

MAY 2007

www.cnumc.org

# Connection

California-Nevada Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church



## Register now for Annual Conference 2007!

Annual Conference is fast approaching! The opening worship service and plenary session of the Annual Conference Session will be Wednesday, June 20 at 4:15 p.m. Adjournment follows the closing worship on Sunday, June 24. But things start well before that: the Clergy Session will begin at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 19 in the Sheraton Hotel, and the Laity Session and District Meetings will take place Wednesday, June 20 beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the Convention Center Ballroom.

Here's what's new: The closing worship on Sunday has been restored to the schedule after several years of Saturday adjournments. Also new this year is a combined meeting hall – the spaces formerly known as Hall A and Hall B have been merged into one large conference space in which both plenary sessions and worship services will be held.

Like last year, this year's schedule also includes a Conference Mission Faire and Picnic. The venue is new, however. The Thursday evening

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### Also Inside

- Update on situation in the Philippines
- Alamo UMC discovers new ministry
- *Lazarus* at Half Moon Bay's Community UMC
- Memoirs Committee



## Walking in the Spirit

Bishop Beverly J.  
Shamana

## Bishop's Itinerary

**Council of Bishops,  
Myrtle Beach, SC  
April 29-May 4**

**Ordinands'  
Retreat,  
Auburn, CA  
May 15-16**

**California-Nevada  
Foundation Board  
Meeting  
May 17**

**Connectional  
Table,  
Atlanta, GA  
May 21-25**

**Cabinet  
May 29-June 1**

**Rocky Mountain  
Annual Conference  
Session (Preach),  
Denver, CO  
June 13**

**California-Nevada  
Annual Conference  
Session,  
Sacramento, CA  
June 19-25**

# The Other Brother

## DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:

Charles Wesley often gets second billing when compared to his older and more acclaimed brother John. But this is the year of celebrating the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley, composer and theologian in his own right. In his honor, the final Sunday worship at Annual Conference will feature a Cantata built on poetry and biblical interpretation of Charles Wesley: "The Good Samaritan: Through the Eyes of the Victim." This creative musical composition is the loving product of Mary K. Jackson who was commissioned for this work in 1995 for the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wesley Methodist Church in Singapore. It was performed at Victoria Concert Hall and Wesley Methodist Church. Ours may be the first performance in the United States since the work's completion.

Our music leaders at our June Annual Conference will be the Global Praise team led by S.T. Kimbrough, Jr., whose long musical tenure with the General Board of Global Ministries has filled his soul and others with the hymns of Charles Wesley, his own original compositions, and edited liturgy used worldwide.

As Editor of this Cantata, Kimbrough's introductory notes speak to our contemporary culture and the plight of victims who are still left by the side of the road today with no one to hear their story. "Wesley's telling of the story remains timely," Kimbrough writes, "for he reminds us that victims of violence in every age deserve our care, love, and justice. Only in this way can violence be overcome."

After my recent visit to San Quentin's death row just before Holy Week, I am more deeply moved by the inmates who lack proper legal representation, are seeking appeal to establish positive proof of their guilt, have few visitors, and do not know Jesus Christ. Who is their Good Samaritan?

Annual Conference will present many opportunities to affirm our care and intervention for justice and mercy through reports from the Philippines Fact-Finding Team on the Extra-Judicial Killings, Volunteers in Missions, West Angola Partnership, Global Mission Outreach, Religion and Race, United Methodist Women, youth, children, and other ministries that unite us.

I invite you to join the combined choir that will present the Charles Wesley Cantata on Sunday morning, June 24 at the Sacramento Convention Center. The rehearsal schedule and place is available through the CCOM office at the Conference Center. The text is from a series of poems on the Good Samaritan that were left unpublished at the time of Wesley's death. I know we will be blessed through this music offering that will serve as The Word on that morning.

As I think of the brotherly bond that enabled God to use their gifts from our Creator to change the world for Jesus Christ, I give thanks for the sisterly bond with my sister Pat who introduced me to a Wesley chorus that I shared with this Conference four years ago at John's anniversary celebration. Praise God for the gifts within us that God uses to make disciples and transform the world for Jesus Christ.

*The love of God, the love of God,  
How the Wesley brothers preached the love of God,  
John would preach and Charles would sing, it was a most unusual thing,  
how the Wesley brothers preached the love of God.*

YOUR SISTER AND BISHOP IN CHRIST,

*Beverly J. Shamana*

## Annual Conference 2007

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gathering will feature a picnic and celebration of our Conference missions with displays at Capitol Park, located across the street from the Convention Center. There is information on line about how to register for the picnic.

Annual Conference Session registration (and housing) is done on line by visiting [www.cnumc.org](http://www.cnumc.org). Place your cursor on "Annual Conference" in the green navigation bar at the top of the Home Page, then click on "Annual Conference Session" in the dropdown list.

Paper registration is also available. Download the necessary forms from [www.cnumc.org](http://www.cnumc.org). If you do not have access to the Internet please contact your local church or District Office. If they cannot assist you, you may obtain the forms by contacting Cate Monaghan in the Conference Office at (916) 374-1529.

Laity and clergy are invited to involve their congregations in collecting cell phones, eye glasses and hearing aids, as well as musical instruments for school bands and music programs in New Orleans. All items (except the cell phones) should be in working condition. The boxes for the collection of these items will be located just inside the door of the convention hall Annual Conference Room (Halls A & B combined). There will also be an opportunity to donate blood.

Each year, Annual Conference attendees are invited to bring an offering designated to support the ministries and missions of the California-Nevada United Methodist connection, putting our faith into action. This year the Conference Offering will support our Angola Partnership and our ministry of solidarity for victims of the extrajudicial killings in the Philippines. Bulletin inserts are available on line.

At Annual Conference Session this year delegates and reserve delegates will be elected to represent our Annual Conference at the General and Jurisdictional Conferences in 2008. Information regarding the nominating and election process is available on the Conference website.

All displays at Annual Conference will be set up at the Conference Mission Faire and Picnic on Thursday, June 21. The only exceptions will be Cokesbury, Igniting Ministries, Bolivian Handcrafts, and the book sale sponsored by the Commission on Archives. Display forms and information are available on the Conference website.

Reports and Recommendations are available on the Conference website. It will be necessary for all conference attendees to bring the Reports and Recommendations to the Annual Conference Session for our legislative work. You may request that they be mailed to you only if you have no way of getting them from the website. Please contact Cate Monaghan at (916) 374-1529 for assistance.

### Proposed ACS Recommendations

#### Item No.

- A "Our 2008 Shared Ministry Budget"
- B Nominations
- 01 Recommendation Concerning "Net Total Paid"
- 02 Local Church Apportionment Study
- 03 Local Church Apportionments
- 04 Location of the 2009 Annual Conference Session
- 05 Conference & District Advanced Specials
- 06 Camping and Retreat Ministries Vision Fund
- 07 Standing Rules: Communications Commission
- 08 Standing Rules: Conf. Board of Camping and Retreat Ministries
- 09 Incorporate the Conf. Board of Camping and Retreat Ministries
- 10 Standing Rules: Conf. Committee on Children and Poverty
- 11 Standing Rules: Division V
- 12 Standing Rules: Division III
- 13 Support of Annual Association of Conference Lay Leaders
- 14 Withdrawal of 2006 Recommendations
- 15 Petition to General Conference: Authority of Deacons
- 16 Petition to General Conf.: Annual Audit of Local Church
- 17 Open Membership for GLBT Persons in all Churches
- 18 Petition to General Conf.: Prayer & Support for those Caught in War
- 19 A Call for an End to the U.S. War and Occupation in Iraq
- 20 A Call for Peacemaking
- 21 The U.S. and Iran: Diplomacy, not War
- 22 War & Peace with Iran, North Korea and the World
- 23 Conscientious Objection and Military Service
- 24 Prisoner Observance
- 25 Universal Healthcare
- 26 GCCUIC Support of the National Council of Churches (NCC)
- 27 Older Adult Ministries
- 28 Substance Abuse Prevention Program
- 29 Adult Equality – Part A
- 30 Adult Equality – Part B
- 31 Affordable Housing/Housing Ministry
- 32 Standing Rule for Div.1.F.3.a
- 33 Standing Rule for Div. IX.
- 34 Standing Rule for Div. II
- 35 2008 Retired Clergy Rental/Housing Exclusion
- 36 2008 "Past-Service" (Pre-1982 Service) Pension Rate

Petition: Opposition to the National Endowment for Democracy

#### The following resources are available ONLY on the [cnumc.org](http://www.cnumc.org) website:

ACS Offering Bulletin Inserts  
 Display Request Forms and locations  
 Sacramento info  
 Meal Event Request Form  
 Power Point Requirements  
 Preliminary Schedule

#### Also available as paper copy:

2008 Conference Budget (also in First Day Packets)  
 Child Care Request Form  
 Youth and Young Adult Registration Forms  
 late Reports & Recommendations

## International Ecumenical Conference on the Philippines

*Ed. Note: The following is a part of our continuing series on the extra-judicial killings in the Philippines, which is part of our 2007 Annual Conference Offering. Our Conference Offering is one of the many ways we put our faith into action. The Conference has formed a legislative action group on this issue, which is working on legislation to limit U.S. funding if the human rights situation doesn't change (as per Senator Boxer's comments). The author encourages us all to write to our Congressional representatives about this issue.*

**By Rev. Pam Fine**

*Arbuckle UMC*

Bishop Shamana dozed as our van traveled along a dark highway on the island of Mindanao, Philippines. It wasn't until after we were stopped at a roadside checkpoint that she awoke to see a grim-looking soldier with an M-16 rifle peering into our vehicle. But she didn't make a sound (we were so proud!). And eventually, we went on our way without incident.

This was one of many events that taught our fact-finding team the dangerous realities of life in the Philippines. We had come at the request of our Conference's Filipino American Caucus, and at the behest of the Annual Conference, which passed Resolution #58 at ACS 2006 protesting the rising number of killings, and declaring solidarity with those who struggle for human rights in the Philippines.

Our work began in meetings with key Filipino human rights workers such as Sharon Ruiz-Duremdes of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), Marie Hilao-Enriquez of Karapatan (the leading Filipino human rights organization), and Edre Olalia, president of the International Association of People's Lawyers. Later at Union Theological Seminary, we met with about 30 "internal refugees" – people who had lost loved ones, either by kidnapping or murder – and now fear for their own lives. The school was providing sanctuary.

Our group of 17 soon became three expeditions, traveling to Central Luzon, the island of Visayas, and Mindanao. The stories we heard were all different, and all the same. Human rights workers, journalists, religious workers – including United Methodist pastor Isaias Santa Rosa – killed. Union organizers ambushed. Mothers' sons, disappeared. Husbands executed, while wives pushed the muzzles of rifles away from their children's faces. In the village of Salay, the Mindanao group was led to the home of Mr. Dalmacio Gindanao (Tatay Daki). In a tiny room with a cooking fire on a bier at one end, we were shown where Daki was eating supper when a stranger walked in and shot him dead. (Daki was a member of the "Misamis" farmers' cooperative.) We put our fingers in the bullet holes that punctured the floor.

Some 830+ people have been executed in the Philippines since the start of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's administration in 2001. Once Mrs. Arroyo announced her staunch support for the American War on Terror, U.S. military aid to her country increased tenfold. But it appears that Mrs. Arroyo sees the enemy among her own people. Internal and external inquiries point to the Philippines military as the perpetrators of the extrajudicial killings. Representing the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, Mr. Philip Alston was investigating the situation when we arrived. He announced his conclusions publicly – the Philippines military is involved in the violence, and Mrs. Arroyo must stop them, and hold them accountable.

In March, shortly after our team came home, an International Conference on Human Rights in the Philippines was held in Washington, D.C., co-sponsored by Church World Service and the General Board of Church & Society. Attending from our team were the Rev. Michael Yoshii, Chair of the Asian American Ministries Caucus, and I. The event joined U.S. advocates for Philippine human rights with nine human rights advocates from the Philippines, many of whom we had met during our visit. Much of the event was spent hearing their profound testimonies. Bishop Solito Toquero of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines condemned the travesty of justice. Ms. Athea Penalosa

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**Among the members of the Philippines delegation who came to Washington, D.C. for the International Conference on Human Rights in the Philippines is Bishop Solito Toquero of The United Methodist Church. Photo by: Jon Melegrito, GBGM**

## Conference on the Philippines

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of the Children's Rehabilitation Center in Quezon City spoke of traumatized children. Ms. Amirah Ali Lidasan, a Muslim representing the Moro-Christian Peoples' Alliance, shared how her people are being pushed off their ancestral lands by multinational corporations, with military support. We also heard from Jim Winkler, General Secretary of the Board of Church & Society, who insisted the Bush Administration shares the blame. The Rev. Randy Day, General Secretary of the Board of Global Ministries, called human rights in the Philippines a top priority, declaring, "We will stand in solidarity together."

Encouraged by members of the California-Nevada Asian American Ministries Caucus, Senator Barbara Boxer had made the Philippines crisis the subject of her inaugural hearing as new Chair of the Senate Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, which began as the conference was ending. Two members of the Philippines delegation spoke: Marie Hilao-Enriquez of Karapatan and the Rev. Eliezer Pascua, Bishop of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. In particular, Bishop Pascua asked Congress to help: (1.) end the killings and other human rights abuses; (2.) bring those responsible to justice; and (3.) force the Philippines government to comply with international human rights agreements. Senator Boxer made sure the Bishop's requests were on record.

When the Senator suggested that future aid to the

Philippines should correspond to human rights improvements, a testifying State Department representative said he thought such a policy would be "counter-productive." The U.S. has provided significant security and anti-terrorism aid to the Philippines, including \$70 million to fight "insurgents" and hundreds of millions for equipment from 2004 to 2006 alone.

The Senator permitted distribution of a statement by the Philippines ambassador outlining President Arroyo's planned response to her country's tragedy. The delegates from the Philippines also distributed a report called "Let the Stones Cry Out," documenting violations that have occurred to date. (A copy of the report is available for download at [http://new.gbgm-umc.org/media/pdf/Let The Stones Cry Out HR Report lres.pdf](http://new.gbgm-umc.org/media/pdf/Let%20The%20Stones%20Cry%20Out%20HR%20Report%20lres.pdf) )

A gratifying moment amid the week's activities came when the conference learned that the Arroyo government was sending Filipino police and military to the Boxer hearing – but when the Senator called their visit an attempt to intimidate her witnesses, and did not allow them to attend.

Ultimately, the conference and the hearing brought all who attended a measure of hope for the future in the Philippines. However, it should be noted that on March 13, as we talked in Washington, D.C., word arrived that Mrs. Siche Bustamante-Guindinao, the daughter-in-law of Tatay Daki, had been gunned down in front of her family in the village of Salay.

### 2007 Conference Camps scheduled

Conference Youth and Camping coordinator Colin Kerr-Carpenter has announced the tentative dates for the 2007 camping program options for Lodestar and Monte Toyon Campgrounds:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Camp</i>	<i>Site</i>	<i>Director</i>
June 22-25, 2007	Camp Explore	Lodestar	Floyd Quenzer
July 15-21, 2007	Super Camp	Lodestar	Don Lee
July 22-28, 2007	Super Kid Camp	Lodestar	Sara Chisum
July 29-Aug. 4, 2007	Lodestar Senior High Camp	Lodestar	M. Stephenson
July 15-20, 2007	Toyon Kids Camp	Monte Toyon	Jennifer Irvine-Goto
July 22-27, 2007	Camp Quest	Monte Toyon	Jason Tesarz

#### *Other Youth and Children Camps*

June 24-29, 2007	Alive Now	Donner Mine	Kris Marshall
August 5-11, 2007	Senior High Backpack Camp	Tahoe area	To be named

For more information, go to [www.cnumccamp.org](http://www.cnumccamp.org), or contact Colin Kerr-Carpenter, Conference Coordinator of Youth and Camping Ministries ([colinkc@calnevumc.org](mailto:colinkc@calnevumc.org)).

# Alysandre's 'sting' operation helps Nothing But Nets

By Jeneane Jones

Director of Communications

The kids in Alysandre's confirmation class figured a special Sting Operation would be a good way to get their attention – the adults. So she and friends decided that instead of a speech during the morning worship service, it would be better to act out what happens to millions of children each day on the continent of Africa. They're stung, but not by cute, fresh faced, 11- and 12- year olds.

At night, mosquitoes invade the village homes of children, sometimes as many as 100 at a time, according to entomology reports. That's 100 times a night a child faces death, stung by disease ridden mosquitoes that will most likely shorten their lives.

Fourteen-year-old Alysandre didn't think that was fair. "A lot of them are children who don't even know their potential yet. It just seems so sad that all these people are dying. They're like me. They deserve a chance."

Alysandre's confirmation class determined to give some children in Africa a chance. "My mom read about the Nothing But Nets campaign in the Conference paper and told us about it." Alysandre's mom, the Rev. Janette Saavedra at Trinity UMC in Mountain View, read in the *Instant Connection* about the campaign to distribute insecticide treated bed nets to families in Africa. The nets protect families against malaria, a preventable disease that infects nearly 500 million people each year. It is spread mostly at night by mosquitoes carrying the disease. Bed nets can prevent malaria transmission by 50%.



**Mountain View-Trinity UMC confirmation class. Back row (from left) – Nemia Mark Qoro, Isei Daveta Jr., Mando Saavedra, Ashley Naqasi. Front row (from left) – Grace Daveta, Talei Maravou, Torika Romula, Alysandre Saavedra**



Saavedra says her confirmation class latched onto the idea of joining the Nothing But Nets campaign as a project for their confirmation class – a way to expand the group's sense of community.

Her 11-year old son Mando says it's no big thing that the kids he's trying to save are on the other side of the world. "Even though they are on another continent they're still people and they have lives just like us, maybe a little different. So I feel that it is very important to help people in need."

So on that Sunday a few weeks ago, Alysandre's and Mando's confirmation class decked out in giant-sized mosquito costumes and netting, and went about the task of stinging some in the church seats and protecting the lucky ones with a net. They became the first church in the California-Nevada Annual Conference to join the United Methodist Church and a number of other organizations, including the United Nations Foundation and NBA Basketball, to raise money for the purchase, distribution and education about the proper use of bed nets.

"It's just ten dollars a net. That's all it takes," says the older Saavedra. "Every 30 seconds a child dies from malaria. That means that in the time I've been talking to you, four children have died." The children's sobering message and the stinging session had the desired response at Trinity. The congregation has decided to designate the Easter Offering specifically for the Nothing But Nets campaign.

More information about Nothing But Nets is available through the Conference website, [www.cnumc.org](http://www.cnumc.org). Click on "Nothing But Nets," shown under "Quick Links" on the left side of the Home Page.

Nothing But Nets "Boot Camps" are being planned around the Conference. The camps are designed as youth leadership training opportunities – teaching youth how to be informed advocates about malaria education. There are also some exciting opportunities to produce videos, web pages and more at national Nothing But Nets events. Call Jeneane Jones in the Conference Communications Office at (916) 374-1518 for more information about Nothing But Nets Boot Camps.

# San Ramon Valley UMC discovers a new ministry

**By Jeneane Jones**

*Director of Communications*

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission at Alamo-San Ramon Valley UMC figure they've sent nearly 100 people to the Gulf Coast since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the region nearly two years ago. When the latest team heads back for trip number 11 in a few weeks, they'll not only be helping rebuild homes, they'll be taking something along to help all future teams.

Tools can weigh down a team. Loading them in with luggage is not always the most efficient way to get them onto the site. Buying them on location can be costly. So UMVIM coordinator Chris Lotz has found another option. "My friend Warren and I are contractors. We know that when a team has all the tools they need, it raises their productivity." So Lotz and Alamo UMC created a tool trailer, and a non-profit company that already has an order to build 25 just like them. "It has tools for a team of 15 workers – enough to build a house from the ground up."

Lotz says they came upon the idea to create trailers for the volunteers after the first few trips. They've made some adjustments to the early prototype trailer – making it easy for the smallest of SUVs to pull it. And each trailer is outfitted with GPS to making tracking it easy.

Lotz says the beauty of the trailers is their versatility. Any place where disaster can strike, the trailers are valuable commodities. "We want to build five or six and loan

them out throughout the Conference. When and if we have a disaster – quake, floods – we want them to be ready." In the meantime, Lotz says there's much need for them around the Conference now for teams working in the

area. He wants churches planning trips to the Gulf region to know they can have a trailer there on site with everything they need. He says it's been hard getting churches in Cal-Nevada to respond to him. "We're available to speak about our trips and the tool trailer ministry. We just want to get the word out." Lotz says the Mississippi Annual Conference ordered 25 of the trailers to use for teams there. Unfortunately, the need exists and Lotz says his trailers are going to be needed for a long time to come.

"In Pas Christian, before the storm the town had 8,000 homes. There are 500 homes now. The need is amazing. Sad, but amazing."

To learn more about Lotz's tool trailers visit [www.Eforrt.org](http://www.Eforrt.org). EFORRT stands for Equipment for Recovery Teams. Lotz can be reached at (925) 872-3187, e-mail [Cj\\_lotz@hotmail.com](mailto:Cj_lotz@hotmail.com). The Alamo UMC team left for the Gulf region April 29. They will be working in Biloxi, Mississippi until May 5.



## What 'One Great Hour of Sharing' can yield

**By Sue King**

*Conference UMVIM Director*

*Note: After one of the worst winter freezes on record, California farm workers continue to struggle to make ends meet. In March, at the request of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, the Bush Administration issued a federal disaster declaration for 12 affected counties including Tulare, Kern, Imperial and Fresno. Churches remain a major player in resourcing food banks to provide for those in need.*

LINDSAY, CA — Rev. Karen Stoffers and Sally McDonald, Interim Director of the Lindsay-Strathmore Coordinating Council, alternately reached into an 18" X 24" cardboard box. They pulled out 11 one-pound

bags of rice, spaghetti or beans, 13 cans of tomatoes, soup or fruit, a jar of peanut butter, and a bottle of oil, a bottle of chili powder and two dozen individual-sized packets of salt.

"A family of seven is eligible to receive two of these boxes every two weeks," said Sally. "You can see it is meant only as a supplement to the family groceries."

The two weeks of night time freezing temperatures had taken their toll on the citrus industry in the Fresno area. Small towns in the Central Valley like Lindsay, whose economy is built upon citrus, grapes, and other produce, were sent into a financial crisis. The field workers were laid off, but the rent and utility

bills still arrived. Landlords' mortgage payments to the banks were still due. Café owners, gas station owners, and grocery store owners had products to sell, but no one could buy them – and their mortgage payments were still due. The Lindsay-Strathmore Coordinating Council, a food and clothing bank started by the local Ministerial Association, served 400 families in one day in January: the number typically served in one month.

The members of Lindsay UMC and Rev. Karen Stoffers knew that immediate relief was needed to hold the community together. Without money, agricultural workers would have to take their children out of school to look for

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# Lazarus rising at Half Moon Bay:

## A musical by the church's nationally-known playwright in residence

By Bruce Pettit

Conference Communications Committee

For the third year in a row, Community UMC (CUMC) of Half Moon Bay produced *Lazarus*, a musical written by Gail Erwin – director of its children's and youth choirs, and a nationally accomplished playwright of 30 plays (20 with music).

*Lazarus*, a musical for mature audiences, was presented at Community UMC in March. The Rev. Larry Thomas had a cameo role. Most of the 25 *Lazarus* cast members were from CUMC. But in an ecumenical outreach, two were from the Mariners Community Church of Half Moon Bay and some were from the town's theatre group. Ed Dee, a frequent attendee at CUMC and well-known guitarist in the Bay Area, wrote other *Lazarus* songs and was its music director. Erwin says she currently has no publisher for *Lazarus* but is interested in other churches doing it.

Many of the CUMC youth choir director's earlier plays were performed by the Omaha (Nebraska) Theatre Company for Young People, where she was playwright-in-residence from 1981 to 1996. Thus most of her work is for children and young people. *Thumbelina*, from the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale, toured nationally in 1995 with that company. *Little Lord Fauntleroy* premiered in Omaha in 1993 and later was performed at Coastal Repertory Theatre in Half Moon Bay. CUMC of Half Moon Bay performed her Christmas play *Frankincense on the Grill* in 2004. Erwin now lives in Moss Beach.

The Gospel of John, Chapter 11, tells the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead – gossip about which perhaps led most directly to the crucifixion. The temple in

Jerusalem was governed by entrenched elders, frightened by new voices and resistant to new teachings. The final authority was Rome. This was the world Jesus challenged. Erwin says the question of the play is: Who will follow Jesus? Those who followed him were surrounded by intrigue and power struggles.

Another serious adult musical, *White Woman's Blues* – about love, friendship, and getting older – premiered in Omaha in 1988 and was performed at Coastal Repertory in 2003. Nevertheless, generally, "I write things that are fun to perform. I want everyone to enjoy themselves, actor and audience alike," Erwin writes on her website ([www.playswithmusic.com](http://www.playswithmusic.com)). "When you look at how to begin making world peace...it's okay to chuckle now and then. It might even help." Blending fun with the serious, in a play for a cast of older youth, is her *Humpty Dumpty* in which "a storyteller...enlists the help of the broken parts of the globe (Humpty Dumpty) to tell tales from around the world. In the end, the audience takes a hand to put the planet back together again."

She started writing plays after her third child was born because "someone dared me to do it. Or, to be honest, they bet me I couldn't do it. Well, that was hundreds of songs ago. I took my songs to people, and they told me I was a storyteller. Why didn't I write the whole story? So I began writing plays with music."



Gail Erwin

## One Great Hour of Sharing

continued from page 8 work elsewhere. This would set the children back in their education, cut off long-standing ties with the community, and leave small citrus farmers without workers when the next crops were ready for harvest – prolonging the community's economic crisis.

Pastor Karen contacted the United Methodist missionaries, Reverends Corozon and Marcelo Escarzaga, who serve the Hispanic Community through the outreach ministries of the Porterville UMC and Exeter UMC.

Together they assessed the needs and asked the Fresno District churches for help. Many responded with donations of money, food, blankets and clothing.

But Pastor Karen also knew that help could come through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and she put in a call to Tom Hazelwood (UMCOR) and her District Superintendent, Rev. Vickie Healy. Bishop Beverly J. Shamana, alerted to the specific needs as described by Pastor Karen, wrote a letter to UMCOR requesting emer-

gency funding for Citrus Freeze Relief. Bishop Shamana's request was granted the same day, and the check arrived the next week.

United Methodists around the world, giving during past "One Great Hour of Sharing" offerings, made it possible for families in Lindsay, Porterville, and Exeter to get food, gas cards, and rent and utility assistance until other aid funds became available.

UMCOR could not respond to emergencies such as this without your generous gifts.

## Conference News Briefs

### Register now to tour Italy with Bishop Shamana

Everyone in our Annual Conference is invited to join Bishop Shamana on a Conference Pilgrimage to Italy to study Christian Arts and Architecture. All pastors and lay persons are invited and encouraged to consider this trip. The ten-day tour will leave October 2, 2007, visit Milan, Lake Garda and Verona, go on to Venice, Florence, Pisa, and Assisi, and spend two days in Ancient Rome. An extension is also available adding four more days to visit Castel Gandolfo, Sorrento, Mt. Vesuvius, the Amalfi Coast, and Pompeii, with a boat ride to the lovely Isle of Capri.

There will be an evening speaker to highlight many of the important stops to be seen the next day.

Brochures with registration forms are available from pastors, district offices, and the Conference Office. Expense of the trip will include: round trip air fare, deluxe motor coaches, first class hotels, guided sightseeing, entrance fees to sites visited, breakfast and dinner daily (lunch on your own). The cost is: \$2,898 for the basic tour; \$948 additional for the extension.

This is a trip not to miss. Deadline for registration is July 1, 2007.

### Progressive Christianity

First UMC, Napa and the Center for Progressive Christianity (TCPC) are presenting an in-depth workshop on "Understanding Progressive Christianity" on Saturday, May 5 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The keynote speaker is Fred C. Plumer, TCPC President. Rev. Plumer will also preach on the following day, Sunday, May 6. The workshop will deal with questions such as, "What is Progressive Christianity and how is it being expressed across the country?" and "Where do Progressive Christians find their spirituality and spiritual practices?" This is an approach to Christianity that is inclusive, innovative and informed. For more information call the Rev. Doug Monroe at (707) 253-1411, ext. 12, or go to TCPC's website, <http://www.tcpc.org>.

### Reconciliation drama at ACS

The Conference Committee on Reconciliation will hold its Annual Conference Luncheon at Westminster Presbyterian Church (13<sup>th</sup> and N Streets in Sacramento) on Saturday, June 23 at noon. The featured presentation will be "Story Theatre: Tales of Belonging," an original presentation

written and directed by the Rev. Pamela Abbey. The cost is \$30; tickets on sale until June 8 at [www.ceedtv.com/reconcile.htm](http://www.ceedtv.com/reconcile.htm).

### Fair Oaks preschool opportunity

Little Methodist School in Fair Oaks is seeking a part-time Preschool Administrator/Director. Administrative duties include teacher supervision, school budgeting, and completion of reports as required by licensing. Previous preschool experience preferred. Fax your resume, with address and phone number, to (916) 961-1572 and you will be sent an application and additional job description.

### Senior New Ways Receives Recognition

Senior New Ways Inc. (SNW), a non-profit outreach organization headed by Dr. Judith Pruess-Mellow, has been recognized for its outstanding work with seniors and their families by the Princeton Theological Seminary under its Older Adult Ministry Aging Initiative. SNW is acknowledged for its excellent offering of group programs that enhance the well-being of seniors throughout Northern California. To learn more visit [www.seniornewways.org](http://www.seniornewways.org).

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CONTACT INFORMATION will be published at the discretion of the editor. Please include relevant e-mail and website addresses.

CHECK THE CONFERENCE WEBSITE [www.cnumc.org](http://www.cnumc.org) for a downloadable version of **Connection**.

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**A**  
**Missionary's**  
**Notebook**  
Rev. Linda Kelly

Linda Kelly directs the Side-by-Side Spiritual Companions program as Conference Missionary to Loaves & Fishes. Her work is supported in part through Conference Board of Missions and donations (Advance Special #811). Phone: (916) 443-4362; revlinda@sbcglobal.net.

## Working together for good

Side-By-Side is more than simply being present with the guests and staff of Loaves & Fishes. It often involves working side by side with other programs, agencies, and churches across denominational lines. I believe Jesus wouldn't want it any other way. Here is one example of working together for God and a person in need.

It was about 8:30 in the morning at Loaves & Fishes. I headed back to my office in Friendship Park after checking the mail. She stood sobbing, leaning on the iron rail by the Genesis Program, her backpack, suitcase, and bedroll at her feet. A counselor stood next to her and waved me over as I crossed the street. Lynn and her husband Steve had recently



Lynn (center right), flanked by Beth from Mary House (holding cross) and Kay from the St. Francis outreach ministry, at Steve's graveside service at St. Mary's Cemetery. Father Anthony, left, from St. Francis Church, officiated.

arrived in Sacramento where they both grew up, but now knew no one here. Homeless and penniless, they sought shelter at a local church's homeless ministry. Early that morning, about 3:00 a.m., Lynn's husband died as they slept in the courtyard of St. Francis Catholic Church. Paramedics were called, but it was too late. Lynn had nowhere to go but this desolate street in the industrial area of Sacramento, to the village of Loaves & Fishes.

I led Lynn through the Park to my office, carrying one of her bags. She was swallowed in grief and despair. She sat on the couch and sobbed. Death is never easy, but when one is alone and without resources it is magnified.

After we talked for a while, Lynn went to Mary House for a hot shower and clean clothes. When she got back to my office, she sifted through Steve's wallet and pulled out identification cards and papers and spread them on the floor trying to make sense of it all. Steve was a veteran and Lynn wanted him buried with full honors. We started making phone calls. We waited for answers.

A memorial service at Loaves & Fishes was planned for the following Monday. Lynn arrived that day supported by three acquaintances who hardly knew her or Steve, but who also slept in the courtyard. They sat under the dusty awning on wooden park benches facing the makeshift altar and flowers placed in front of the memorial wall. I read Scripture, said prayers and searched for words of comfort and hope for Lynn, never easy even in the best of circumstances.

Others worked with Lynn: Mary House put her in a motel for a few nights; the outreach worker at the St. Francis Church began making phone calls and gathered donations. My calls to the coroner's office and funeral directors and the Veteran's Administration, plus all of us visiting Lynn at the motel room finally resulted in this: Steve, it turns out, was not eligible for military burial. Usually in the case of our homeless guests, the County ends up cremating and burying the body in a common grave. But for Steve and Lynn, it just did not feel right. Between St. Francis, Mary House, Friendship Park, Side-By-Side, and others, we managed to fund a private cremation with Simple Traditions who gave us a discount, and get a plot donated by St. Mary's Cemetery. This man, who did serve his country and loved his wife, would not be anonymous.

Within a week, Kay at St. Francis was able to get Lynn into a new program with the Cathedral in partnership with Self-Help Housing that provides shared living arrangements. Lynn is going to make it. She is determined to move ahead and live the dream she and Steve had: finding a place, getting established, and making a new life and home, going fishing.

This morning Lynn brought me a bright bouquet of flowers. She looked wonderful, rested and calm, her face freshly made up, long brown hair flowing over her shoulders. She smiled. Next week, finally, everything should be ready. Fr. Anthony from St. Francis will officiate at a graveside service. Staff from Loaves & Fishes and people from St. Francis will be there, as will I. It is not over for Lynn, but at least she knows she is not alone.

# Committee solemnly gathers memoirs for ACS



Photo courtesy of Sacramento Bee and Kevin German

**Editor's  
Desk**  
Chuck Myer

May is supposed to be a time of fresh new life. But there is a Conference committee that spends most of May dealing with death.

The Conference Committee on Memoirs toils in relative obscurity, barely visible even during the Annual Conference Memorial Service (scheduled this year for Friday evening, June 22). The committee has some responsibility for the memorial service itself, working in conjunction with the Worship Task Force. In recent

years this service has grown to include a multi-media presentation and creative forms of worship and music. While historically the Memorial Service was the ACS event most likely to be “skipped,” a numerical feedback/evaluation of 2005 ACS events showed the Memorial Service receiving the highest evaluation of all events!

The committee is primarily responsible (in May!) for preparing the booklet that contains the photographs and short biographies of clergy and their spouses who have died during the past year.

It seems simple and straightforward, but it is a task that is becoming more complex each year.

In days gone by, it was relatively easy to have the recently-widowed clergy wives (they were all wives) write the memoirs of their husbands, and to have veteran photographer Bob Sanford photograph their beloved portraits. (The children would do the same when the mother died.)

In today's fast-paced world, however, it's not quite so simple. Clergy families are sometimes fractured and spread around the world, speaking a variety of languages. Tracking them down has become a challenge bordering on the work of a private investigator.

And even more confusing is the issue of just exactly who should be included in the annual memorial service. The proliferation of different categories of service to the church, while certainly advantageous for providing leadership, has muddied the waters in the memoirs department. A 2004 attempt to clarify the standing rules on this point didn't solve all of the clarification problems. The committee is still faced each year with a number of names that fall into “the grey area.”

The current language reads, “The Committee on Memoirs, ... in consultation with the Commission on Archives & History and the Retired Clergy Association, develops biographical statements about the Ordained and Diaconal ministers, current local pastors and those in a

retired relationship with the Conference, bishops (who served, were elected from, or reside in the Conference), retired and active Associate Ministers, ordained clergy from other annual conferences and from other denominations presently under appointment in this Conference, deaconesses of the Conference, and the spouses or partners of all of the above. Persons who do not come under the above categories who have given exceptional service in the Conference may receive appropriate memorial recognition at the discretion of the Committee on Memoirs, in consultation with the Board of Laity.”

“Deaconesses of the Conference” aren't even listed in the Journal any more. How to handle (TBS) supply pastors still seems to be a sticking point. And I don't have space to get into the issue of partners of clergy. Many laypeople have given exceptional service as Conference officers – where do we draw the line? The Committee tries to “err on the side of inclusion.”

But is the right person always remembered? Take, for example, this sensationalized but not-too-far-fetched hypothetical situation: Upon retirement, a pastor leaves his long-suffering wife who raised five kids in six parsonages. He runs off and marries a 30-year-old church secretary, and then on their honeymoon he has a fatal heart attack on the beach in the Bahamas. Of course, he is memorialized. But the first wife is never included in an ACS memorial service. And the committee has to keep track of the secretary for the next 50+ years, so that when she dies, she *is* included in the Book of Memoirs!

The printing of the book itself entails quite a few logistics, too. Chair Don Baldwin's

**continued on page 12**



**The hard-working Memoirs Committee. Back (from left) – Chuck Myer (staff), Dottie Vieira, Don Baldwin (chair). Front (from left) – Joanne Iritani, Bob Clazie and Jim Vincent. Photo by outgoing member and Book of Memoirs Editor Bill Sanford.**

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## Exciting New Resources: Early Christian Heroes

### For Junior/Junior High Students

The **Torchlight Series (DVC-310)** tells of real-life heroes from Christian history who faced danger and trials to carry a flame of faith to a dark world. Adults also will find it exciting and inspiring. Guides and student handouts included.

1. **John Bunyan** was imprisoned for many years for going against the established state religion and illegally preaching the Gospel in the mid 1600s. While in prison, he wrote the manuscript for **The Pilgrim's Progress**.
2. In the 1500s it was illegal to read, write, or speak the Scriptures in English. **William Tyndale** defied the authorities and began the difficult and dangerous work of translating the Old and New Testaments into English

for the common people. He moved from town to town and country to country as a fugitive to avoid capture.

3. **The Jim Elliot Story** follows Jim Elliot from his college years to his missionary work in the Ecuadorian jungle where Jim and four others were killed by the very people they had begun to befriend. Later the missionaries' families returned to the same tribe and carried on the work of their martyred family members.

### For Adults

In this fascinating one-man play, **Hymns of Praise: The Story of Hymn Writer Charles Wesley (DVC-550)** John Jackman plays the part of Charles Wesley, who wrote more than 6,500 hymns. The play tells the stories of the early days of Methodism, Charles's conversion, and unfolding events as Charles and his brother John begin to preach and sing in England.

## Memoirs Committee

continued from page 11

photography and Jim Vincent's graphic abilities have turned it into a product that compares quite favorably to similar publications by other Conferences. This year, the person who has edited the book of memoirs for more than a decade of years is retiring from that job. So if you see

Bill Sanford at Annual Conference, shake his hand for a job well done.

The Retired Clergy Association now donates \$100 for each person memorialized into a special scholarship fund for seminary students going into pastoral ministry. This helps put the memorial service in perspective as

a transitional part of what used to be referred to as the "Endless Line of Splendor."

In short, the work of the Memoirs Committee isn't easy and is never done.

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