

UMMA UpDate #70, May 2, 2010, Spring Board
Special issue e-bulletin of the
United Methodist Missionary Association
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"Linking mission workers worldwide and moving forward"

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Announcements:

Register now for "Rethink Mission: Reflection and Action" from October 14-17, 2010 at Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville. Come to share your story in mission and interact with participants who have collectively logged 1000 years of mission: missionaries, mission professors, pastors, international missiologists, mission staff and members of local churches. Reflecting on the past and present, participants will discuss, interact and make plans to re-energize, re-engage, and re-commit to working in God's mission. Advance registration for meals and lodging for 3 nights is \$265. For more information go to www.umma-global.net or contact Richard Vreeland, Registrar at rvreeland@sbcglobal.net. Early registration with guaranteed room reservation closes May 31, 2010. See item <6> below.

UMMA ANNUAL GATHERING, October 17-18, 2010 - Venue will shift from Scarritt Benett to a local hotel. Annual Gathering will begin at 3:00 pm and conclude on Monday at 12:00. Book your flight to depart after 2:30 pm on Monday. All are invited to attend. See item <2> for current current UMMA priorities. Contact Lyda Pierce lydapierce@earthlink.net for additional details.

<1> Eastertide Greetings and Update by Jim Gulley, UMMA chair

Eastertide greetings! Lent and Easter took on added significance for me, given my personal experience with the Haitian earthquake. I continue to thank God for my life, health and strength. Let me share two messages of hope.

The first message of hope comes because we trust in God, whom we know through Jesus, the Christ. My pre-Easter experience in Haiti included being entombed with five colleagues on the floor of the Montana Hotel for 55 hours. Four of us received the gift of a new life, bestowed upon us graciously - unearned, unmerited and with deep humility. Two of us, Rev. Sam Dixon

and Rev. Clint Rabb, claimed the fullness of Christ's resurrection for they trusted, as we all did *"that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:38-39)*. Through my tears of loss I claim the hope of the resurrection, knowing that Sam and Clint remain alive in and with Christ, our Lord. I continue to pray that Cindy Dixon and Suzanne Rabb may likewise claim that same hope.

Beyond our personal losses, let us never cease to pray for the Haitians whose lives have been totally turned literally upside down and inside out. As I am currently in Haiti, I can confirm that Haitians are now rebuilding, once again, but the road is oh so long. May we never abandon our commitment to walk with them to the end of our lives into a *new Haiti*, built together through the grace of God.

A second message of hope comes with the election of Thomas Kemper as General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). You should have received his letter of welcome to the whole missionary community, which speaks for itself in its affirmation of the centrality of missionary personnel in the life of Global Ministries, even as its role may change (see copy of the letter on the UMMA website: <http://www.umma-global.org>).

Let us live out of God's resurrecting and transforming power trusting that we all - GBGM staff, board members and missionaries alike - will step into the new future of hope and promise that God offers us as we serve faithfully together. *O God, let me, let others all do our part!*

<2> **GBGM Board of Directors Meeting** - Notes by J Dwyer, J Hill, and C Whitlatch

The GBGM Board of Director's Meeting , April 12-14, was enveloped by well thought out and inspiring worship services. Rev. Jim Gulley offered the reflection at the opening service in which Sam Dixon and Clint Rabb were remembered. The second time of worship was a service of blessing and affirmation of Thomas Kemper as the new General Secretary of GBGM. In attendance from UMMA were, in addition to Jim Gulley, Joyce Hill, Cathy Whitlatch, Jim Dwyer and Fred Price.

GBGM President's Address

Bishop Bruce Ough reflected on Matthew's resurrection story about the women who were at the tomb. He commented that the women holding onto Jesus' feet "were trying to get a grip on reality..." Bishop Ough feels this is a good image for GBGM – we need to hold onto Jesus as we go through the transition, transformation, trauma, and tragedy. Furthermore he urged GBGM to truly lead United Methodists by being a resource to individuals, conferences, churches, and institutions already in mission. Full text of Bishop Ough's Address: http://gbgm-umc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=5721

General Secretary's Report

During his address, Thomas Kemper commented that he is strongly committed to the four United Methodist focus areas. Kemper also called for:

- (1) United Methodist mission culture that is spiritually connected and operationally collaborative;
- (2) a vital, Wesleyan mission theology that becomes the foundation for our strategic mission plans;
- (3) an international, ethnically diverse community of effective, well-trained and well-supported missionaries, assigned in collaboration with mission partners around the world; and
- (4) ecumenical mission.

Full text of Thomas Kemper's Address: http://gbgm-umc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=5724

Task Force Reports

Reports were given by the chairpersons of the Governance and Implementation Task Forces set up after the 2009 Operational Audit of the General Board of Global Ministries. The Implementation Task Force reported its progress on the 216 recommendations. The overall Governance Task Force's final report given by chairperson Mrs. Inelda Gonzales was "received" but not adopted by the Directors. Mrs. Gonzales reported a lack of consensus on level of representation the Women's Division level of representation on GBGM's Board of Directors and on the draft mission statement. Some perceived a conflict of interest in Mrs. Gonzales serving both as President of the WD Board of Directors and as Chair of the Governance Task Force that was to decide WD representation.

The draft mission statement prepared by the Mission Development Committee (MDC), with input from Dr. Phil Wingeier-Rayo, was also "received" and referred to the Executive Committee for further action. Valerie Stultz, MDC chair, celebrated the process but noted that with the dissolution of MDC the Executive Committee will be responsible for deciding on the mission statement process in the future. There was much discussion about what was needed in the theology of mission statement. The planning functions of the Mission Development Committee were also transferred to the Executive Committee.

See Elliott Wright's review of the board meeting: http://gbgm-umc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=5733

New GBGM organizational structure approved has five major divisions:

Administration and Treasurer

Development and Communications

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

Mission and Evangelism (M&E) with three major sub-units:

+ Missionary Services + Mission Relations + Justice and Discipleship

Women's Division (WD)

In closed session (elected board members only) the Personnel Committee nominated and Board members confirmed the following staff in their new positions:

Rev. Cynthia Fierro Harvey, Deputy General Secretary of the **United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)**. Bio can be found here: http://gbgmumc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=5723

Rev. Jorge L.F. Domingues, Deputy General Secretary for **Mission and Evangelism** unit. Bio can be found here: http://gbgm-umc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=5693

Rev. Bruce Griffith, Associate General Secretary, **Missionary Services** sub-unit, Mission and Evangelism unit.

Ms. Jerald S. McKie (Jeri) continues to serve as interim Associate General Secretary of the **Mission Relationships** sub-unit until permanent assignments can be made to positions.

The **Justice and Discipleship** sub-unit of Mission and Evangelism is currently unfilled.

Four Areas of Focus - Groups were formed from the final Mission Development Committee meeting on Tuesday afternoon to review GBGM's work on the Four Areas of Focus which originated from the Connectional Table (2008 General Conference). Joyce Hill attended the session on ministry with the poor; Jim Gulley, global health (UMCOR); Jim Dwyer, congregational development; and Cathy Whitlatch, leadership development.

Meeting with GS Kemper, staff and directors

UMMA members met with General Secretary Thomas Kemper, cabinet and other staff members, and several directors for approximately 1-½ hours following the close of the Director's meeting. UMMA had several issues to address which included:

- finding a place at the table for missionary community;
- the desire to have the MIR role situated in the office of the General Secretary,
- a desire to coordinate and with GBGM cooperation to hold bi-annual Mission Forums,
- the need to have a data base of the whole missionary community (active, inactive, and retired) as persons who are interested in GBGM, appreciated by GBGM, and who can be advocates in their Annual Conferences as well as agents of hospitality for visiting missionaries;
- a new look at missionary pensions and health benefits,
- and the different categories of mission service.

In the future, UMMA has been asked to work with the office of Mission and Evangelism to draw up the agenda at least 30 days prior to the meeting so that all will have a chance to study the needs. Thomas Kemper stated that he thinks we should always be able to find a 1-½ hour block of time to meet at each board meeting.

Other notes

As a long-time observer of Board meetings on behalf of UMMA, Jim Dwyer found the spirit of the meeting to be more positive than any previous meeting he has attended. Although some found it off-putting, the fact that the Directors were able to openly express the sense of distrust of one another which has often remained unexpressed without getting angry with one another can also be seen as a first step toward a new level of cooperation and collaboration among the directors and of the Board with the church

Another remarkable aspect of the meeting was the presence of three representatives of large United Methodist local churches whose full-time mission directors are part of an association-information of persons in similar positions across the country and across denominations. The three were Jonathan Bell, director of mission ministry at the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection <www.cor.org>, Leawood, Kansas; the Rev. Lynette Fields, executive director of servant ministries at St. Luke's United Methodist Church <www.st.lukes.org>, Orlando, Florida; and Jeff Jernigan, chair of the Global Ministries team of the North Georgia Annual Conference and a leader in McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church <www.meachernumc.org>, Powder Springs, Georgia. This seemed to be directly related to Bishop Ough's vision of GBGM as increasingly a mission resource rather than sole mission agency of the church. Lynette's first comment was one often heard in various mission settings: "I started in mission as a US-2."

Those who have followed previous Mission Personnel Committee meetings and the reporting of missionary statistics will find Bruce Griffith's new formulation of interest.

Statistical Report on Mission Personnel (retyped from handouts)

Current statistics as reported by AGS Bruce Griffith (Missionary Services unit) to the Mission Development Committee are now divided into 4 "tracks" (This was the first time the report was presented in this new format. A revised version was presented to the Board as a whole, as follows.) *Note below* = some are commissioned in multiple categories*

Commissioned personnel

Track 1 Full or shared-salary support from GBGM

197 Total "GBGM" missionaries (175 International + 22 U.S.)

50* Church and Community Workers

- 14 Mission Interns
- 22 Workers in National Plan for Hispanic and Latino Ministries
- 13 US-2

Track 2 Salary-support from placement

- 3 Missionary Associates
- 4* Red Bird Missionaries (no salary support)

Non-commissioned personnel

Track 3

- 19 International (full salary support)
- 0 International (shared salary support)
- 1 US (full salary support)

Track 4*

- 33 Alaska missionaries (moving costs paid by GBGM; missionary Advance numbers issued)
- 41 Community developers (initial grant provided)
- 317 Persons in Mission (grants to partners, e.g. Autonomous Churches, Central Conferences)
- 39 Red Bird Associates (missionary Advance numbers issued)

Editors note: The success of the meeting with GBGM was enhanced by two preliminary Skype meetings of UMMA administrators on March 24th and March 26th, including Dick Vreeland, Lyda Pierce, Jim Dwyer and Jim Gulley participating in first meeting. Dick, Lyda, Jim D., Jim G. Phil Wingeier-Rayo, Cathy Whitlatch and Nan McCurdy participating in the second.

<3> New General Secretary of GBGM Has a Global Background

NEW YORK (UMNS)—Through his United Methodist connections, Thomas Kemper, 53, is a citizen of the world. His passport is German, but he spent two years managing a youth hostel and working with Vietnamese boat people in London. He took up residence in an African village to do research for a master's thesis and spent nearly a decade as a missionary in Brazil. On March 15, he became the top executive of United Methodist Board of Global Ministries.

<4> Welcome Letter to Thomas Kemper as New General Secretary by Jim Gulley

Dear Thomas, Your letter to the missionary community is most welcome! In spite of the fact that as an "inactive GBGM missionary" I must receive these official communications second-hand, the Methodist Connection did not fail me!

Thank you for connecting so effectively with the missionary community at this the beginning of your tenure. I know your message will be well-received and will encourage all engaged in mission service to redouble their efforts to be faithful servants of Christ.

As we UMMA leaders have discussed the upcoming board meeting, we would like to suggest that you consider the resumption of the luncheon meeting with UMMA leaders on Monday, the opening day of the board meeting, from 12:00-1:30pm. This is the time we have been meeting for several years. Although time is limited, knowing how pressed you will be for time, this brief meeting would be a great start to our working together. We can discuss what other venues might work best for the future. We look forward to the upcoming board meeting and to the work that we will do together as an integral part of the life and work of Global Ministries. - Grace & peace, Jim

<5> UMMA Representing Missionaries for 15 Years by Richard Schwenk, editor

In 1995, Robert Harman, last Associate General Secretary of the now extinct World Division, suggested to me that missionaries should get organized so they would have a unified voice. Under the re-structuring plan of the GBGM in 1996, there would no longer be Missionary Consultations each year with representatives from various regions who were on home assignment. As Missionaries in Residence, my wife, Caring, and I compiled the first long email list of missionaries so we could more easily gather their ideas and objectives of what became UMMA. The response was overwhelming with almost 500 paying dues of \$25 each in 1996.

Now, 15 years later, our missionary force and finances have dwindled. UMMA is making great progress, but needs more membership support. A major cost is transportation subsidies for our representatives to attend meetings. They volunteer their own funds to make up the difference for transport, food and other costs. So your help in paying your dues is greatly appreciated.

Membership dues for 2010 are being received now.

----- 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: _____
Lifetime=\$500., Individual Member = \$25., Couple = \$40, Affiliate Memberships = \$15.
Please make checks payable to: "UMMA" and mail to: **Richard Vreeland, 182 Ameren Way – Apt. 752, Ballwin, MO 63021-3317, USA**

<6> RETHINK MISSION: Reflection & Action by Norma Kehrberg

From Edinburgh 1910– 2010, Mission Engagement Past, Present and Future
Scarritt Bennett Center, 1008 19th Avenue, Nashville, TN 37212

Register early. Numbers are limited. Don't miss out.

Site: Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville, historic seat of missionary and Christian education training

Date: Begins Thursday Evening, October 14, 2010
Registration October 14, 2010 afternoon
Closes on Sunday, October 17, 2010 at 12 noon

Early Registration Cost: \$265—Includes three nights lodging, nine meals and registration fee.

Registration Form: Available at www.umma-global.org/pdf/rethink10.pdf
or at the end of this newsletter, or contact Richard Vreeland, Registrar, (636) 825-6351
rvreeland@sbcglobal.net

For more details on speakers and topics contact Norma Kehrberg, Convener
kehrbergn001@hawaii.rr.com or click to the GBGM website:
<http://gbgm-umc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=5737>

Plan now and Register to attend

Your registration and deposit is needed in order to complete arrangements at Scarritt Bennett Center. Print a registration form at the end of this newsletter and send now.

Early registration with guaranteed room reservation closes May 31, 2010.

Cost: Early registration fees are:

Plan A: No TV or internet access (available in library) **\$265**
90 rooms available, reserved on first come, first served

Plan B: Ten rooms reserved (includes TV and internet access) **\$315**

Commuter Rate: Registration and meals **\$150**

After May 31, 2010, add \$25

Refunds, minus \$20, available until June 30, 2010

Each room is a single room (one twin-size bed) with a shared bathroom. Cost includes lodging for three nights, nine meals (beginning with dinner on October 14, 2010) and registration. Transportation from Airport: *InShuttle* service to Scarritt Bennett is \$17 round trip (2009 fees). Self reserve online at www.inshuttle.com or call the shuttle service at 615-255-3519.

----- Please fill out, cut off here and send -----

YOUR REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____ City : _____ State : ____ ZIP: _____

Indicate if you need consideration for ground level sleeping room: yes []

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Health Insurance Carrier: _____

Plan #: _____ Policy #: _____

Accommodations: (Check one): [] Plan A [] Plan B [] Commuter plan

If desired, please list name of shared suite participant _____

Payment: Make check payable to: **UMMA. SEND THIS FORM and CHECK TO:**

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