferences. Otherwise, meals on your own at cafeteria at Northwestern, a 10 minute walk away.

----- Please fill out, cut off here and send to Richard Vreeland -----

REGISTRATION FORM

For details & forms click: <http://www.umma-global.org/pdf/gathering.pdf>

Name of delegate: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: ___ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Health Insurance Carrier: _____

Plan #: _____ Policy #: _____

Affiliation (Check all that apply): NADAM, NCVIM, UMMA, India Reunion
 SE Asia Reunion, Philippines Reunion, Other (please name) _____

Housing:

- Hotel – I will reserve and pay for my own hotel room.
- Loder Hall Dormitory (Rm. total =\$186. Roommates name: _____)

<u>Item:</u>	<u>Loder Hall or</u>	<u>hotel</u>
Registration per person – Non-refundable	35.	35.
Food per person*	105.	105.
<u>Dormitory (Total for 1 or 2 participants per room)*</u>	<u>186.</u>	<u> </u>
Total =	326.	140.

* Refundable until May 1, 2007

Payment: Make check payable to: **Trinity UMC** with \$326 for Loder Hall option, *or* \$140 if you reserve & pay for your own hotel room. PLEASE SEND TO:

Richard Vreeland, 182 Ameren Way – Apt. 752, Ballwin, MO 63021-3317, USA
 Information on registration Tel: (636) 825-6351; email: RLVreeland@sbcglobal.net