

UMMA UpDate #60, November 9, 2008
e-bulletin of the
United Methodist Missionary Association
For PDF version click to <http://www.umma-global.org>
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"Linking mission workers worldwide and moving forward"

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[1] **WELCOMED and WELCOMING** by Jim Gulley, chair

The 2008 UMMA Gathering (Oct 12-14), held in conjunction with the General Board of Global Ministries Fall Board Meeting, marks another milestone for UMMA. Before the board meeting began, GBGM staff received and acted on our inquiries and requests warmly and quickly. Staff handled our hotel reservations, sent us the advance program schedule and provided a meeting room for our Gathering at no cost. All who attended felt a genuine welcome to the GBGM Board Meeting. That welcome reflects the growing trust in our common purpose and commitment as partners in the mission of Jesus Christ through the General Board of Global Ministries.

Readers of *UMMA UpDate* should not be surprised, as this partnership between UMMA and GBGM has been developing in recent years through GBGM-sponsored luncheons at board meetings, mini-consultations with three missionary associations and two Global Mission Personnel Conferences. These provided time for consistent conversation that has now become genuine dialogue. Recruitment of active missionaries into staff positions has brought additional missionary perspectives to GBGM's program and management tables. GBGM Treasury has taken initiative to increase pension and dental benefits, secured agreement for the better-equipped Board of Pensions to manage retirement funds and created a Missionary Pension Committee that will include a missionary. To borrow Bob Dylan's line, *The times, they are a-changin'!* And I sense more change is coming.

What an historic time we live in when an African-American has just been elected to the U.S. Presidency with a clear mandate for change! When two women candidates came within reach of securing the top two political offices in our country. And the response of almost the whole world was to rejoice with us and to reclaim hope! *The times, they are a-*

changin'!

The greatest change now needs to come from you and from me. We need to examine our priorities and ask not what GBGM can do for us, but ask what we can do for others and for Christ through OUR General Board of Global Ministries. It's time to get off the sidelines and get into the game. It's time to lay aside our past preoccupations with the weaknesses of our system and start organizing ourselves at the grassroots level – the local church, our districts and our conferences and **be the change** we have been waiting for. **What type of change can we be?** Let me suggest one role that every former missionary is uniquely prepared to play in this **new mission age**.

Nearly half of all GBGM missionaries now originate from countries outside the U.S. Most have little financial support because they come from financially poor countries. I believe that many of the 1500+ former missionaries of the United Methodist Church could become principal **hospitality-providers** for this **new corps of missionaries "from everywhere to everywhere"**. When they come to itinerate in the U.S., who better to be hosts than former missionaries? We (former) missionaries thrive on cross-cultural experience! We have unique linguistic skills for listening and interpreting! We have the capacity to be crucial bridges between the Western world and the new world of missionaries from abroad. **Hospitality-providers**: that should become **our new mission. today!** Why are we uniquely abled and called to be **hospitality-providers?** The reasons are theological as well as practical.

God first loved and called us to mission. God first loved us through the people among whom we served in another country. God first showed us grace and hospitality in a foreign land through a people whose financial poverty never prevented them from receiving us, loving us and feeding us out of their sense of hospitality and generosity. Now, we are called to be **hospitality-providers** to the missionaries of this new age of mission. It is time we get organized with GBGM to **be that change**. *The times, they are a-changin'!* May God show us The Way forward, as we continue to live and serve through the Grace and Peace of Jesus the Christ.

* * *

May no person belittle someone who starts change at the grassroots and gives hope. – ed.

[2] Highlights of Annual Gathering & Business Meeting by Nan McCurdy

October 12, 3:15 pm - Chairperson, Jim Gulley called us to order in Stamford, Connecticut. Nan McCurdy was chosen as acting secretary. A total of 17 members attended with over 350 years of missionary service. They were: James Gulley, Lyda Pierce, Wendy Chun, Norma Kehrberg, Richard Schwenk, Jeff & Ellen Hoover, Helen & Jim Dwyer, Nan McCurdy, Dick Vreeland, Howard Heiner, Joyce Hill, Donald Reasoner, Phil Wingeier-Rayo, Dakin Cook, and Sara Flores.

* We were led in Devotions by Norma Kehrberg who challenged UMMA to become a more prophetic voice to our age. One aspect of this was exhibited through the witness of cross-cultural longer-term mission personnel. Norma mentioned that she feels that the GBGM has become less of a prophetic voice in the past ten years, by becoming more cautious and as a result, silent on many critical issues of our time. In her conclusion, Norma stated that God calls the GBGM to lead our church to God's vision, a world of peace and justice and world that is not divided by religions and denominations but may become one.

* We met with new **General Secretary Edward Paup** who shared his story, which includes growing up in a "church framed around missionaries", serving 12 years as bishop of the Alaska Missionary Conference and just concluding four years as a member of the GBGM Board of Directors. After describing some of the struggles in which he has been involved, the new GS said he is committed to work to improve communications at the GBGM. He hopes to lead the GBGM to work with other churches and faiths to build a table of world peace as well as work together on disaster relief and prevention and treatment of malaria, TB and HIV-AIDS. "We need to build relationships for the sake of transformation of the world, and we need people with passion and commitment". Those present shared briefly our vision of working more closely with the GBGM in mission. We also shared some concerns and indicated we would give him a proposal.

* We met with **GBGM Treasurer Roland Fernandes** who announced that pension calculations were recommended to go up \$25 per year of service in 2009 and dental coverage will increase from \$1000 to \$2000 per year. This was passed by the Directors.

* We met with **Lynda Byrd, Director** of the Office of Development, which does mission advocacy, church partnerships and donor cultivation. She sees us as partners in this! She says (and we agree) that the average United Methodist doesn't know how the UM connectional system works in mission and doesn't know that it is the best deal on the block. "We need to educate, inform and ask." Are there retired missionaries out there who could work more closely with Linda? "Less than 10% of churches support our missionaries in a covenant relationship. It is the greatest opportunity for growth". There is a webpage and a hotlink for contributing to ADVANCE projects and missionaries. <http://new.gbqm-umc.org/give/advance/>

* **Chair, Jim Gulley** gave his annual report and presented an excellent summary entitled "Increasing UMMA presence and perspective within GBGM and its Board of Directors". These will also be made available in the Update. Jim thanked many people beginning with **Fred Price** for his outstanding service as UMMA Coordinator. He also stated that UMMA is committed to work closely with the Missionary Personnel Unit (MPU) as it revises itineration procedures.

* **Dick Vreeland** presented the Treasurer's report, which was accepted. Dick has also agreed to keep membership records as he collects dues. It was agreed that Steering

Committee members will now pay dues. They had not been paying dues since in the past they spend money on other UMMA business.

* Thanks was given to Richard Schwenk for all the work getting out the *UMMA UpDate*. We pay Leslie Batten \$100 each time the Update is uploaded to the website and \$15 monthly for maintenance of the web. Gene Matthews sends out hard copies.

* **Helen Dwyer** shared her perspective about the MIR position after 18 months. She says that it is necessary to have access to the database of contact information for active missionaries and retirees in order to adequately fulfill the job. Helen will put together an outline of a revised job description for UMMA to revise and approve and send to Mission Personnel. UMMA recommends that the MIR should be a three-year term, if feasible.

* Members of the United Methodist Missionary Association (**UMMA**), Church & Community Worker Organization (**CCWO**), and National Association of Deaconess & Home Missionaries (**NADAM**) met together with some GBGM staff persons for **The Theology of Commissioning Forum** from Aug. 24-26 at Stony Point, NY. The group formulated a statement of shared understanding about commissioning. The consultation began at the conclusion of the GBGM Mission Personnel Conference.

* We agreed that UMMA would contribute \$1000 towards publishing the reflections, papers, and studies from the 2007 Mission Forum held in Evanston, IL. Mission Education / GBGM has spent money to publish other books, like John Nuessle's, and they could decide to help publish our papers. We would like to see the papers published in time for the one hundredth anniversary of the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in a special program worldwide called 2010. One of the studies for the Schools of Christian Mission will be on mission with the study book being written by Dr. Dana Robert. Perhaps the Mission Forum book could be part of the reading list.

* **We discussed and approved a revision to Article IV on Membership:** *Members shall be active, inactive or retired missionaries of the GBGM mission organizations or their predecessors who affirm the purpose and objectives of UMMA and have paid the current UMMA dues. Members have a voice and vote at meetings of UMMA Gathering.* Dick Vreeland agreed to respond to a letter inquiring into UMMA membership.

Discussion Group Reports

Expanding Missionary Presence and perspective within GBGM: Jim Gulley provided an excellent outline that we could include in an UMMA update. **Mission Forum 2009:** Norma Kehrberg reported that this group suggests we plan a mission forum to coincide with the hundredth anniversary of the World Missionary Conference in 2010 instead of 2009. We decided UMMA will send a letter to board leadership including Bishop Bruce Ough, President of the Board, Ed Paup, General Secretary and others as appropriate request the GBGM to take leadership in forming a meaningful discussion or a conference in connection with the GBGM meeting around some themes of the Edinburgh 2010 and indicate that UMMA is prepared to work with them on this. It could include a short forum in 2009 to discuss themes for a large mission forum in 2010 and to develop a committee to promote and carry out the conference. The UMMA task force currently

includes Phil Wingeier-Rayo, Lyda Pierce, Doug Wingeier, Richard Vreeland and Norma Kehrberg. Additionally, the chairs of NADAM and the CCW's are invited.

Revising Itineration Procedures: Mark Abbott and Fred Price could not be present. Jeff Hoover reported that he made an UMMA presentation at the Missionary Personnel Committee and asked for input. We are a diverse missionary community from many countries. Some had not heard of UMMA. How can we better address new missionaries, e.g., language issues? This discussion group can help Fred Price, Mission Personnel Executive for Itineration, to revise itineration procedures. Current members are Mark Abbot, Ellen and Jeff Hoover and Howard Heiner who will work with Fred Price.

Concerns for New Missionaries: Carol Seckel could not be present but expressed willingness to continue facilitating this group. We would like to encourage her to continue. Concerns of new missionaries should be shared with GBGM mission training facilitators (Glenn Rowley and Bruce Griffith).

Your Special Vision for GBGM: Howard Heiner focused on this moment in time for UMMA, the GBGM, the church and the nation (We are in transition with 70 new directors, new Secretary General, Bishop, etc; and the nation is in a transition; we are also in a crisis which brings opportunity and challenge). Like Norma, Howard suggested we focus on prophetic witness. The proceeding discussion included a suggestion that Directors be challenged to get their churches to form covenant relationships (if they don't already have one). We want to increase UMMA presence in GBGM decisions, in the staff and with the board of Directors. Howard added: "It is time to go to the new GS and say, 'This is our dream! We have discussed for too long.'"

Concern for Cuba: We wrote, discussed and edited a letter about the importance of UMCOR getting aid to Cuba. This letter went to staff and directors and UMMA UpDate readers. When a board member from El Salvador asked if any action would be taken on the statement, Sam Dixon explained what actions UMCOR was taking. GS Ed Paup encouraged writing to Congress people. Bishop Ough thanked UMMA for "keeping this important issue before" the board. Linda Bloom referred to it in an article <http://umns.umc.org>. ***[FLASH: on Nov. 4, Linda Bloom reported that The United Methodist Board of Global Ministries has been granted licenses from the U.S. government for relief work in hurricane-ravaged Cuba.]***

Nomination of officers were Lyda Pierce, Coordinator, Dick Vreeland, Treasurer, Nan McCurdy, Secretary [recently approved by the Steering Committee]. Jim Gulley remains Chairperson and Cherie White remains Vice-Chairperson. *[All recently approved by the Steering Committee.]*

Decision was made to write to Edith Gleaves (copied to Ed Paup and John Redmond) expressing our concern about the "at will" clause in all missionary letters of agreement. We have all been uncomfortable with this clause and decided to take action after a missionary who had been with the GBGM for nine and a half years was let go citing the "at will" clause. We request that all missionaries have a letter of agreement and that all missionaries are informed about an appeal procedure.

Closing: Tuesday, October 14, 2008, 3:00pm.

[3] OUR READERS WRITE

Ric, as a former Cuba missionary, I thank you for getting this message out. The Methodist Church in Cuba is dynamic and growing, but along with almost all other Cubans, the Methodists need help in recovering from the devastation recent major hurricanes. Gratefully, Betty Whitehurst

Thanks for "A Statement of Concern..." on aid to Cuba. We have done so. - Keith and Marilyn Hamilton

Thanks, Ric, Sent a letter to the two senators and our rep. - Stan E. Moore, Pilgrim Place

Good morning Richard, Thank you for this e-mail. I will write as well as pass this information along to churches in my Conference. Shalom, Judy Siaba

Richard, I have sent the Statement of Concern...about aid to Cuban churches to my congresspersons. - Carla Warnock, Missionary Health Ministry Wellness Program

Hi Jim and Ric, I am sending the Cuba Statement of Concern to Missouri's 2 senators and 9 representatives today. – Dick Vreeland, UMMA treasurer

Walt and Betty Whitehurst, retired Chile and Cuba missionaries, have published a book, *Following God's Call: Individual Volunteers In Mission*. Autographed copies are available from the authors for \$12 plus \$3 postage. Order from Walter A. Whitehurst, 1761 Princess Anne Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23456 or buy at Cokesbury bookstores (without autographs). For further information email: < WaltPungo@aol.com >

Ric, Our ministry for street children is now approved as GBGM Advance #3020792. Help transform a street child's future, see: < <http://www.aapmci.multiply.com> > - Helen L. Camarce, Missionary Code #013953-8 GBGM Area Financial Executive-Philippines

Hi Ric, Just added to my website: < web.mac.com/richarddeats >. It has information and articles about peacemaking and related topics. Take a look! PEACE, Richard Deats, Philippines 1959-1972 & Fellowship of Reconciliation 1972-2005

The job of the peacemaker is to stop war. To purify the world. To save from poverty and riches. To heal the sick. To comfort the sad. To wake up those who have not yet found God. To create joy and beauty wherever you go. To find God in everything, and in everyone. - Muriel Lester

[4] Short-term Opportunities by Alycia J. Capone, Young Adult Programs

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant. - Martin Luther King, Jr.

The youth and young adult office is accepting applications for the **US-2, Mission Intern and Summer Intern Program**. Below you will find descriptions of the programs and requirements, as well as a link to the application. Please feel free to spread the word!

US-2 Program – a two-year leadership development and mission service program for young adults ages 20-30 interested in working with faith-based organizations to engage their faith by addressing systems of injustice. College degree or equivalent life experience required. Application deadline: **December 1st, 2008** for service to begin Fall 2009 <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/connections/youth/>

Mission Intern Program – a three-year program for young adults ages 20-30 to develop leadership skills and gain exposure to global issues of social justice as they work with faith-based communities around the world. College degree or equivalent life experience required. All program costs are covered by the young adult program office. Application deadline: **December 1st, 2008** for service to begin Fall 2009 <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/connections/youth/>

Summer Intern Program – a 10 week leadership development program designed for young adults ages 18-25 to witness The United Methodist Church actively addressing social injustice within their local communities. High School diploma or GED and at least one year of work or college experience required. Application deadline: **January 1st, 2009** for service to begin Summer 2009 <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/connections/youth/>
Write Alycia J. Capone, acapone@gb-gm-umc.org

[5] **MISSIONARY MILESTONES for Two UMMA Members**

“When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life so that when you die, the world cries and you rejoice.” - White Elk (American Indian)

M. Murden Woods born July 6, 1924 in San Mateo, California, passed away September 27, 2008 in Seattle. With a M.A. Journalism from Syracuse University, Murden in 1955, served in India and Pakistan and retired from the Regional Staff of the Women's Division of the United Methodist Church in 1996. She traveled throughout the world and served in the New York, San Francisco and Denver Regions as a Methodist Women's Division Staff member. Memorial Contributions may be made to the United Methodist Church General Board of Global Ministries designated for the chapel at the Warne Baby Fold in Bareilly, India at 475 Riverside Dr. New York, N.Y. 10115 in Murden's name. Cards may be sent to Ruby M. Stewart 1535 Princeton Dr., Twin Falls, Idaho 83301.

Margery Ellen Rempel McWilliams born in El Paso, Texas, on April 16, 1921, passed away at Pilgrim Place on October 10, 2008. She served as a high school teacher in a Japanese-American relocation camp during WWII. After marriage to Bob McWilliams they set off to western Japan begin pioneer rural ministry of evangelism, Bible study, social action and volunteerism in addressing the needs of the poor and handicapped, including A-Bomb survivors. In 1977 she returned to the San Francisco Bay Area and worked as a social worker. Memorial gifts may be sent to Pilgrim Place, 660 Avery Rd., Claremont, CA 91711, designated for the Residents Health & Support Fund.

Our condolence to Cherie White and family. Her mother, **Mary-Ellen Caldwell White**, went to the Lord on October 21. Mary-Ellen and her husband David C. White were

missionaries in Chile, Cuba, Fiji Islands and Mexico, plus worked in Australia, Bolivia and Scarritt College in Nashville, TN where he taught missionaries for many years.

[6] **MISSIONARY GATHERINGS and REUNIONS**

April 17-20, 2009 Stony Point Reunion Winter Class 1967 (the 5th since 2001)
Atlanta, Georgia, Contact: Jo and Warren Harbert, Email: warren@harbertnet.com

June 26-28, 2009 Malaysia/Singapore/Indonesia Missionary Reunion at Scarritt-Bennett, Nashville, Contact: David & Shirley Wu, shirleyawu@yahoo.com

July 17-19, 2009 Liberia Reunion of former missionaries, students & friends of Methodist institutions in Liberia at Lambuth Inn, Lake Junaluska, Contact: Wilfred & Stella Boayue, Tel. 770-649-9373 wsboayue@gmail.com

September 25-28, 2009, Nigeria Missionary Reunion, UMC Canyon Camp, west of Oklahoma City. Contact: Delphine Jewell, 14901 N. Penn Ave. - Apt. 379, Oklahoma City, OK 73134; Phone: 405-753-9035; Email: edjewell@juno.com

October 20-23, 2009 Brazilian Missionary Reunion, Lake Junaluska. Contact: Jane Spencer, jane.robert@verizon.net

[7] **TREASUER'S TIPS by Richard Vreeland**

I want to thank all who have responded to my previous notes about the need to remit unpaid dues for the current year. Although our numbers are still behind those of 2007, many have now paid their dues and some have pre-paid for 2009 as well. I am also pleased to report that we now have seven members who have paid the lifetime membership fee. It is very encouraging to have so many who have expressed their support for the association in this way.

Please remember, if you haven't yet paid your dues for 2008, there is still time! Review your check register to make sure that you have sent in your payment. If you have any questions, please e-mail me for clarification: RLVreeland@sbcglobal.net. If you find that you haven't paid, please complete the following form and send in your 2008 UMMA information and dues payment. We appreciate all who support the association and the work, which we are trying to do on your behalf.

When completing the form, please print clearly, especially your e-mail address. This is the quickest way to acknowledge receipt of your check. Thank you.

[8] **THIS IS YOUR INVITATION, Join UMMA or Renew your Membership**

We hope you will include the work of UMMA in your prayers and consider one of the following **new options for membership**: If you are not yet a member, we hope you like this ***COMPLIMENTARY COPY*** of UMMA UpDate and will want to join or keep up your annual membership dues. If you have paid already, Many Thanks.

--- Please fill in this form, cut off here, and send to Richard Vreeland with 2008 dues ---

Your Name (Given, SURNAME):

Spouse's Name (Given, SURNAME):

Address:

City: State/Province: Zip: Country:

Email: Phone:

Please list the country(s) where you served as a GBGM missionary, including USA:

Annual membership dues payment options. Check one [box]:

Membership for a couple: \$40.00; Lifetime membership for a couple: \$800

Individual membership: \$25.00; Lifetime membership for an individual: \$500

Affiliate membership (no vote—just interested in mission work & Updates): \$15.00

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

Richard Vreeland
182 Ameren Way - Apt. 752
Ballwin, MO 63021-3317