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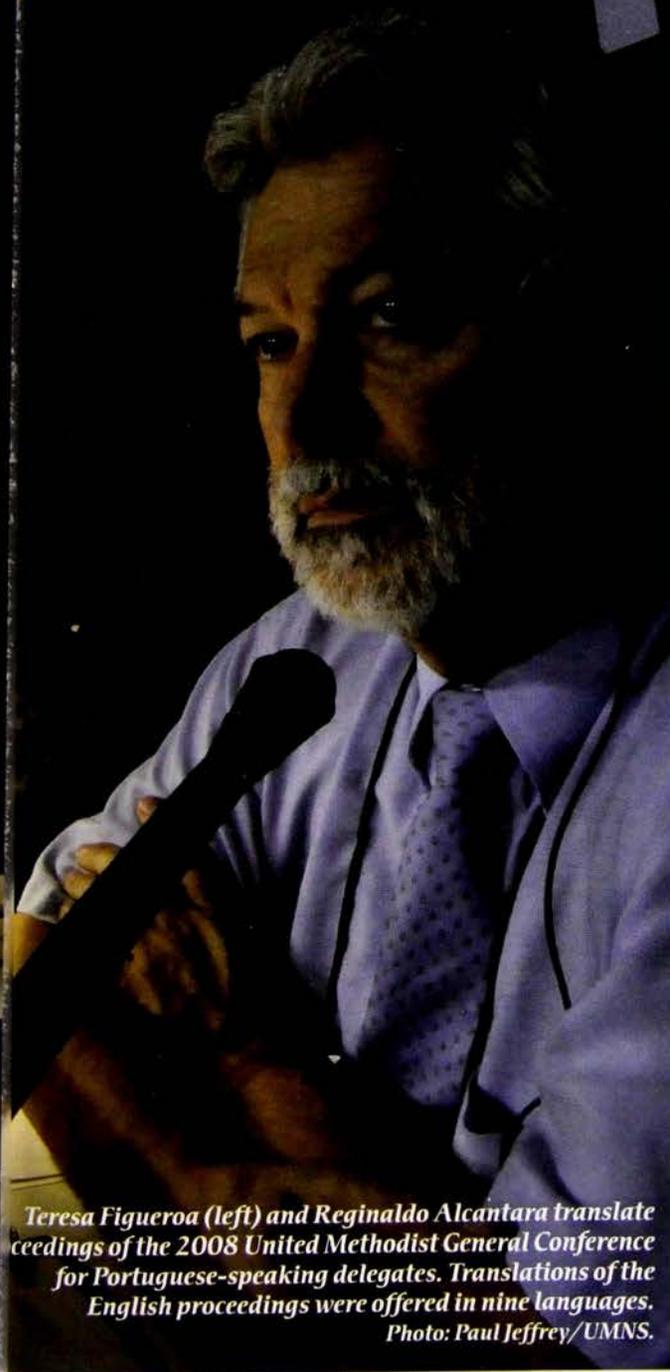
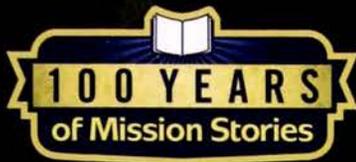
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Cover: Photo by J. Rollins for UMCOR. Representatives from international assistance agencies and church bodies in the US, Canada, and Great Britain visit a recipient of the Emergency Assistance Plan (PAUA, French acronym) in Haiti.



Teresa Figue
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Englis

MAKING THE GLOBAL CONVERSATION POSSIBLE THE WORK OF THE GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES



Teresa Figueroa (left) and Reginaldo Alcantara translate proceedings of the 2008 United Methodist General Conference for Portuguese-speaking delegates. Translations of the English proceedings were offered in nine languages. Photo: Paul Jeffrey/UMNS.

- 6 MAKING THE GLOBAL CONVERSATION POSSIBLE:
AROUND THE MISSION INITIATIVES TABLE**
by Christie R. House
- 11 HOW MINISTRY WITH REFUGEES ENABLES
THE GLOBAL CONVERSATION**
by Naomi Madsen
- 14 PENTECOST: HEARING THE WORDS OTHERS SPEAK THROUGH
TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION**
*An Interview with Global Ministries' Multilingual
Resource Services Staff by Christie R. House*
- 18 WHO WE ARE ENHANCES WHAT WE DO:
THE GLOBAL STAFF OF UMCOR**
*by Thomas Dwyer, Nina Fernando, Gimhani Kariyawasam,
Elizabeth Petheo, and Pamela Karg*
- 23 MAKING THE GLOBAL CONVERSATION POSSIBLE**
Global Ministries Staff Special Feature
- 28 WELCOME TO GOD'S MISSION: MISSION VOLUNTEERS**
by Malcolm Frazier
- 32 COMING HOME: GLOBAL CONVERSATIONS IN CHIANG-MAI, THAILAND**
by Jorge Lockward
- 35 THE MISSIONARY AT THE MISSION HUB**
by Elliott Wright
- 38 WORKING FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE AND JUST STRUCTURES**
by Tatiana Dwyer

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 HOW TO CONVERSE IN METHODIST**
by Christie R. House
- 5 LETTERS FROM READERS**
- 27 MISSION MEMO**
- 42 STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP 2011**
- 43 BULLETIN INSERTS ON MISSION**
*Bulletin inserts can be clipped out of the magazine, copied back
to back, folded, and slipped into the Sunday bulletin.*

From the editor

HOW TO CONVERSE IN METHODIST

What is the language of Methodism? At one point in its history, the answer would most definitely have been "English." After all, John and Charles Wesley were English, and when Methodism spread, it spread first to English-speaking countries, such as Ireland and the United States, which was still under the British Empire at the time that the Wesleys arrived as missionaries in the colony of Georgia. Once established as a denomination in the United States, Methodism was still associated with English speakers, and those of like mind who spoke other languages, such as German, established separate traditions, such as the Church of the Brethren.

As American Methodists began missionary explorations abroad, they understood the need to learn and speak other languages. But English was the primary language of the church body centered in the United States. In addition to the Bible, one subject taught in almost every Methodist missionary school around the world was the English language. If Methodists in other countries wanted to participate in the decision-making councils of the Methodist Church, they had to learn English. Emerging churches strategically sent their best English-speakers to represent them at regional and general conferences.

More than two centuries have passed since the Christmas Conference of 1784 that formally established the Methodist denomination in the United States. Yet United Methodists are still experiencing the growing pains of becoming a global church. "Our church" spun off "their churches," as central conferences and independent churches; but in the miracle of God's love, we are really all "our church"; the church of all of us United Methodists and of many Methodist families around the world. God is patient. As many times as we have tried to separate our community and pull it apart, God, through the daily intervention of Jesus in our lives, has pulled it back together again.

The center section of this edition shows some statistics about the current make-up of Global Ministries' staff. The figures don't actually include every staff member, since slightly more than half answered *New World Outlook's* survey. But, keeping that in mind, the survey reveals that at least 38 different languages are spoken by the staff, bringing the average number of languages spoken by most staff members to two. Many speak three or more, and some of us just speak English.

With about 35 percent of 2012 General Conference delegates coming from outside the United States, clearly, United Methodists now converse in many languages, and the task of United Methodism's global mission agency is to make that global conversation as smooth as possible—clear, direct, and meaningful for all involved.

Christie R. House



New World Outlook team members: Christie R. House (editor), Hal Sadler (art director), Tylie Waters (editorial assistant), Ronald Underberg (designer), and Karla Donato-Matos (production manager). Photo: Felipe Castillo.



Fuji and Tim Boyle with their daughters. Photo: Courtesy the Boyle family.

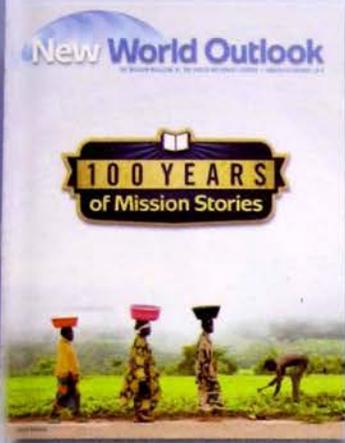
Japan Update

It's now more than four months since the earthquake and tsunami devastation of March 11 in northeast Japan, and yet the efforts of cleanup and rebuilding seem to have only scratched the surface. It will take years for some areas to get back on their feet, and the ongoing nuclear crisis in Fukushima means that particularly the nearby areas may have to, in effect, be abandoned for the foreseeable future.

More than 5,000 people are still missing and there is little likelihood that more than a tiny few of these will ever be found. Washed out to sea by the tsunami, they are lost forever. As sad as this would be in any culture, it's even more so in Japanese culture, as the bones of the deceased are considered critical to proper burial care of the grave.

Here in western Japan, where we are, we escaped any direct consequences of the March 11 disaster, but there are significant indirect effects. About a third of the electric generation capacity of Japan has been nuclear, and there had been plans to increase that level in the future. Those plans, however, have taken quite a beating. Plants similar to Fukushima Daiichi that are vulnerable to a large tsunami have been closed

Letters from Readers



down and the reopening of plants shut down for regular maintenance has been delayed. This has led to a shortage of electricity. Everyone is being urged to conserve energy, as there is a danger of "rolling black-outs" at peak times in the afternoon on hot days, when everyone wants to use air conditioners. True to form, the Japanese have responded very well to these requests. Energy use at this time is considerably below last year's levels. We now have a daily "electricity forecast" along with the weather forecast, in which they predict peak demands as a percentage of maximum supply. As long as we stay below 100%, we are safe.

*Tim and Yuko "Juji" Boyle
Missionaries in Kobe, Japan*

Dear Christie:

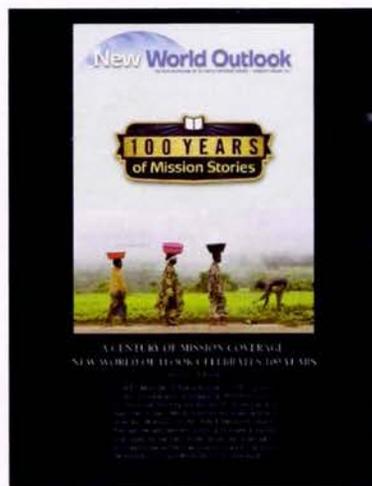
I am the vice president of Conference UMW in Pacific Northwest (and also the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries). At our upcoming Annual Meeting of United Methodist Women, October 14-15, we are celebrating 400 years of the King James Bible, 142 years of UMW, and 100 years of *New World Outlook*.

I would like to know if you have any materials that you could send to me to be used to promote this celebration. And copies of *New World Outlook* to hand out?

We are going to have cake at the end of our Friday evening program and anything that you could send to be displayed would be appreciated as well as raising awareness about *New World Outlook*.

As I am English, I particularly enjoyed the 150 years of the *Methodist Recorder* article in the Jan/Feb issue and noted they reciprocated by having an article on *New World Outlook* in their issue.

*Joan Hackett
Vice President
Pacific Northwest Conference
United Methodist Women*



Editor's Note: Please visit our website at <http://newworldoutlook.org> to find the current issue of the magazine and two download features (under the cover photo) that you can download from our webpage and use in celebrations. Thanks for commemorating the magazine's 100th anniversary. Readers with a print subscription also have access to the digital edition online. They just need to go to the site, click on the digital issue, and follow the instructions for setting up your password. Your subscription account number is found on your mailing label.

Errata

To the Editor:

Thank You for selecting and featuring Little Rock Better Community Developers in the September-October 2011 issue of the *New World Outlook*.

Please note that **Alyson Powell** wrote the article that was attributed to Deborah Bell and she also took the photos. She serves as the Communication Consultant for BCD.

*Deborah Bell
Director of Programs
Better Community Development Inc. (BCD)
Little Rock, Arkansas*

Global Ministries' staff members, the Rev. Dr. John Nuessle and the Rev. Judy Chung at a recent missionary commissioning service. Photo: Cassandra M. Zampini.



Making the Global Conversation Possible: Around the Mission Initiatives Table

by **Christie R. House**

Right: Sunday School class at the United Methodist Church in Nepal, Kathmandu. Photo: Patrick Friday.
Below: Kara Oliver, mission volunteer in Malawi, and Pastor Kaunda baptize a new church member. Photo: Jeff Oliver



The Sanciai United Methodist Church in Kaunas, Lithuania. Photo: Ullas Tankler

To introduce this issue of *New World Outlook*—which features a number of Global Ministries' staff members and their offices—I sat down with members of the Mission Initiatives team for a conversation about gospel and culture. This team is responsible for coordinating the ministries of the 13 youngest mission areas of The United Methodist Church: Honduras; Latvia; Lithuania; Eurasia (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan); Malawi; Senegal; Cameroon; Cambodia; Laos; Vietnam; Nepal; Thailand; and Mongolia. The March-April 2011 edition of *New World Outlook* included stories from each of the mission initiatives.

The Mission Initiatives team is composed of staff members who are also from various parts of the world. Coordinated by the Rev. Dr. John E. Nuessle, a US pastor from the Upper New York area, the team is a microcosm of the world. Joining John and me around the table that day were Elizabeth Tapia, Vladimir Shaporenko, John Southwick, Nora Martinez, and Caroline Njuki. Some were physically present, some were conferenced in from other parts of the world, and some sent me their comments at a later time. Other members of the team, who did not take part in the discussion, were Jong Sung Kim, Edgar Avitia, and Üllas Tankler.

Integration and Globalization

The integration of staff within the United Methodist mission agency has taken place over the last 100 years. When *New World Outlook* began in 1911 as *The Missionary Voice*—a publication of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South—the agency's staff members were primarily of European descent, though not necessarily born in the USA. However, since

Global Christianity has come to Global Ministries! It is our task to help promote the church's participation in God's mission in today's complex world.

Elizabeth Tapia

the missionary movement of the Methodist Church began with the formation of mission societies among Methodist women, the church's official mission agencies have intentionally had both male and female staff members. Legislation in the United Methodist *Discipline* guarantees gender equity.

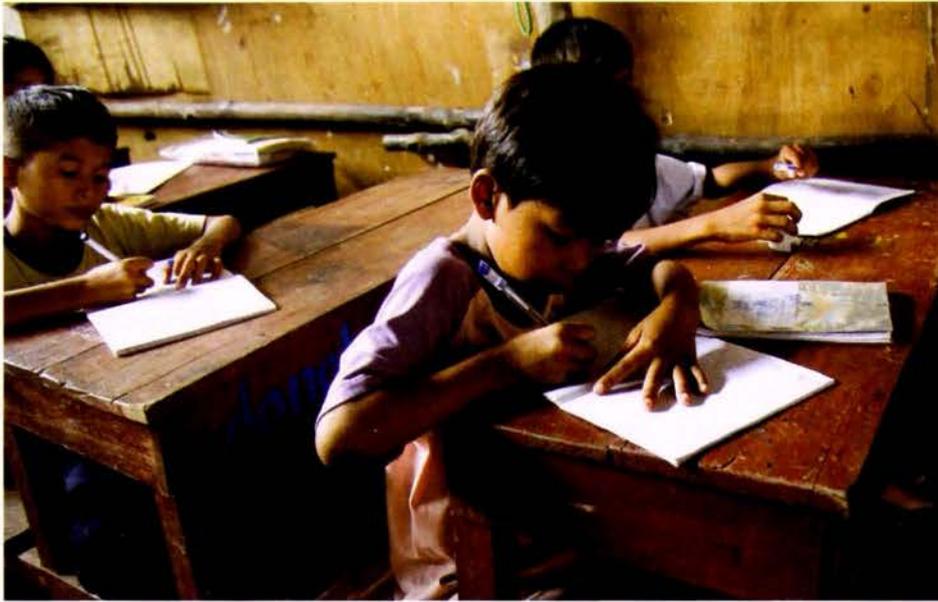
From 1911 to 1964, *New World Outlook* had various teams of co-editors, always one male and one female. George M. Daniels, the magazine's first African-American editor, served as executive editor for five years (1982-1986) and then as senior editor (1987-1989). His primary staff in the 1980s consisted of assistant editor Gladys Koppole, from India, and senior writer Nelson Navarro, from the Philippines. So, even 25 years ago, *New World Outlook* was produced by a multinational staff.

Likewise, over time, Global Ministries was integrated by members of US minority groups and immigrants from other countries. The Women's Division of the Methodist Church first hired Theresa Hoover in 1948 as a field worker in the Department of Christian Social Relations. In this position, Ms. Hoover was responsible for general welfare programs and legislative affairs. In 1968, she was made head of the Women's Division at Global Ministries and directed its staff until her retirement in 1990. Being an African American, a female, and a Christian, she described herself as representing those in "triple jeopardy."

Dr. Randolph Nugent, an African-American pastor from the New York Annual Conference, was hired in 1972 to head the mission agency's National Division. In 1976, he began a purposeful effort to diversify the National Division's staff. Then, in 1982, Dr. Nugent was selected to become the mission board's general secretary, a position he held until his retirement in 2002. "Early on, we had to work to make this a diverse organization," Dr. Nugent told Alma Graham, *New World Outlook's* former editor. "That was very intentional. Once you live in a diverse organization, you can no longer *not* live in one because of its richness and the different gifts that people bring." Dr. Nugent was the magazine's publisher from 1982 until 2002 and a frequent contributor to *New World Outlook* magazine.

A quick review of staff listings in Global Ministries' annual reports (which were published in *New World Outlook* until 1991) reveals that, in 1978, the mission agency staff had about a 25 percent minority representation. By 1988, that percentage was closer to 40 percent. Yet it is difficult and not always acceptable to try to categorize people by their origins. For example, should immigrants from other countries who become US citizens be considered part of the US minority staff or part of a multinational staff? And what about staff members who come from multicultural or multiracial families? They may not wish to be consigned to a single ethnic identity.

Current statistics about Global Ministries' staff makeup can be found on pages 23-26 of this issue. To begin the global conversation with the Mission Initiatives team, I posed the following question: "Why is it important for people to hear the gospel within the context of their own cultures?"



Children have the opportunity to go to school at Orphan Light, a ministry of the Methodist Church in Cambodia. Photo: Richard Lord

Church Indigenization

John E. Nuessle's Perspective (New York)

Why is it important for people to hear the gospel message within their own cultural context? Because each of our perspectives or outlooks on life is always defined, to an extent, by the culture in which we have "been raised" or the culture we have adopted and lived in for much of our lives. You can be raised in one culture, live in another culture, and adopt aspects of both cultures. In this way, people become multicultural.

It is also important for Global Ministries to have staff from many different regions. The church needs those varieties of cultural background and experience to be able to interact with churches in more than 100 other countries—and also to interact with the multiplicity of cultures that make up the United States. We need representatives who relate to all these various cultures and subcultures.

Global Ministries creates new annual conferences and related structures within which indigenous Christians present the gospel from their own cultural perspectives. We build the infrastructure—the roads and bridges—upon which indigenous Christians drive the cars and trucks, which is the visible work of evangelism. But just as a car requires a road, infrastructure building is absolutely essential to the long-term development of the church. This process of pioneer evangelism has not changed in nature since Francis Asbury's time.

I believe the church needs to get its theological understandings in order and question all the cultural baggage we carry around and assume is sound theology! Then, we can engage honestly with persons of varied cultural backgrounds in order to understand the realities of life around the globe.

Living Our Connectivity

Caroline Njuki's Perspective (Uganda)

The global conversation starts with conversations among staff members about their lives—about their religious, cultural, and educational backgrounds, their special foods and celebrations, and other experiences and teachings that are important to them. In this diverse environment, staff members learn about other

cultures and develop an understanding of and appreciation for each other.

The inclusion of staff from other countries in the mission agency speaks to the global nature of our church. It puts the "connectional" church into perspective and shows how the church is living out its witness to connectivity. Such witness is exemplified by assigning staff members to work in regional contexts that are well understood by them. A global staff can help the church understand the context in which other churches, in other geographical areas, live out their witness. Such a staff can help congregations in different regions of the world interact with one another.

How do we build bones and put flesh on the concept of "the beloved community?" It happens when members of a congregation get over the difficulty of accepting diversity and learn how to embrace all humanity. Then a congregation becomes a community in which people genuinely care about one another and differences exist in an environment of mutual acceptance. Such a community has learned to "love thy neighbor as thyself." This depth of community can be reached only when a congregation has broken down such barriers as color, race, gender, age, religious affiliation, or socioeconomic class. It happens by changing one congregation at a time.

Theologies Meet in the Halls

Elizabeth S. Tapia's Perspective (The Philippines)

I am happy to join the multiracial and multicultural staff of Global Ministries. Everywhere you can hear various voices, accents, and perspectives. I meet colleagues in the hallway who offer different gifts and capacities, skills and theologies, joys and concerns.

In this pluralistic and multiethnic world, an organization cannot afford to be homogenous and ethnocentric.

Diversity and differences are important marks of the postmodern world we live in.

North America had been, for a century, in the forefront of sending missionaries to "the rest of the world." Now there is a "reverse mission," as Christians from "the rest of the world" become missionaries themselves. Our staff members come from various countries and cultures. This diversity should enrich the way we worship, theologize, conduct meetings, and do mission together.

Western theology is no longer the universal norm in understanding the gospel. Inculturation in the Majority World has produced theologies such as Dalit theology in India, Minjung theology in Korea, African Indigenous theologies, the theology of struggle in the Philippines, and many more. In the last century, mission outreach originated largely from North America or Europe, but in the 21st century that is no longer the case. As Christianity's growth and vitality are now centered in the Global South, mission today is, in the words of the conciliar movement, "mission in six continents." It is not accidental that the staff of the United Methodist mission agency is very diverse.

Through diversity of cultures and theologies, we can harness within our ethos rich theologies and missional

expressions. At Global Ministries, we need to affirm and celebrate our rainbow of cultures and races, and at the same time, be open to learn from one another, taking thoughtful risks as we sit around the table in global conversation.

United Methodist Culture

Vladimir Shaporenko's Perspective (Russia)

I am reminded of situations in which tensions developed between local church practices and traditions and those of the global church. I think there is an identifiable United Methodist culture—and we should not easily and readily do away with that in order to just blend in.

The fact that we are multicultural is a strong point. But there is also give and take, which really makes us stronger because we learn from one another. When we go as United Methodists to another country, we bring something—and we take something as well. We look for the balance. Hopefully, we take the best and we help each other. So yes, there are many indigenous cultures, and churches are different, but we also need to remember that we are building a United Methodist culture.

I don't know if we are ready on the leadership level to be a global church. Are we ready to sacrifice something to fully open up to the global church? Do we see the church as having many centers? Many still picture the church as having one center in the United States.

Sharing a Meal

John Southwick's Perspective (Washington State)

Twice in Luke 10 (verses 7 and 8), Jesus tells us that, when we go into

Rev. Nikolai Smirnov of The United Methodist Church in Eurasia.

Photo: Courtesy UMC Eurasia

a village, we need to go into people's homes and eat their food. If you wish to cross cultures, that is a big thing. There are all kinds of social implications around food. The Bible is very big on sharing meals. The action of giving and taking food has many implications.

It is still true that, in many cultures, a great way to relate to the people and begin to understand them is to eat their food. Some people going into other countries are afraid to eat the local cuisine. If you can cross that barrier and eat the food, you've gone a long way toward making connections in another culture.

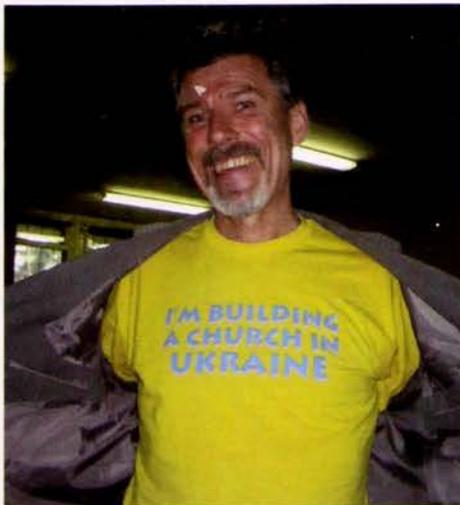
Enriching the Conversation

Nora Martinez's Perspective (Venezuela)

For me, looking at the food in different cultures is a very practical way of framing the issue. When Dr. Nuessle said earlier that, after living in this culture over a number of years, we become Americanized, some of us bristled. But he is right.

For many of us, the process of adapting to a new culture is a journey in which we have had to choose what we will keep from our original culture and what we need to adapt. This decision can involve important choices, such as how we will raise our children, or lesser choices, such as how to adapt our concept of time. I think that the experience of growing and adapting, for all of us, enriches the conversation around the table and the work we are trying to do. If we didn't have that understanding of how cultures encounter one another and merge, we would be crippled. That is how I understand the experience of going to a new place and eating the local food.

Christie R. House is the editor of New World Outlook. Special thanks to the members of the Mission Initiatives team who made specific contributions to this article.



The Mission Initiatives Team Members

The Rev. Dr. John Edward Nuessle

John Edward Nuessle is an associate general secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries, serving as the managing supervisor of the Mission Relationships and Mission Initiatives staff teams, Mission and Evangelism program area. Dr. Nuessle is an ordained elder of the Upper New York Annual Conference where, in addition to his 19 years on the staff of Global Ministries, John has held several pastoral appointments and served as a district superintendent in his home annual conference.

Dr. Caroline W. Njuki

Caroline W. Njuki is an assistant general secretary in Mission and Evangelism for Africa and Special Projects. Prior to her work with Mission and Evangelism, she worked in general administration to coordinate Global Ministries work and relationships on the continent of Africa. Originally from Uganda, Dr. Njuki began working with Global Ministries through UMCOR as an executive secretary for World Hunger/Poverty.

Vladimir A. Shaporenko

Vladimir A. Shaporenko is an executive secretary for Europe, North Africa, and Middle East in Mission Relationships. He was born in the Ukraine and graduated from the Moscow Telecommunication Institute and from Moscow Academy of Foreign Trade. Shaporenko worked as a consultant to the General Board of Global Ministries from 1992 to 1997 and then joined the staff as a full-time executive.

The Rev. Üllas Tankler

Üllas Tankler serves as an executive secretary for Europe, North Africa,

and the Middle East in Mission Relationships. Originally from Tallinn, Estonia, Rev. Tankler serves as deployed staff with his home base in Pärnu, Estonia.

The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth S. Tapia

The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Tapia, a native of the Philippines, serves as director of Mission Theology at the General Board of Global Ministries. An ordained clergy in the United Methodist Philippine Central Conference, Manila Episcopal Area, Dr. Tapia began church work as a deaconess and a church women organizer. For ten years, Tapia taught Christian Theology at Union Theological Seminary, Cavite, Philippines, and from 2002-2005, held the Global Ministries Chair of Mission at Bossey Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches. She joined Global Ministries in April 2011 and now lives in New York City.

The Rev. Nora Colmenares Martinez

The Rev. Nora Martinez is an assistant general secretary in Mission and Evangelism with responsibilities in the area of congregational development and racial ethnic ministries. Rev. Martinez was born and raised in Venezuela and she is an ordained Deacon in The United Methodist Church with clergy membership in the North Georgia Conference.

The Rev. John Southwick

The Rev. John Southwick is director of research and executive secretary of Rural and Urban Networks (RUN) at the General Board of Global Ministries, where he has worked since 1998. In his research role, he helps provide statistical and demographic resources for church and denominational leadership and



Members of the Mission Initiative Team, front row: Nora Martinez, John Nuessle, Yovanda Garavito, Caroline Njuki; back row: Patrick Friday, Jong Sung Kim, Vladimir Shaporenko, John Southwick. Photo: Felipe Castillo

serves as editor of the *Background Data for Mission* newsletter. He is a member of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference.

The Rev. Jong Sung Kim

The Rev. Jong Sung Kim is an executive secretary for the Asia/Pacific Region in Mission and Evangelism. He oversees the United Methodist Mission Initiatives in Asia, including Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand, and Vietnam. Rev. Kim is an ordained elder of the New York Annual Conference having served local churches in the New York Annual Conference, for 13 years before beginning his ministry at Global Ministries in 1997.

The Rev. Edgar Avitia Legarda

The Rev. Edgar Avitia Legarda is currently serving as executive secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as for Brazilian Ministries at Global Ministries. Rev. Avitia is a clergy member of the Rio Grande Annual Conference.

The Rev. Patrick Friday

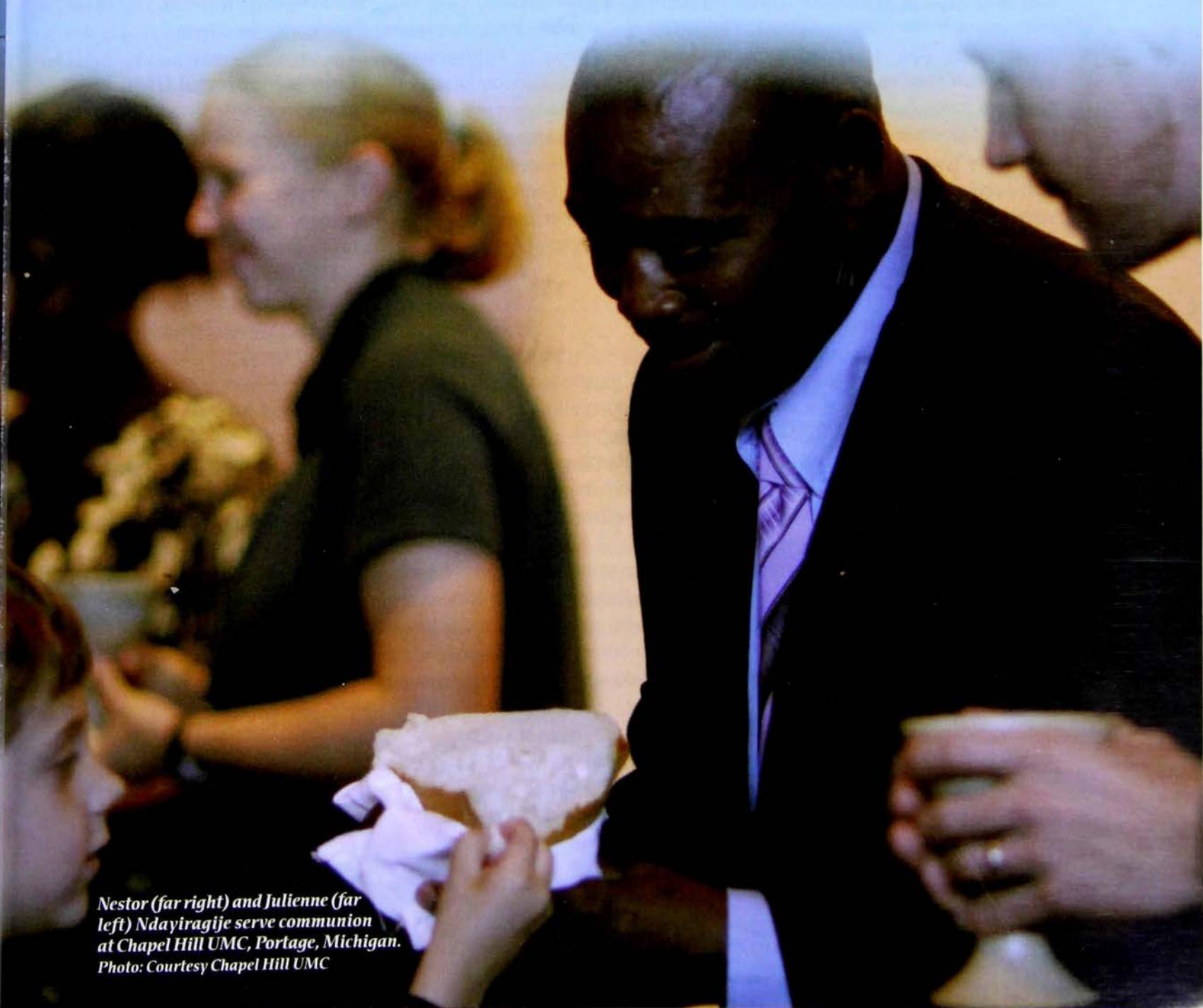
The Rev. Patrick Friday is director of In Mission Together for Global Ministries, a partnership program that assists churches to engage in shared mission and ministry with developing congregations. Rev. Friday is an ordained elder of the North Alabama Annual Conference.

HOW MINISTRY WITH REFUGEES Enables the Global Conversation

by Naomi Madsen

*Jesus Christ gave us two commandments: "Love God and love your neighbor."
If we can't operate out of that foundation, we are totally wasting our time.*

Rolly Loomis, pastor of Family Ministries and Missions
St. Francis in the Foothills United Methodist Church, Tucson, Arizona



*Nestor (far right) and Julienne (far left) Ndayiragije serve communion at Chapel Hill UMC, Portage, Michigan.
Photo: Courtesy Chapel Hill UMC*

Founded more than 60 years ago, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) began as a ministry to the refugees of World War II. That core function continues today with the work of UMCOR's Refugee Ministry office. With its long-standing partner, Church World Service, UMCOR has sought to provide welcome to refugees, working with United Methodist congregations to accompany refugee families as they attempt to build new lives in the United States.



Mary Lynne Ball, Meridian UMC in Meridian, Idaho.
Photo: Courtesy Meridian UMC

How does welcoming refugees enable the "global conversation" in congregations? Churches involved in refugee resettlement experience their world's growing bigger and smaller at the same time. The world grows bigger because each welcoming congregation has its eyes opened to a part of the world it might never have known about otherwise. It grows smaller because places that once seemed strange, "foreign," and very far away have now become the hometowns of friends—people the church members know and care about. All this is accomplished without church members' ever leaving home.

Another important global conversation is the one congregation members engage in among themselves once they've opened this "window on the world." Uncomfortable issues and tough questions are inevitable. "Why has my life been like this, and my new friend's life like that? What caused this disparity, and what does God expect me to do about it?" No quick and easy answers present themselves.

It's probably best to let people tell their own stories. So here are just a few voices, among many, from United Methodist congregations that have been transformed by engaging in the "global conversation" known as the ministry of refugee resettlement.

Chapel Hill UMC in Portage, MI

Shortly after 9/11/2001, as the United States prepared to go to war in Afghanistan, Chapel Hill United Methodist Church in Michigan took in a refugee Afghan family. Since then, the church has also sponsored a family from Iraq. These were not the first refugee families that Chapel Hill UMC resettled. Over the past 15 years, this church has sponsored four families of refugees.

"Refugee resettlement reminds us of our common humanity," Pastor Barry Petrucci says. "Some of us are in a position of being helpful; others of us need help. We are in a web of mutual blessing."

Chapel Hill UMC has a long history of ministry to newly arrived refugees, including the Ndayiragije family who arrived from Burundi in 2006. Nestor, the father, was only a child when his family fled Burundi during the civil war there. He lived in one refugee camp in Rwanda, then another in Tanzania. In fact, he lived in refugee camps for more than 20 years before his family was resettled in the United States.

"The Ndayiragijes chose to become worshipping members of our congregation from the time they arrived," Pastor Petrucci continues.

"One day, I went to meet Nestor at his job, and he introduced me as his 'papa,' which is how he would have introduced his pastor back in Africa. I cannot explain in words how meaningful that was for me."

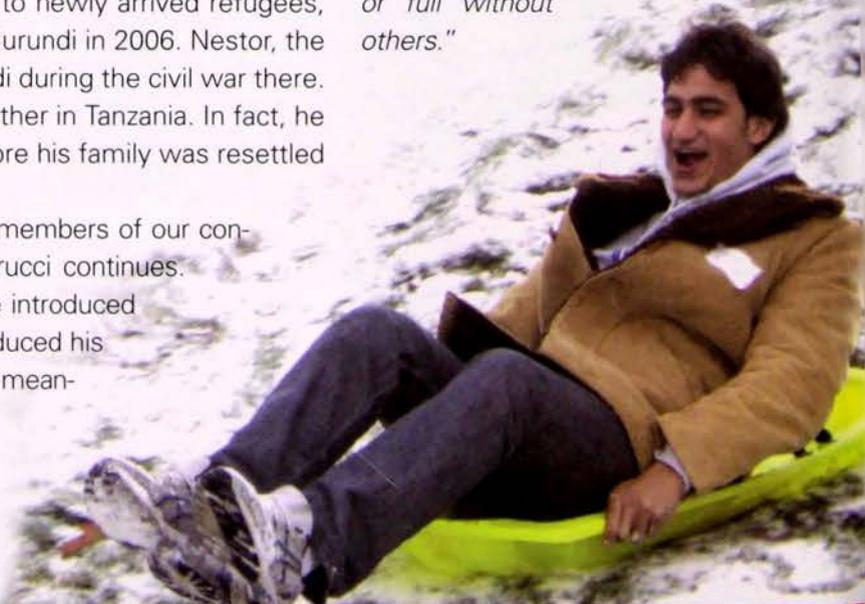
An Iraqi family member enjoys a sled ride in Seattle, WA. Photo: Courtesy Gig Harbor UMC

Meridian UMC in Meridian, ID

"Welcoming a person from another country...is like opening a window to the world," said Mary Lynne Ball, coordinator of Refugee and Immigration Ministries for the Oregon/Idaho Annual Conference. "I wish that all our churches could feel the joy and love that we at Meridian United Methodist Church in Idaho have experienced. I often wonder how I would feel if I were chased out of my country and couldn't go back for fear of being killed," she continues. "What if I had to learn a new language, adopt new customs, change my occupation, and follow unfamiliar laws just to survive? I would want someone to help me and my family. I try to be that 'someone.' for others."

Lohr's Memorial UMC in Hanover, PA

Dawn Evans of Lohr's Memorial United Methodist Church in Hanover, Pennsylvania, headed the team that recently resettled an extended family of refugees from Bhutan in the Himalayas. "It has been such a blessing to be a part of refugee resettlement," she says. "My family is bigger now, and so is our church family. On our way home from the airport where we picked up our second family, I thought, 'This is how I know God's love is real.' I hope I will always have a feeling of divinely inspired 'emptiness,' a reminder of our call to hospitality. I hope I will always know that *we are not complete or full without others.*"





The Thang family resettled in Fort Worth, Texas, from Burma. Photo: Courtesy First UMC.

First UMC of Fort Worth, TX

Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, "Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase." In 2009, the five-member Thang family from Myanmar (formerly Burma) arrived in Texas after years of persecution and displacement. Kim Isabel, head of Refugee Ministry at First United Methodist Church in Fort Worth, welcomed the Burmese refugee family. She admits that her congregation had much to learn from the Thangs.

"They don't give up just because they can't see the 'staircase,'" she says.

"Raphael Lemkin [1900-1959] once asked this disturbing question [regarding genocide]: 'If women, children, and old people were being murdered 100 miles from here, wouldn't you run to help? Then why do you stop when the distance is 3,000 miles instead of 100?' We had to come to grips with the question: 'What if these same people are being dropped off on our doorstep? Do we reach out to assist them?' The Thang family has truly taught our congregation the meaning of faith."

Gig Harbor UMC in Seattle, WA

"On December 11, 2008, the family we were sponsoring arrived in Seattle—a mother, six children, a son-in-law, and a new grandchild—beginning their new life in the United States after six years of war in Iraq," recalls David Richardson, a retired minister belonging to Gig Harbor United Methodist Church. "Her husband was killed in the war while helping US forces. Following his death, the family fled to Jordan, where they lived until coming to the United States.

"The idea to co-sponsor a family came to us at Gig Harbor UMC early in 2008," he continues, "when we heard that two million Iraqi refugees had fled to Jordan, Syria, and Turkey. We decided it was time to stop talking and to do something. So, forming a committee to explore a Christian response to the Iraqi refugee situation, we talked with the Church World Service resettlement affiliate in Seattle and with Naomi Madsen at UMCOR.

"This is, after all, what Christians have done throughout the ages—welcoming the sojourner in our midst and making faith relevant in terms of action. It wasn't always easy. This has been a transforming time for our congregation—a congregation that was, at first, hesitant to get involved. Many worried that there would not be enough resources to provide for the needs of a refugee family in this economy. We discovered, however, that mission, hospitality, and generosity are contagious. As with Jesus and the multitudes, five loaves of bread and two fish show there is always enough for the faithful.

"The Sunday the family was introduced was our first snow day of the year, but it was one that warmed our hearts. We have given the family a hearty welcome, and they have graced us with their friendship and shown us the meaning of fortitude and courage."

St. Francis in the Foothills UMC in Tucson, AZ

Pastor Rolly Loomis—Pastor of Family Ministries and Missions, and head of the Refugee Ministry at St. Francis in the Foothills United Methodist Church in Tucson, a church passionate about its ministry with refugees—views this work as truly living out the gospel message.

"Jesus Christ gave us two commandments," he says. 'Love God, and love your neighbor.' If we can't operate out of that foundation, we are totally wasting our time."

Go ahead, take an inventory and measure participation in the global conversation, including the ministry of refugee resettlement, against all the other activities of your congregation. Then try to determine what is worth doing, and what is "a waste of time." Do this if you dare.

Naomi Madsen is the Program Manager for the United Methodist Committee on Relief's Refugee Ministry office. She began work with refugee resettlement in 1999, when she founded PARA Refugee Services, a Church World Service Immigration and Refugee Program affiliate in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Later, she worked with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops resettlement affiliate in Grand Rapids, first as volunteer coordinator and then as manager of the New American Family Center. When she and her husband moved to New York City in 2005, her first job was with Catholic Charities of New York, serving evacuees of Hurricane Katrina who had come to the city.



Donald Reasoner, director of the Multilingual Resource Services unit of Global Ministries, is welcomed to the Icolo e Bengo United Methodist Church in Luanda, Angola. Photo: Mike DuBose/UMNS

Pentecost: Hearing the Words Others Speak Through Translation and Interpretation

An Interview with Global Ministries' Multilingual Resource Services Staff

by **Christie R. House**

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We are not speaking for people who speak other languages; we are enabling their voices to be heard.

Donald Reasoner

The Multilingual Resource Services unit of Mission Communications at Global Ministries has a staff of four individuals who speak 12 languages among them. Donald Reasoner, whose area of expertise is simultaneous interpretation, directs the unit's other members: Kate Kang, Esperance Kayombo, and Damaris Marmolejos.

Translation is a written process, while interpretation is an oral one. Simultaneous interpretation generally requires technical equipment—transmitters and headset receivers—so that words spoken in one language can be translated in the mind of the interpreter and rephrased in another language *while the speaker is still speaking*. Sequential interpretation is a process in which a speaker speaks in one language and then waits for an interpreter to translate, line by line, before resuming the speech. This process is more tedious and time-consuming than simultaneous interpretation, but it works when no equipment is available.

Donald Reasoner: Global Ministries' multilingual unit makes the church's connectivity real by enabling various parts of the church to speak and listen to one another. The church has language constituencies not only abroad but also in the United States. Here, the Hispanic and Korean communities, Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans all have special needs and issues. We are not speaking *for* these groups; we are enabling *their* voices to be heard.

When I'm at a meeting to provide interpretation, I often joke that, until there is another Pentecost—a time when the Holy Spirit allows us to understand each other's languages—we need to use our technology as a poor substitute to enable us to communicate with one another. This is the only way for the whole church to work together, fostering the collaboration and partnerships needed to make mission happen. We assist communication both through oral interpretation at meetings and events and through the translation of written documents.

Damaris Marmolejos: Through the resources from Global Ministries' program areas that we produce, we bring the mission story to people who do not speak English. We produce translations of books, brochures, articles, and other media.

Kate Kang: Most importantly, we provide information about what is happening in United Methodist mission. The

Donald Reasoner, Esperance Kayombo, Yun Nam "Kate" Kang, and Damaris Marmolejos, staff of the multilingual department of Global Ministries. Photo: Christie R. House

Korean constituency has traditionally been very active and committed to mission. I think it is important to provide the information and opportunities for them to give financial support and volunteer support.

Reasoner: In turn, our translations from other languages into English help the US constituency hear the mission stories of others. That way, we can read about what the church is doing in other parts of the world.

Marmolejos: Since we translate stories about UMCOR's work, speakers of many languages have the opportunity to help during disasters. It's important to let everyone know how the church is responding and how they can help.

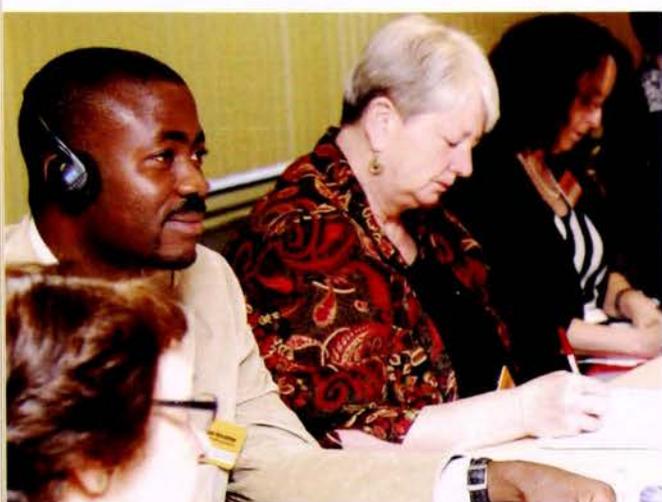
Reasoner: Nilda Ferrari—who retired as director of Multilingual Resource Services last year—spent a lot of time encouraging writers of other languages to produce Christian resources. She insisted that resources developed for language constituencies did not have to be translated from English writers but could and should be written by native speakers. So, whenever possible, we try to provide resources produced by different language constituencies—not just translations of English materials. Finding and encouraging writers in other languages to consider the same themes and produce their own materials gives minority language groups a voice. It recognizes that they have something important to share which the rest of the church needs to hear.

Kang: The Korean version of the United Methodist Women's *Program Book* is written entirely by Koreans.

Marmolejos: The Spanish *Program Book* is generally written by Spanish speakers as well, although this year's book included both original writings in Spanish and translations.

Christie House: When church members think about Global Ministries' multilingual unit, they may imagine an enormous





The Rev. Andrade Gomes from the East Angola Conference listens to Portuguese translation, Global Ministries board meeting. Photo: Cassandra M. Zampini

staff—with people who speak Russian, French, German, Swahili, or other languages sitting here translating away, taking up maybe 50 desks. Please explain the actual process.

Reasoner: Most people don't really understand our work until they have delegates coming to their meetings from other countries and realize that they have no way to communicate with them. So we often get a request for interpretation or translation at meetings that have already begun or will be starting the next week. Sometimes it takes meeting coordinators that long to realize their need for translations, either oral or written. We try to be proactive, to educate the church about the need to be more aware of issues involving communication in different languages. So when I hear about meetings being planned, I ask about the arrangements for providing translations.

The sooner planners can think about translation and interpretation, the better. That gives *us* a chance to plan and gives *them* a chance to build the service into their budget. Funding is a major issue. I do believe our church wants to provide good translation. But planners who don't consider translation at the outset won't have the budget to pay for professionals to have the job done well. They will end up getting

volunteers. Some volunteers do a wonderful job. But I have seen others who experience brain freeze, being unable to listen in one language and speak in another at the same time. Simultaneous interpretation requires special skills and a lot of practice.

Sometimes inexperience causes people to confuse reality with science fiction. They think we have technology that provides "automatic" translation. They don't realize that there is an actual person providing interpretation—listening to one language and simultaneously translating it orally into another—who transmits that speech to people wearing headsets to receive the translation. I explain that we need a trained person present to do the interpretation. In fact, given the intense concentration required to interpret well during a full day of meetings, it is best to have two translators available. In response, some planners will say: "Oh, we don't have the money to do that! Cancel our request." That is why educating people about interpretation and translation is a big part of what we try to do.

Actually, our equipment consists of two systems for simultaneous interpretation. We have an FM radio-based system, which allows six different language channels to operate at the same time. So the participants at a meeting or workshop can tune into one channel for Russian and another channel for French. Of course, we need a separate interpreter broadcasting the translations for each language channel. This system is portable—often called a tour-guide system.

The second system is an infrared system for large groups. We set up the infrared emitter panels to flood a large room with invisible infrared light. As long as you are in the area,

your headset and receiver will get the signal. That is more of a stereo digital signal, whereas the radio is more of an analogue signal.

Marmolejos: We generally have to hire freelance translators to do a good deal of the written translations. People call us and want something translated by the next day, yet they can't afford the time or money that would cost. We have to contact freelance translators and give them time to do the work. Translation is not an overnight job.

Esperance Kayombo: Not only are we limited by funds and the fact that we have to hire translators. We also need to create a churchwide awareness about the many language groups the church *has* reached and the many more it *can* reach. There are many more languages than the principal languages our agencies use now. We tend to forget that we have to hire people to translate into and from those regional languages.

House: One of your big events every quadrennium is General Conference. Can you talk about the preparation process for that?

Reasoner: It's not just General Conference. Virtually all the other United Methodist boards and agencies have used our translation services for their meetings at one point or another. As the church becomes more global,



A father and son listen to translation of a worship service at the 2007 European Methodist Festival in Bratislava, Slovak Republic. Photo: Kathleen LaCamera/UMNS



The Rev. Cynthia Harvey speaks during a service of dedication for mosquito-net distribution at the Methodist Hospital of Dabou in Côte d'Ivoire. French interpreter, Isaac Broune of the United Methodist Church in Côte d'Ivoire, translates for her. Photo: Mike DuBose/UMNS

more speakers of languages other than English are elected to boards and agencies. Today, nearly 35 percent of delegates to General Conference come from outside the United States. So communication is becoming a major issue.

As General Conference delegates are elected, we try to find out their language needs. We have to ensure that all delegates can participate fully—not only in plenary sessions but also in legislative committees. At this point there will be French, Swahili, and Portuguese in all committee proceedings. The sheer volume of delegates who speak those languages ensures that. So now we are in the process of building teams to help facilitate translation and interpretation. We'll have about nine languages for plenary sessions. Spanish and Korean are spoken by a growing number of US delegates, and these groups

are taking stronger leadership roles in the church. Even delegates who are bilingual sometimes prefer to hear proceedings in their first language so they can be confident about understanding everything said.

I consider it a real privilege to travel to so many countries to provide interpretation. It is an opportunity to see "living saints"—people whose faith is put into practice. Real partners with God discern how God is acting in the world and become part of that action. It is always encouraging to see people living out their faith.

Christie R. House is the editor of New World Outlook.

Donald Reasoner grew up as a missionary kid in Brazil and came to the United States to attend Whitworth College in Spokane, Washington. He worked in Mexico and Central America before being commissioned by Global Ministries as a missionary to serve in Nicaragua. In 1992, he was hired as an executive for the Latin America/Caribbean Office of Global Ministries and was responsible for relating to the churches and missionaries in Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Cuba. He is now the Director for Multilingual Resource Services, coordinating the language interpretation and translation services for Mission Communications at GBGM. Don is married to Christie R. House, editor of New World Outlook magazine.

Yun Nam "Kate" Kang serves as the Editor of Korean Language Resources at Global Ministries, overseeing and developing a broad range of United Methodist resources for Korean-speaking constituents and serving as a conduit of information and resources between Korean American United Methodists and the larger United Methodist Church body. She began her career at the Board in 2002, first as a consultant and then as Assistant Editor for Korean Language Resources. Previously, Ms. Kang was a news

desk anchor on US Korean language channels WMBC TV-63 and TBC-TV channel 31. In Korea, she was a television reporter and writer at two of Korea's major broadcasting companies, MBC and SBS. She received her BA from Ewha Women's University and currently lives in Montville, New Jersey, with her husband Kevin and son James, a student at Cornell University.

Damarys Marmolejos was born in New York City of Dominican descent. Since 2008, she has held the position of Multilingual Production Coordinator. Ms. Marmolejos is responsible for coordinating written translations and overseeing the production process of printed resources in languages other than English—particularly Spanish, French, and Portuguese. She also proofreads resources in Spanish. In conjunction with Design Services, Multilingual Resources produces printed resources in as many as eight languages.

Esperance Kayombo was born in the DR Congo, where more than five languages were spoken in her home. Her father, a United Methodist pastor, spoke English, French, and Swahili, along with six other African languages. In addition, he studied German, Hebrew, and Greek. Ms. Kayombo went to a Methodist boarding school for her secondary education, where she learned additional local and regional languages. She and her siblings helped her father produce Christian education resources for their conference sessions and Sundays schools. Ms. Kayombo is a United Methodist deaconess. Before her service with Multilingual Resources, she served as a regional missionary working on advocacy projects with women and children.



Teresa Figueroa, far right, provides interpretation for a SPSARV workshop held in Kitwe, Zambia, so that all participants can play a game together. Photo: Timothy Yuan

Who We Are Enhances What We Do The Global Staff of UMCOR

by Thomas Dwyer, Nina Fernando, Gimhani Kariyawasam, Elizabeth Petheo, and Pamela Karg

The sense of unity at the UMCOR Sri Lanka workplace resembles the social, ethnic, and religious diversity seen on the main street in Sri Lanka. Our workplace effectively interacts with and reaches out productively to the local populace.

Bharat Pathak, Head of Mission for Sri Lanka



Children play between rows of tents at Camp Corail, outside Port-au-Prince, Haiti, where UMCOR is helping provide services for about 10,000 people displaced by the January 2010 earthquake.
Photo: Mike DuBose/UMNS





Thomas Dwyer.
Photo: Courtesy UMCOR

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) has nine field offices that fall under the nongovernmental organization (NGO) unit of UMCOR. Field offices serve communities recovering from war or natural disaster, providing emergency relief and transitional development programs. Currently, UMCOR has field offices in Afghanistan, Armenia, Georgia, Haiti, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. Each of these offices hires staff, and all are governed by UMCOR hiring policies. UMCOR's philosophy for recruitment is governed by equal opportunity. This policy is applied in recruitment for both international and national (in-country) staffing. International (expatriate) staffing is also governed by the related laws of the State of New York, where UMCOR is headquartered as part of the General Board of Global Ministries. National staffing—involving staff members from the countries in which field offices are located—also must take into consideration the relevant country's related laws and policies.

Another major hiring criterion is qualification—recruiting those who are most qualified for each position. All available UMCOR positions are publicly posted, and we encourage and anticipate a large, qualified applicant pool to draw upon. As a result, we have a naturally created diversity in the staffing of our field offices—a balance as to ethnicity, religion, race, and gender. These criteria, however, do not factor into selection. Each candidate must be qualified and able to meet the expectations of the

A woman in Sri Lanka walks through the rubble left by the 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka.
Photo: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance

position. Our institutional donors also require us to ensure that our staff recruitment is competitive and that we focus on the applicants' qualifications. The head of mission and expatriate staffing is managed through UMCOR's main office in New York, while national staffing occurs at the field office level.

UMCOR's staffing practices benefit the individual mission offices, the communities they serve, and the United Methodist connection. As examples, we will focus on three field offices—those in Sri Lanka, Haiti, and Armenia.

Thomas P. Dwyer is Executive Director for UMCOR's NGO unit. He began his work with UMCOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, becoming director of operations in 2008 and executive director in 2009. Dwyer has more than 20 years of professional experience in financial services, social entrepreneurship, and international development. He has an M.A. in International and Intercultural Management from the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont.

UMCOR Sri Lanka

by Nina Fernando and Gimhani Kariyawasam

As a mission, UMCOR Sri Lanka celebrates the Sinhala and Tamil New Year,

called *Avrudu*, on April 13 and 14. The first working day after the New Year, staff members bring milk to a boil, allowing it to overflow as a sign of good beginnings. We serve *kavili* (sweets) and *kiribath* (milk rice), and we play *Avrudu* games in which team-building in a peaceful atmosphere serves as an outward sign of cooperation among staff members. This is the only festival in Sri Lanka that is celebrated by both major ethnic groups here—the Sinhalese and the Tamils. These two groups have been torn apart by civil war for more than 30 years. It is a privilege for UMCOR to witness their long-standing traditions and to promote team-building at our workplace during this festive season.

UMCOR's Tsunami Response

Early in 2005, UMCOR established a mission in Sri Lanka in response to the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami that struck that island nation. The Sri Lankan mission was started with United Methodist funding received



Bharat Pathak, Head of Mission for Sri Lanka.
Photo: Courtesy UMCOR



UMCOR Field Office Staff

No.	Location	Country of Origin			Number of Staff
		Host National	International Staff		
			USA	Non-US	
1	New York, NY	0	11	3	14
2	Afghanistan	24	0	1	25
3	Armenia	68	1	0	69
4	Georgia	21	0	0	21
5	Haiti	14	2	3	19
6	Dem. Rep. of Congo	13	0	1	14
7	Sudan	63	1	4	68
8	South Sudan	34	0	4	38
9	Sri Lanka	54	1	3	58
10	Zimbabwe	20	1	0	21
Total:		311	17	19	347

Figures provided by Javed Sheikh, Comptroller, UMCOR's NGO Unit

through The Advance. UMCOR Sri Lanka helped those affected by the tsunami through an initial emergency response to alleviate suffering and by contributing to the restoration of housing, infrastructure, livelihoods, and education.

UMCOR has also played a key role in emergency response programming with various key donors, including USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. The programs provided a

proactive response to a looming humanitarian crisis and complex emergencies in northern Sri Lanka caused by the civil war. Thereafter, the needs shifted to the internally displaced population (IDP) and the return of IDPs to their places of origins in eastern and northern Sri Lanka.

The greatest need now is to ensure that those in the north and east are provided with sustainable livelihoods. UMCOR is currently operating projects in those regions of Sri Lanka to ensure that the most vulnerable families can rebuild and regain control over their lives.

Staffing in UMCOR Sri Lanka

UMCOR Sri Lanka's hiring practices follow the recruitment policy for both nationals and expatriates. The

policy states: "UMCOR Sri Lanka is committed to the equal employment opportunity principle and is fully dedicated to the fair and equal treatment of all employees without taking into account gender, race, color, religion or belief, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, disability, or marital status...." (*National Employees Personnel Policies Manual*, 2009).

In addition to practicing a competitive recruitment policy, UMCOR Sri Lanka has made intentional efforts to form a staff that is ethnically and religiously diverse. The staff includes people who are Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim, and Burger (a Eurasian ethnic group descended from colonizing populations). Our workplace facilitates a prototype of interfaith community from the onset of recruitment. We believe in peaceful coexistence and mutual respect for one another. Members of an interfaith staff—including Buddhists, Hindus,



UMCOR Sri Lanka distributes relief supplies in Batticaloa after 2011 floods.
Photo: Courtesy UMCOR Sri Lanka

Muslims, and Christians—work together to serve human needs, and, by doing so, model wholeness in the Sri Lankan society and at UMCOR's workplace.

UMCOR Sri Lanka staff members respect one another's views on race, culture, and faith. We also take into account gender equality by promoting women to management levels throughout the organization. When advertising a position, we state: "Women are encouraged to apply." We have fewer female staff members out in the field because of ethnic wars and the cultural practices of local populations. Yet we continuously strive to create a more just workplace.

Recently, we have also diversified the expatriate workforce. Currently, we have expatriates from the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia. The practice of hiring a diverse national and international staff in no way compromises the quality of our work or program standards. Our international staff understands and respects the cultural sensitivity of the local population.

Diversity has made the UMCOR workplace dynamic and open to new ideas for program productivity. Even though, at times, national staff has found it hard to understand those from other parts of the world, gradually we adjust to different accents and learn to enunciate clearly and speak more slowly.

UMCOR reaches out to vulnerable communities, striving to serve

One of my life goals is to bring people together to respond to need and to work toward eradicating extreme poverty. The motivation and compassion that drive my work stem from my faith.

Thomas P. Dwyer, Executive Director, UMCOR's NGO unit



Besta Kide learns about sewing from Rehema Ajiba Asga, who teaches a skills training class in a community center in Mugwo, Southern Sudan, a program sponsored by UMCOR.

Photo: Paul Jeffrey

the unreached. Race, cast, religion, color—none are barriers. Our ability to lend a hand to those who need to be lifted is the main criteria for our involvement. Our UMC clergy, lay workers, volunteers, and UMCOR staff members of all faiths follow the principle of John Wesley: "Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can."

Nina Fernando is Information Officer and Gimhani Kariyawasam, Human Resource and Administrative Officer for UMCOR Sri Lanka.

UMCOR Haiti

by Elizabeth Petheo

Integration of cultures and experiences is central to the functioning of UMCOR's operations in Haiti. Of the 26 staff members at the UMCOR Haiti mission, 20 are Haitians who bring a depth of expertise to Haiti's situation. The six international staff members hail from four different countries—all having diverse work experience to share. This staff make-up results in open dialogue and open support for many points of view and program suggestions.

Our all-staff monthly meetings exemplify this dynamic. The meetings are led and organized by a rotating chair, chosen each month from a different program and operational team. This rotation enables a regular sharing of knowledge throughout the office.

The give-and-take dynamic within the Haiti office extends beyond our internal work to our relationships with other humanitarian and government agencies working in Haiti. Partnerships and collaboration are central to the way that UMCOR Haiti operates—including both partnerships

within the UMCOR family and ones with government agencies and other international and local organizations. Some interactions may be formal, as in sector coordination meetings with UN working groups concerned with livelihoods, shelter, or agriculture. Others may be informal, as in a simple reaching out to partners to find places where there may be

opportunities for synergy. Forums like the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance provide the opportunity for both global and local conversations about humanitarian access, policies, and approaches used by various ecumenical members.

Elizabeth Petheo serves as Head of Mission for UMCOR-Haiti.



A Women's Livelihood program of UMCOR in Armenia 2004 enabled a weaving and sewing coop for young craftswomen.
Photo: Zaven Khachikyan



Gohar Grigorian, Head of Mission for Armenia.
Photo: UMCOR Armenia

UMCOR Armenia Volunteers

by Pamela Karg

"It touched my heart," said Nina, a member of a United Methodist Volunteers-in-Mission (UMVIM) team from Wisconsin. "We couldn't really communicate in words, but we commu-

nicated in our actions toward each other—sharing a table, sitting together with cups of coffee, hugging babies."

Nina and five other Wisconsinites came to Armenia at the invitation of UMCOR to assist in the village of Areni. Four team members worked side by side with local people to renovate the Areni school gym, used by village children and seniors year-round. Another member worked with teachers in the classroom, introducing new ideas and activities to the children. Nina simply wanted to hug babies during the team's two weeks in the village, and she did.

In addition to the team's work and financial contributions, the school staff, local businesses, the women's committee of the local farmers' cooperative, and even the children got involved in every aspect of the remodeling. The team also provided some "extras" for the school—new gym equipment, new chairs, and new books for the library.

"At first, after we learned that the team members were between ages



Wisconsin volunteer working on the Areni school gym. Photo: Courtesy UMCOR Armenia.

52 and 72, I wasn't sure what to expect," admitted Srбуhi, principal of the Areni School, which has an enrollment of 300 students in grades one through 11. But after the first day of work, the principal continued, "I knew something special was happening in this small international project. The team members may be older, in terms of years lived, but their spirits were so young that they really inspired us all."

As part of their two-week mission, the UMVIMs became acquainted with the Armenian culture, customs, and traditions and visited some of Armenia's historic sites. Armenians, too, learned more about Americans as they experienced international collaboration and formed new friendships.

"There might be 10,000 miles and language differences between us physically," Nina reflected, "but we could still touch each other's lives just by showing care and respect."

Pamela Karg was team leader for the Wisconsin 2008 UMVIM team to Armenia.

I really enjoy working for the community as part of a united family.

M. Kavitha, Livelihoods Program Trainer in the Mullaitivu field office, northern Sri Lanka

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Working at Global Ministries is a great experience that helps you to understand other people and get closer to them. *It is very nice to work in a multicultural, multiethnic setting and I am grateful to this work environment.* I think working with a multinational, multiethnic staff is a blessing and a gift that few people in our local churches get to experience. *Being part of a multinational, multiethnic staff configuration is one of the greatest benefits, as well as, at times, one of the biggest challenges of working at the Board.* It's an opportunity for learning and engaging with a broad range of people from different places, cultures, values, and customs that can enhance one's own walk in life and formation of oneself. *I love it.* My understanding of God's world and mission has grown and expanded beyond my imagination. I am so proud to be a part of one of the greatest mission organizations in Christian history. *Working here was kind of tough at the beginning, but now I am actually proud to work for Global Ministries. I learned a lot and there is more room to grow.* The Staff is not only multinational and multiethnic, but also multicultural and interdenominational, multicolor, multiracial, and multilingual. Each one's contribution is unique, crucial, marvelous, and wonderful. I have seen God's presence in each one. Through our differences, we are all aiming and advocating for a common purpose—Christ—and causes: eradicate causes of suffering and we "reach out to the poor." *It has been exciting to learn from others' experiences and their travels. Together we have learned that addiction is prevalent worldwide. We are working together to seam together the continued effort of SPSARV to offer The United Methodist Church's response to drugs, alcohol, and violence.* It is fascinating to exchange worldviews and theological perspectives for the sake of mission. *Such a working environment allows one to learn differences and similarities and obtain an understanding and appreciation for cultural differences.* I enjoy the diversity and learning. *The diversity of the workplace is one of the perks of this job. There is always someone with a new perspective, a different culture, a story about an unfamiliar place or upbringing to learn about, and that makes the work environment an exciting and vibrant place to spend my days.* The work environment is rich and stimulating. *It is exciting to learn about other cultures through the experience of working side by side with many from other countries and cultures.* I love seeing and sharing in the beautiful diversity of God's world. I believe that working and living in New York City is a global and worldly experience. I love learning about my colleagues' lives—their histories, languages, families, struggles, and hopes. (We share these in our lunch time creative writing group.) *It is wonderful to hear so many different languages in a work environment.* It is a great experience to be able to contribute to our community, which represents such a diverse background. It is a blessing to feel that all cultures are valued. *This is the best of Global Ministries: God's children, from all over the world, working together to make disciples of Jesus Christ to transform the world.* This work is really interesting and exciting. It provides a great possibility to learn about other nationalities and countries, their traditions and cultures. *The community spirit is built over time and it can have ups and downs during the phases of mission operations. The sense of one community is upheld and reinforced by the prevailing leadership, individual staff commitments and the mission's ability to train and retain qualified staff.* In the past 4 years, I sincerely feel we have managed to achieve the sense of belongingness and purpose as one UMCOR community. It is very interesting to work in a multinational environment: different people, different approaches, cultures, and ways of thinking. A lot of things to compare, share, and learn. *It is very interesting experience to be a part of a multinational team, and at the same time, very challenging. You learn to be more tolerant and understand the differences in ways of thinking and interpretation. And this work experience is adding a lot to my out-of-office life, improving my communication with friends and family members.* It is great to be part of a community that actually reflects the diversity of groups we work with. *It is really Great to be a part of the big UMCOR family, bringing hope to people in need!* This is a good experience—working with a multinational staff, you can learn a lot and gain from their experiences. *I feel blessed to work with the GBGM Staff, with its diverse members from all over the world and many of them are immigrants in search of full employment and a better life. Many staff members from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean "Christianities" are represented in GBGM. Respect for the different backgrounds, languages, and experiences of the staff: all these and more I treasure. We believe the countries, churches, and communities we come from all have a part in why we are here. I hope to keep alive our core values and mission purpose.* Working in this multinational and multiethnic environment was a challenge at the beginning but it becomes wonderful as you learn and get to know one another. *I learn every day. It is a necessary blessing. The experiences are worthwhile for learning different cultures. Programs are developed by the staff to work with immigrants and refugees with a diverse national and ethnic background. It is very rewarding and experiential. It helps to develop a sense of unity and a responsibility for each other, which promotes healthy relationships, unity, and a very favorable working environment. Working at Global Ministries is a wonderful experience that presents varied ideas, thoughts, ways and processes to ensure value-added impact of all our work and ministry.* I have worked with Georgians, Russians, Abkhazians, Americans, UK citizens, Indians, Pakistanis, Polish citizens, Armenians, Azeri citizens, and other multiethnic staff, and I have always enjoyed learning and sharing different customs and traditions. All people are kind and benevolent in their core—this is my strong understanding of the human condition. *Working with the GBGM staff has been a blessing. I have learned a lot from working for GBGM/UMCOR mission. I am now working with people of diverse backgrounds and ethnicities and I have learned a lot from their perspective. My friendship with a Filipina who is a political refugee has changed my view of immigration, and I now understand immigrants in this country may have reasons for being here other than economic ones.* It is very rewarding to be part of God's master plan in a united world, sharing and experiencing different cultures, learning a different way of seeing things, and cherishing that there are different world views and enriching cultures beyond mine. *It helps to broaden my horizon for living in both personal and professional. Working within a multinational, multiethnic staff constantly reminds me that God is the author of all and that we are all God's people. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" as we work together to create relationships with God's people in all places.* I was blessed to have my beginning in Institutional Ministries, where I was not only exposed to a multiethnic staff, but also to multinational communities. That was one of the most enjoyable experiences of service that I have ever encountered. *I feel so at home in the midst of our diversity.* It is a wonderful place where you learn so much about so many. *It has been a very rich experience, and I appreciate the diversity.* There is so much to learn, appreciate, and rejoice in the differences a person has with other peoples. This makes us uniquely rich in knowledge, understanding, and a recognition of how all our lives are connected and linked to one another. *GBGM is a very diverse working environment and has great opportunities for learning and great cultural exchanges!* When I open myself to the world, to peoples and cultures other than my own, I learn not only who the other is but who I am. In my experience, being able to do so at work, around a shared endeavor, deepens the outcome while opening a universe of possibilities. *While it is challenging, it is also rewarding to see and be among such a diverse population. Fantastic learning experience!* Working in a multinational and multiethnic arena has afforded me a lot of knowledge of other countries, and I learn things that are not mentioned in the news. This has allowed me to see more clearly God's mission in all that is done at Global Ministries. *The opportunity to work with people of other cultures, ethnicities, and nationalities is a gift. I don't know anywhere, except maybe the United Nations, that a staff has such an opportunity. Together we transcend our national identities and form the beloved community of God.*

Making the Global Conversation Possible

The Staff of the General Board of Global Ministries

Actual statements from Global Ministries' staff members.

New World Outlook

surveyed the staff of Global Ministries to determine where staff members come from, how many languages they speak, how many countries they've lived in, and how many countries they've traveled to in a year's time.

Taking the survey was entirely voluntary and self-directed. A total of 188 Global Ministries' staff members were sent the survey and 108 responded. In addition, the field offices of UMCOR joined in the survey, but we are not entirely sure how many received the survey link, so our total universe of possible respondents can not be accurately calculated.

From what country or US state did you originate?

Staff members come from 27 different countries and 24 different US states

27

Countries (Blue pins on the world map)

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Armenia | Indonesia | South Africa |
| Brazil | Jamaica | South Korea |
| China | Korea | Sri Lanka |
| DR Congo | Liberia | St Thomas (US Virgin Islands) |
| Dominican Republic | Mexico | Trinidad & Tobago |
| El Salvador | Nepal | Uganda |
| Germany | Pakistan | Ukraine |
| Haiti | Panama | Venezuela |
| India | Philippines | |
| | Puerto Rico | |

24

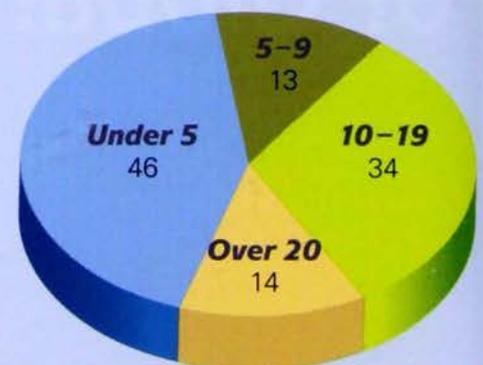
US States (Green pins on the world map)

- | | | |
|------------|----------------|----------------|
| Alabama | Maryland | Oklahoma |
| Arkansas | Michigan | Pennsylvania |
| California | Minnesota | South Carolina |
| Florida | New Hampshire | Tennessee |
| Indiana | New Jersey | Texas |
| Illinois | New York | Vermont |
| Kentucky | North Carolina | Virginia |
| Louisiana | Ohio | Washington |

0-27

How many years have you worked for Global Ministries?

Years of Service



3

In how many countries have you lived and worked?

The average number of countries Global Ministries' staff members have lived in: 3

Number of Countries Lived in	Number of Staff
1	38
2	30
3	17
4	4
5	5
6	5
7	3
8	3
21	1

63

How many different countries have Global Ministries' staff traveled to this year for work-related purposes?

Total Number of Different Countries: 63

38

Languages spoken by staff

- Arabic
- Armenian
- Bemba
- Chinese (Cantonese)
- Chinese (Mandarin)
- Chinese (Toishanese)
- Chokwe
- Creole
- English
- French
- Georgian
- German
- Hindi
- Indonesian
- Italian
- Iwena
- Kihemba
- Kiluba
- Kiswahili
- Korean
- Ligala
- Luo
- Nyanja
- Pilipino
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Sanga
- Serbo-Croatian
- Sinhala
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Tagalog
- Tamil
- Tshibemba
- Tshiluba
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Uruund

2

How many languages do you speak?

The average number of languages spoken by Global Ministries' staff members: 2

Number of Languages I Speak	Number of Staff
1	30
2	37
3	24
4	6
5	1
6	1
7	1
8	1
12	1

Cabinet members of the General Board of Global Ministries

Currently, the cabinet of the General Board of Global Ministries comprises seven staff members. As general secretary, deputy general secretaries, and associate general secretaries, they oversee all mission ministries conducted by the United Methodist mission agency.

Thomas Kemper



Thomas Kemper is general secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries. The first person from a conference outside the United

States to head a United Methodist general agency, Mr. Kemper is responsible for personnel, projects, and mission partnerships in more than 135 countries. He served as a missionary in Brazil for eight years with The United Methodist Church in Germany, his home church, and as secretary of the Board of Missions and International Church Cooperation for the Germany Central Conference.

Jorge Domingues



The Rev. Jorge Domingues has served as deputy general secretary for the Mission and Evangelism program

area of Global Ministries since 2010. Ordained by the Methodist Church in Brazil, Rev. Domingues came to Global Ministries in 1996 as executive secretary for Youth and Young Adults in the World Division. Since then, he has served as assistant general secretary for Mission Contexts and Relationships and as associate general secretary for Mission Contexts and Relationships, Evangelization and Church Growth, and Mission Education.

Cynthia Fierro Harvey



The Rev. Cynthia Fierro Harvey serves as deputy general secretary for the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Rev. Harvey, an

ordained deacon, worked with the Texas Conference in providing disaster relief after hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 and Hurricane Ike in 2009. Fluent in Spanish and trained in journalism, Rev. Harvey served on the boards of the United Methodist General Commission on Communications and the Foundation for United Methodist Communications.

Harriett Jane Olson



Harriett Jane Olson has served since 2007 as deputy general secretary of Global Ministries' Women's Division, making her

chief executive officer of the national administrative and policymaking arm of United Methodist Women. A Harvard graduate and attorney, Ms. Olson was a partner at the Pitney, Hardin, Kipp and Szuch law firm of Morristown, New Jersey, before working for the church full-time. Prior to leading the Women's Division, Ms. Olson served at the United Methodist Publishing House.

Shawn Bakker



Shawn Bakker is an associate general secretary, Director of The Advance, the designated giving channel of The United Methodist

Church. Before joining Global Ministries, she was founder and director

of Project Transformation, a not-for-profit organization that connected opportunity-seeking young adult leaders to urban communities. She is a commissioned deacon in the North Texas Conference and has received the Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) credential.

Dr. Larry R. Hygh, Jr.



Dr. Larry R. Hygh, Jr., is an associate general secretary, Director of Communications for the General Board of Global Ministries. Prior to

Global Ministries, Hygh served as a United Methodist communicator in the California-Pacific, Baltimore-Washington, Mississippi, and New England annual conferences. He has also anchored and reported for the *Crown City News*, an independently produced cable newscast in Pasadena, California, and the San Gabriel Valley.

Roland Fernandes



Roland Fernandes is the general treasurer of the General Board of Global Ministries. Since 1995, he has served Global Ministries as financial

executive for the India and Philippines area; comptroller of the United Methodist Committee on Relief; and associate treasurer of the General Board of Global Ministries. Before coming to Global Ministries, Mr. Fernandes was chief auditor of the Methodist Church in India.

Photos: Felipe Castillo, Cassandra M. Zampini, Don Loft.

missionmemo



Worldwide UMC Committee, 2012 General Conference

The 2012 United Methodist General Conference is being challenged to more fully embrace the denomination's expanding worldwide presence and ministry. After seeking input from around the world, an international panel has completed its proposals for the 2012 General Conference in Tampa, Florida. The 20-member Committee to Study the Worldwide Nature of The United Methodist Church is submitting legislation to:

Incorporate a new worldwide United Methodist Church covenant into the *Book of Discipline*. The covenant will be accompanied by a "Litany for the Covenant of The Worldwide United Methodist Church";

Create a new global *Book of Discipline* that specifies the decisions of the General Conference and which areas of ministry and organization are adaptable by central conferences;

Clarify how general agencies function in a worldwide, rather than United States-centric, church;

More clearly model Wesleyan Holy Conferencing in a worldwide church to bring greater equity between church ministries outside the United States and those within; and

Set in motion a process for annual conferences to study a proposed new model for a worldwide church. The study process may result in petitions for greater structural change for the 2016 General Conference.

A Bold Act of Compassion

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, UMCOR developed a multifaceted response in the United States and overseas, including an ongoing program in Afghanistan. UMCOR's board of directors approved the plan to open a field office in Afghanistan, following a spring 2002 assessment trip by UMCOR NGO Regional Director, Guy Hovey. "There was suffering there," said UMCOR treasurer Roland Fernandes.

Returning Afghan refugees found that the departing Taliban had destroyed homes, farms, irrigation systems, schools, hospitals, and other infrastructure—in a country where there was not a lot of social and economic infrastructure to begin with and where destruction provoked by war was ongoing. Today, more than 130,000 people have benefited over the years from UMCOR-built

or refurbished schools and health clinics; more than 11,000 families in Kabul have received assistance for income-generating projects, livestock, and livelihoods. They also have access to clean water in Kabul province, Afghanistan, thanks to UMCOR projects there.

Crisis in the Horn of Africa

The result of years of drought in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya are causing widespread hunger and famine. According to the United Nations, today's drought is the worst the region has seen in half a century and has left an estimated 11 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. It has provoked acute malnutrition and death, especially among children and other vulnerable populations. In a recent effort, UMCOR has partnered with International Blue Crescent to provide milk, vegetables, and other nutritional supplements to 1,000 children living in Somali camps.

Somalia, where relief efforts have been hampered by ongoing violence and war, has seen tens of thousands of its weakened citizens fleeing to neighboring Kenya and Ethiopia. The Somali population in three refugee camps in Dadaab, Kenya, has increased by more than 30 percent. Nearly half the population—3.7 million people—is estimated to be in crisis, the UN said.

UMCOR is working with ACT Alliance, Church World Service, GlobalMedic, and Muslim Aid to devise a regional response to the famine and is asking that donations be given to **Horn of Africa, Advance #982450**.

DEATHS...Irene Patrikios, retired missionary with almost 11 years of service in DR Congo, died June 23, 2011...

Edwin Williams II, retired missionary with 3 years of service in Borneo, Sarawak, and Hong Kong, died June 30, 2011...

Gerald Janousek, retired missionary with 7 years of service in Liberia, died July 2, 2011...

J. Clagett Taylor, retired missionary with 6 years of service in Zimbabwe, died July 10, 2011...

Helen Halstead, retired missionary with 4 years of service in India, died July 29, 2011...

Alfred Bohr, retired missionary with 17 years of service in Nigeria, died August 14, 2011...
Irene Cole, retired Evangelical United Brethren missionary with 43 years of service in the United States, died August 26, 2011.

Welcome to God's Mission Mission Volunteers

by Malcolm Frazier



Children at the House of Hope Orphanage in Honduras. Photo: Courtesy Kayla Austin

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The Mission Volunteers office of the General Board of Global Ministries coordinates the movement of volunteers all across the United Methodist connection. Working cooperatively with the jurisdictional coordinators of the United Methodist Volunteers-in-Mission (UMVIM) networks, this office assists individual volunteers with training and places them in United Methodist-related ministries around the world. Of the young adult missionaries commissioned by Global Ministries as US-2s and Mission Interns in August 2011, more than half experienced their call to mission while participating in Volunteer-in-Mission trips sponsored by their churches or colleges.

From North Carolina to Tanzania

In a Maasai tribal village located in Tanzania, east Africa, preparations were being made for the construction of a preschool. Waiting in Tanzania for the arrival of a work group of volunteers from Oklahoma, who were coming to help build the preschool, was Matthew Watts. A young adult native of North Carolina, Watts represented the volunteer team's Tanzanian hosts. He had been placed in Morogoro, Tanzania, by the Mission Volunteers office of Global Ministries to serve as an Individual Volunteer, beginning his service there in January 2011.

Watts' responsibilities in Tanzania include teaching English and ICT (Information, Communication, Technology) at the Wesley Primary School in Morogoro. He is also one of the mediators for the Morogoro United Methodist Church, which facilitates partnerships with churches in the United States.

Watts' parents, home church, teachers, college chaplain, friends, and previous pastors in North Carolina were all involved in opening his eyes to the world of serving others. His first local mission experience was with a United Methodist summer program in South Carolina called *Salkehatchie*—a ministry that enables young people to use their hands and hearts for God. His first international mission experience had been a placement with the People's Central Institute in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. There, he served in the nursery and helped with basic maintenance work.

But to Matthew Watts, mission involves much more than the physical work that may be required. He describes his life's journey as a mission experience—one that first began with God's love for him and then with his desire to share that love with everyone around him. To him, the true importance of mission is not found in the work itself, such as the building of a school. Instead, its greatest value lies in the heart of the mission experience—the communion with God and with all God's children.

The United Methodist connectional system, of which Matt Watts is a part, provides the means wherein churches in the United States can join in the global conversation, as by supporting the ministry in Tanzania, for example. When Watts returns to the United States, he will make church-to-church visits—a great way to maintain his connection with US churches and to make their connection with the ministry in Morogoro more meaningful.

To prepare himself for his current ministry in Tanzania, Watts attended an Individual Volunteer training event held in New York City in October 2010. Volunteer training events are coordinated by Nancy Eubanks, a Global Ministries' consultant who is responsible for the recruitment and placement of Individual Volunteers. Eubanks herself served as an Individual Volunteer in Nicaragua and Estonia. She also served for eight years on Global Ministries' Board of Directors. In addition, her background includes an eight-year stint



Matthew Watts with Maasai children in Tanzania. Photo: Courtesy Matthew Watts

as the Volunteer-in-Mission coordinator for the Memphis Annual Conference. Currently, Eubanks serves the Memphis Conference as Conference Secretary for Global Ministries.

From Washington, DC, to New York

Like Matt Watts, I participated in an Individual Volunteer training event—my training taking place in the state of Georgia in May 2010. In part, that event was responsible for my current appointment as Global Ministries' executive director of Mission Volunteers. In this position, I am responsible for managing the Individual Volunteer program. I also collaborate with each of the five UMVIM jurisdictional coordinators. Before joining the Mission Volunteers staff, I served for 11 years as Director of the Wesley Foundation



Kayla Austin, a volunteer from Tennessee, serves at the House of Hope in Honduras. Photo: Courtesy Kayla Austin



The Mission Volunteers team: left to right, Administrative Assistant Glendora Dazle, Program Associate Giuseppina Avitia, Assistant General Secretary Una Jones, and Executive Secretary Malcom Frazier. Photo: Felipe Castillo

United Campus Ministry at Howard University in Washington, D.C. The Wesley Foundation ministry is part of the Baltimore-Washington Conference. One of my ministries at Howard University was missions, leading me to call upon the resources of both the conference United Methodist Volunteers-in-Mission representative and the jurisdictional coordinator. Eventually, I served as one of Baltimore-Washington Conference's Volunteers-in-Mission representatives myself, so I am a product of the UMVIM program.

From Illinois to Peru and Bolivia

On May 13-14, 2009, a collaborative conference was held in Puno, Peru. In attendance were Methodist leaders from Peru and Bolivia, along with representatives of the First United Methodist Church in Boise, Idaho. The purpose of the conference was to determine how to minister to residents of the high plateau around Lake Titicaca, the largest high-altitude lake in the world. Lake Titicaca spans the border between the highlands of southeastern Peru and west central Bolivia.

The 2009 conference resulted in the establishment of *Mision Fronteras*, a Lake Titicaca Border Ministry. Key to the success of this ministry was the work of Dr. Scott and Beverly Pressman, a couple who served on the Bolivian side of the lake through the Individual Volunteer program.

None of this history was known to Jeff Wasilevich and Debbie Rissing, a couple from Downers Grove, Illinois, as they were deciding about their future. Their period of discernment included an Individual Volunteers training and orientation event in which they learned about the

Lake Titicaca Border Ministry. After they completed their training, Jeff and Debbie participated in a mission trip with their local church. The mission site they visited turned out to be near the residence of Nancy Eubanks. So Nancy met with Jeff and Debbie about a potential placement in Bolivia.

While seriously considering this possibility, the couple traveled to Bolivia to meet with Scott and Beverly Pressman. After two weeks spent learning about the ministry there, Jeff and Debbie decided to accept the assignment. In an early communication, the two describe one of the ministry's goals—to provide space for a residential senior center in a multifunctional church complex.

The planned center is to provide support for the *abandonados*—elders who had been spiritually and physically strong and independent throughout their earlier lives but who had become sick, malnourished, and faced with homelessness in their old age.

Activities planned for the senior center include nutrition classes, health clinics, and handicraft lessons.

Yet this center—envisioned just two years ago, when a few concerned individuals engaged in a global conversation—is just one of the ministries being undertaken by the Lake Titicaca Border Ministry. The supporters of and volunteers at this ministry are connected through a system in which information is shared and direction is given. By working within the United Methodist connectional system, our volunteers become models, showing how our global community networks make partnership in mission possible.

From South Africa to New York

Helping to make these connections is part of the leadership responsibility of Una Jones, Assistant General Secretary for Mission Volunteers and Conference Relations. Jones is originally from Johannesburg, South Africa, where she taught school for many years. She arrived in the United States in 1990, working in corporate-gift management and university-related marketing before joining the Global Ministries staff 12 years ago. Previously serving as Assistant General Secretary of The Advance, Jones now manages the Mission Volunteer programs. Her work is supported by the UMVIM jurisdictional coordinators, and jointly they relate to the annual conferences. In her present capacity, Jones

I am a product of the UMVIM program.
Malcolm Frazier

networks with Mission Evangelism, UMCOR, and The Advance to link missionaries and projects and to discover new opportunities for partnership within God's mission.

Benefits of the Connection

By working through the Individual Volunteer program, mission volunteers receive the benefit of the United

Methodist connectional system. For example, they can arrange to have their financial support processed through The Advance—an accountable, designated-giving arm of The United Methodist Church. The Advance ensures that 100 percent of each gift reaches its intended mission or ministry. Many volunteers solicit financial support through their local churches or other United Methodist-related agencies or institutions. *The Individual Volunteer Advance number is 982465.*

The staff person who manages the receipt and disbursement of these funds is Giussepina Avitia, the Program Associate for Mission Evangelism. Giusy (as she is called), who is originally from Texas, began working at Global Ministries in 2008 in the Mission Education Department. She now manages the United Methodist Volunteers-in-Mission Insurance Program as well as the matching grant component of the UMVIM Haiti Response Plan.

Providing administrative support for the Individual Volunteer Program—and for all other Mission Volunteer

programs, as well—is Administrative Assistant Glendora Dazle. She has been with Global Ministries for 20 years.

Global Ministries Staff Collaboration

The Mission Volunteers office partners with Global Ministries' Mission Evangelism staff to facilitate the placement of volunteers. Maggie Armstrong, who took part in the July 2011 Mission Volunteer training event in Arkansas, had her first mission experience as part of a hurricane relief team to Mississippi. She credits her youth minister for giving her that opportunity. During worship services, Armstrong has given personal testimonies about her mission experiences.

Armstrong was interested in going to India, but Executive Secretary of Mission Relations, Rebecca Asedillo,

recommended a potential placement in China. Originally from the Philippines, Asedillo coordinates work in the Asia-Pacific region. The placement process for Mission Volunteers includes coordination, dialogue, and discernment to ensure that the match of the individual volunteer to the project is mutually agreeable.

The benefits of Mission Volunteers' collaboration with Global Ministries regional staff are mutual. Currently, there are 100 Individual Volunteers in service. They can be found in a number of countries around the world. If we are to achieve our goal of connecting the church in mission, global conversations such as these must continue.

Malcolm Frazier is the Executive Director of Mission Volunteers for Global Ministries.

Individual Volunteers

For information about Global Ministries' Individual Volunteer program and the 2012 training events, go to <http://new.gbqm-umc.org/about/us/mv/programs/individualvolunteer/orientation/>.

Debbie Rissing and Jeff Wasilevich (center) with men from the Lake Titicaca Border Ministry projects.

Photo: Courtesy Rissing and Wasilevich.





ออมสิน
Government Savings Bank

Coming Home: Global Conversations in Chiang-Mai, Thailand

by Jorge Lockward



Global Praise team member, Gladys Mangiduyos (far right) from the Philippines, with children in Thailand. Photo: Courtesy Global Praise.

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I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; I will say to the north, "Give them up," and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth—everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

Isaiah 43:5b-7

"...Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God. Indeed, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

Luke 13:29-30

At the very heart of the gospel is God's deep intention and ardent desire to bring all nations together at the table. Like a mother whose greatest delight is in seeing her scattered offspring come home to be together, nothing pleases God so much as the sight of God's children working, sharing, and learning together.

God's work of salvation is not about "fixing the problems of the world," but rather, "reconciling the relationships of the world"—to the Creator and to one another. To be in mission is to join God in creating, facilitating, and engaging in the actions and conversations that lead to this reconciliation, this "coming together around the table."

In January 2011, I had the privilege of coordinating a training event in Chiang-Mai, Thailand, sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries through its Global Praise Program. The training was designed for pastors and lay leaders of the United Methodist Mission Initiatives in Laos and Thailand.

Here are some of the lessons we learned (or learned again).

Global Partners

A Global Conversation needs global partners. Bringing together a diverse team that included Filipino, Korean, Anglo, African-American, Thai, and Hmong leadership not only enriched the conversation but actually made it possible. The visible diversity of the

leadership shaped an environment in which traditional boundaries could be crossed, making room for authentic conversation to happen. One facilitator, Taylor Burton-Edwards of the General Board of Discipleship, describes his experience this way:

The second morning in the first week, I was teaching about the basic pattern of our worship and its connection with the sacraments. I noted that the Entrance Rite corresponds with baptism, citing this as the reason why so many churches around the world have a baptismal font located at the entrance to their worship space. In response, both Thai and Lao pastors and musicians raised questions. One Thai participant noted that water is often used at the entrance to some Buddhist worship spaces as well. Would Christians using water in this way create confusion?... A Lao pastor noted that nearly all baptisms in Laos are done outdoors in a stream or lake, not usually in the worship space....These participants felt enough trust in our connection to question what I was saying.

For the Global Conversation to happen, we need to create and live in environments where every voice is heard and valued.

This often requires the grace to give up power and privilege in exchange for the gift of

community. We need to be ready for a world where *some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.* (Luke 13:30).

Safe Spaces

The Global Conversation requires safe spaces where mutual trust can be nurtured.

In planning the training event, the team agreed to use a modified version of Covenant Discipleship Groups as the structural core of our time together. Every participant, facilitator, and staff member was assigned to a group that met twice a day. Group members were to hold one another accountable and to help each other in four areas: acts of compassion, acts of justice, acts of devotion, and acts of worship. The space created by these Covenant Groups was key in nourishing and furthering the larger conversation taking place in plenaries and worship. In the words of Gladys Mangiduyos, a deaconess and Christian educator from Manila, Philippines:

The time when we convened in the plenary session, listening to speakers and singing wonderful songs in our

Global Praise team in Thailand, January 2011. Photo: Larry Hygh



own languages, was incredible.... The place was like a common table—one on which all concerns and anxieties can be laid. There, each person in the entire group partakes of a share and offers a share to another.... A real faith communion was present.

The Global Conversation requires places where we can engage in mutual hospitality, helping us recognize how beautiful we are, how different we are, and how much we need one another.

Creativity and Change

The Global Conversation requires creativity and will demand change. Someone said that the best way to get God to laugh is to tell God our plans. Charged with the task of providing foundational Wesleyan principles for the worship life of these mission initiatives, we were keen on providing a strong sacramental base. To that end, materials on United Methodist sacramental theology were translated, and workshops on the meaning of baptism and Holy Communion were offered, along with practical training for the celebrants.

Our lofty intentions came face to face with a few stark realities. Taylor Burton-Edwards describes one of them:

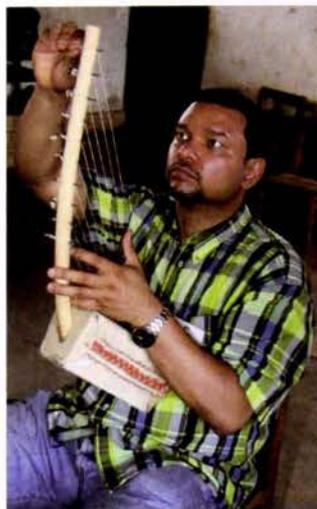
The complexities involved in seeking to be a truly global church became far more palpable to me in this experience. One complexity has to do with ordination and who is eligible to preside at sacraments. In all of Laos, I learned, there are exactly nine people authorized to preside. This is partly because the kinds of educational requirements built into our current system presume a US-based income and a largely US-based set of cultural and leadership assumptions.

Another challenge was to secure Thai, Lao, and Hmong translators who could capture the beauty of the documents while avoiding unnecessary verbosity. Some translators were quite successful in their efforts,

while others failed miserably. Yet, from this struggle and temporary disappointment, honest conversation and creative thinking led to the creation of a group, sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship, that recently finished a fully culture-sensitive adaptation of the Holy Communion ritual in the Hmong language. My sense is that this is only the first of many such successful efforts.

Out of all the amazing connections and conversations I experienced in Thailand, there is one that looms large in my soul. Khamxay Mounsengdavanh is a layperson from Laos who had blessed us with his sunny disposition and broad smile throughout the training. His wide-eyed curiosity turned every moment into an occasion for praise and thanksgiving. A few days before the end of the training, he shared with us the fruit of his work in the Composition Class. The homework assignment was to write a song on a Wesleyan theme. His was a wonderful song based on Romans 8:38-39, in which nothing, "in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

We learned that day that he suffers from a condition that puts him at constant risk of liver and renal failure. That made the moment even more poignant. On the last day of the training, it was time to take our group pictures. I was glad to end up seated next to Khamxay on the entrance steps to the hotel. And then, while still smiling for the camera—in a moment of amazing and surprising grace—Khamxay gently placed his hand on my knee in a gesture that took us both beyond the student-teacher, east-west, and south-north divisions into a space where no words were needed to say "thank you." In like



Jorge Lockward.
Photo: Chris Heckert

manner, no theological statements are necessary to understand our oneness in Christ.

Jorge Alfonso Lockward was born and raised in the Dominican Republic in a family with deep roots in the Wesleyan and

*Brethren traditions. He seeks to bring "all of God's children" together in a rich, multicultural, multiethnic, and sacramental worship experience. Currently, he lives in New York City, where he directs the Global Praise Program at Global Ministries. Jorge was a committee member of the Spanish-language United Methodist Hymnal, *Mil Voces para Celebrar*, and has served as a consultant on other denominational hymnals. He is the editor of *Regocijate y Canta* (1995), a collection of Latino worship choruses, and of *Tenemos Esperanza* (2001) a trilingual (Spanish, Portuguese, English) songbook and recording, and has participated in creating other works in the *Global Praise* collection.*

*The Rev. Debra Tyree, a deacon of The United Methodist Church, serves in the Global Praise program and resides in Nashville, Tennessee. Before joining Global Ministries, she served the United Methodist Publishing House as Music Resources Development Editor. There, she was managing editor of the magazine *Church Music Workshop* and editor of a series of music leadership books and a variety of music resources, including anthems, musicals, and songbooks. Currently Debi also serves as a part-time Minister of Music at Bellevue United Methodist Church in Nashville, which serves as a testing ground for her teaching concepts.*



Debra Tyree.
Photo: Chris Heckert

The Missionary at the Mission Hub

by Elliott Wright



Cathy Whitlatch and other Global Ministries staff give praise for the young adult mission interns and US-2s commissioned in August 2011 at The Interchurch Center.

Photo: Cassandra M. Zampini

Ministries. Her experience also facilitates the agency's objective of connecting the church in mission. Cathy and Ron served in Argentina for 15 years and then as missionaries related to the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries in the United States. Also, from 2008 to 2011, she was Mission Interpreter in the Western Jurisdiction. At one point during the Argentine years, she took time out to complete basic seminary training and became an ordained elder of the Rocky Mountain Conference and, later, of the Iowa Conference.

Arrival at Global Ministries

"I wasn't quite sure what it would be like to be a missionary at Global Ministries," Cathy said in an interview during the summer of 2011, near the start of her three-year term as Missionary-in-Residence. "Being a missionary is not just a job and a salary," she continued, "but it's taking the gospel into the world. I wondered if my missionary ways would fit into a corporate environment. But I needn't have worried. I was warmly welcomed by everyone and soon knew I was surrounded by people who shared my goals."

Missionaries are called by God, sent by the church, and received by a community. The Rev. Catherine Whitlatch has the current distinction of having the same sender and receiver. She is the new Missionary-in-Residence at the General Board of Global Ministries, the mission agency through which she has served for more than 23 years, both as a layperson and as an ordained pastor in Argentina and the United States. The Missionary-in-Residence was once thought of solely as a representative of—or advocate for—missionaries at Global Ministries, the mission hub. The position is still that but it's much more these days.

"Cathy is the presence of the missionary community in everything we do at Global Ministries," says Thomas Kemper. Mr. Kemper, whose title is general secretary, is chief executive of the agency, which has mission personnel in some 60 countries. "She is available to all of our offices and programs," he adds, "not just to those related directly to missionary activities. She brings the insights and experience of missionary service into our organizational life."

Cathy Whitlatch and her husband Ronald have broad missionary experience and a wide network of mission contacts, which enhance her contributions at Global



A symbol of the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, who, for 30 years, have sought to find the families of children kidnapped during Argentina's military dictatorship. Photo: Courtesy the Whitlatch family

Cathy arrived at an opportune time for the sharing of insights into what it means to be a missionary today. Her arrival coincided with the training of 26 new young adult missionaries. She quickly involved herself with the incoming classes of Mission Interns and US-2 missionaries, becoming a favorite presence for the young people and taking part in a spirited service of commissioning on August 18.

"Aren't they wonderful?" she said of the new youthful missionaries. "They have so much excitement and commitment. I am so encouraged that the church and Global Ministries are excited about the potential of young adult missionaries." Asked why she applied for the post of Missionary-in-Residence, Cathy said: "I am greatly encouraged by the course I see Global Ministries taking under the present leadership. There's a strong affirmation of the missionary community—such clear vision—and I wanted to be part of it."

As Missionary-in-Residence, Cathy has a range of responsibilities and reports directly to the general secretary. She takes part in new missionary training and policy discussions on matters of missionary service. She also edits a newsletter, called "Mission Matters," for the missionary community and has taken on the task of working out an email distribution system. She plans to strengthen ties between Global Ministries and retired missionaries. "Our retirees are

important interpreters of mission," she affirmed.

She is also available for missionaries who may need a special listening ear. While all missionaries have supportive staff liaisons, some situations may require the special guidance of a missionary colleague. Cathy gains spiritual strength for her new role from a prayer in Psalm 16:11: "Show me the path of life, O God." She says this prayer reminds her that each new missionary assignment requires a time of learning the new surroundings—peoples, places, customs. "This prayer helps me to focus on God as my guide," she explains, "and on God's promise of abundant life for all."

Call to Missionary Service

God's guidance of Cathy and Ron Whitlatch into missionary life began while Ron was studying for a Master of Sacred Theology degree at the Drew University School of Theology in Madison, New Jersey. He had already completed a Master of Divinity degree as part of the ordination track at the Methodist Theological School in Delaware, Ohio. Cathy was then a high school teacher and mother of two young children. (A third child was born in Argentina.) She grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, one of Joe and Ruth Wimsatt's 13 children. In 1974, she earned a degree in mathematics and education from Ohio Wesleyan University.



A storefront church of the Methodist Church of Argentina. Photo: Courtesy the Whitlatch family

"Ron did some courses at Drew with Tracey Jones," Cathy said, referring to a former missionary who was general secretary of Global Ministries from 1968 until the 1980s and taught at Drew after retirement. "Ron was strongly influenced by Jones's mission theology," she continued, "and did his thesis on the concept of 'the simple life' in service to Jesus Christ. Ron came home from school one day and asked me if I would consider living a simple existence in response to God's grace and, maybe, become a missionary. I was willing to think about it. While it took some time to work things out, Ron, the children, and I put our lives on the line and went to Argentina in 1983. Ron was a pastor in the Argentina Evangelical Methodist Church, a very old congregation. Initially, I worked with women and children's ministries. Then I became a lay pastor. After nine years, we came back to the States, where I studied at Iliff School of Theology in Denver. Ron worked as a peace and justice educator in the Rocky Mountain Conference. We then went back to Argentina, where I, too, was an ordained pastor. We were there another six wonderful years of mission and blessing."



A Hispanic cultural festival on the streets of Columbus Junction, Iowa. Cathy and Ron Whitlatch served as missionaries with the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries in the Iowa Annual Conference. Photo: Courtesy the Whitlatch family

The Whitlatches speak with reverence about their years in Mendoza, Argentina, where the Methodist Church was 120 years old. Ron joined Cathy in the interview to talk about their time there. "The congregation began at a time when it was illegal for any Argentine church to hold worship in Spanish," Ron said. "The reason was that the Roman Catholic mass was in Latin. So, the Protestants held services in English. Later, after the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, Spanish-language worship was permitted and the Methodists switched to the vernacular."

Mission emphases in Mendoza included new church development, education for mothers and children, and measures to address the acute unemployment there. Cathy served as both pastor and chaplain of an Argentine Methodist school for special-needs children.

Hispanic/Latino Ministries

From 2001 into 2008, Cathy and Ron worked with Hispanic/Latino ministries in the Iowa Annual Conference. Cathy was a pastor in Columbus Junction, a town where immigrants

made up more than 50 percent of the population. Ron worked with the Hispanic/Latino National Plan in that area and on the annual conference level.

The Columbus Junction congregation became a part of the Justice for Our Neighbors Program. Sponsored by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), this program offers clinics on immigration issues to any who need such services. Columbus Junction is in the vicinity of Muscatine, a center of the meat-packing industry, which draws many immigrants to Iowa. During Cathy's pastorate, the church added two new worship services—one, in Spanish; the other, an informal, contemporary celebration.

From mid-2008 to July 2011, Cathy was Mission-Interpreter-in-Residence for the Western Jurisdiction, based in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference, where Ron was conference director of the Hispanic Ministry Training Institute. Cathy says that she loved the work of relating to conferences, districts, and local churches to interpret the global work of mission and to promote missionary support through *The Advance*. When Cathy moved

to the Global Ministries' office, Ron continued as a missionary related to the Hispanic/Latino plan, assigned to a ministry geared to a large Brazilian population in the Danbury, Connecticut, area of the New York Annual Conference.

Cathy and Ron have three grown children. Meg continues to live and study in Argentina. While she finishes her medical degree, she teaches biology at the Methodist High School. Hays is based in Nashville, Tennessee, and Alberto, in Minneapolis, Minnesota—both being graduates of the University of Iowa.

The Whitlatches are not sure what will come next after their current missionary assignments, but Cathy is sure that God will continue to show them the path of life. And she believes very firmly that, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, she is called to "bloom where she is planted."

Elliott Wright is a freelance writer from Delaware, where he retired after several decades of work with the General Board of Global Ministries in the area of public relations and communications.

Working for Systemic Change and Just Structures

by Tatiana Dwyer

Christian Social Action's work is about advocacy and challenging systemic injustice in the best Wesleyan and Methodist traditions. We raise awareness and educate women about a problem, we advocate, and we call for action on pressing social justice issues.

Tatiana Dwyer, executive secretary for Global Justice, Women's Division, Church Center for the United Nations

Today, most offices of the Christian Social Action (CSA) section of the Women's Division are located at the Church Center for the United Nations, situated directly across the street from the United Nations building in New York. The CSA priorities for 2009 to 2012 include Domestic Violence, Environmental Justice/Climate Change, Immigration/Civil Rights, and Sex Trafficking.

Women's Rights, Gender Justice, Racial Justice, and Peacemaking are cross-cutting themes for all the priorities above.

This article focuses on the work of the office of Global Justice, within the wider mission of the Women's Division (the policy-making body for United Methodist Women) and CSA. It focuses on promoting peace with justice and advocating

for gender equality, women's rights, and empowerment. The Global Justice Office works with global partners at both the grassroots and policy levels, which includes UN advocacy on relevant issues. It also organizes events to inform, educate and involve constituencies and to put forth specific actions.

For example, Global Justice works with women—and women's organizations—who advocate for justice-oriented, strategic peacemaking through the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The Global Justice Office is also an active part of the ecumenical voice promoting gender equality and empowerment of women worldwide through the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Together with the Women's Division's Office of International Ministries, the Global Justice Office makes it possible for women from the developing



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Ilia M. Vázquez-Gascot, speaking at CSW-55, on the Violence Against Women Prevention program she coordinates on 11 campuses of the University of Puerto Rico. Photo: Felipe Castillo.





Fea Elizabeth Saffa, of the 50/50 Group in Sierra Leone, and Indriani Bone, a pastor in Indonesia, discuss women's access to education with other participants in a CSW-55 forum at the Church Center for the United Nations. Photo: Felipe Castillo.

world to meet with women in the United States and with policymakers at the United Nations. This direct, face-to-face contact is another way that Global Ministries—through the Women's Division—makes a global conversation possible.

Grassroots Change

To increase the impact of our global work, we seek to integrate service and advocacy by strengthening grassroots advocacy and service and by linking global policy and implementation. Unfair and unjust systems take a long time to correct and disproportionately affect those who are the most vulnerable, marginalized, and dispossessed: women, children, and youth. Sometimes change takes months, even years, and it takes a lot of focused effort to change the situation for the better. But it is not impossible if one stays optimistic, remains focused, and perseveres.

I believe personally (I come from a developing country myself), and the CSA section believes as a team, that building grassroots capacity is very important, because social change doesn't often come from the top. Usually, social change comes from

the grassroots. We see our task as working with women at the grassroots level, whether they are in the United States or other countries. Our intent is to offer women the skills and resources they need to fully utilize their talents and God-given potential in addressing social ills in their communities and societies.

Leadership development is very important, as are educational and economic empowerment.

Economic empowerment and education help people recognize what resources they already have, realize what they can do, and learn how to organize for action in their communities. We believe that we should work *with* the women, not *for* them. And we see women as agents of change rather than as victims. With some help, they can accomplish a lot and significantly improve their lives and the lives of their families. Generally, those who have suffered under unjust systems are willing to risk the most to bring about positive change.

Interpreting Policy

In global advocacy, our work involves raising awareness and interpreting global policy for local constituencies. We should not forget that there are real people behind the policies. The United Nations has made many policies and resolutions. But often those most affected by these policies and resolutions do not know about them or how to apply them in their specific situations. Women who are affected by the policies may not know how to organize to combat social injustice in their own communities, much less at national, regional, and international levels.

So we are trying to get relevant international policy information to grassroots women to educate them on policies that affect their daily lives. After raising awareness, we offer them the resources and skills that empower them to address the systemic injustice within their communities and countries and to work effectively for social change. Our goal is to help them to be the best advocates possible—the most fair-minded and impassioned reformers—because their awareness has been raised and their advocacy skills sharpened.

Participation in Peace

Globally, violence against women has become the biggest disaster of the 21st century. It has multiple dimensions and different faces, and we all must work together to combat it. Let's look at the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 as an example of the need for advocacy. Resolution 1325—on Women, Peace, and Security—was adopted by the United Nations membership in 2000. It concerns the role of women in peace building. Women are affected disproportionately by wars and conflict. In countries such as the DR Congo, Afghanistan, and Bosnia, rape is used as a tactic of war. Yet women, globally, have no voice in the peace negotiations and peace processes that end wars.



Emma Cantor, Regional Missionary for Asia. Photo: Felipe Castillo.



Sandra Chinyere, from Zimbabwe, and Susan Kim from the United States engage in discussion at the CCUN forum. Photo: Felipe Castillo.

speak about the challenges facing them, and share their needs.

A Peace Fair

In 2010, we hosted a Peace Fair to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Our global delegation had representatives from Pakistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liberia, and El Salvador. During the five days of the Peace Fair, these visiting women had the opportunity to talk about the issues they faced in each of their regions. Sometimes they had different opinions, which was good because it created healthy debate. Some UN representatives came to hear what the women had to say. This is important because policymakers don't always realize how their policies may affect people. They tend to forget that women and children are the ones who will be affected most.

As an organization, United Methodist Women does not work in isolation. Its members work together with other women, both in the United States and in international contexts. We believe in mutually beneficial, win-win partnerships. We partner with ecumenical, grassroots, rural, international, and US-based organizations. By working with other organizations and combining our resources with theirs, we create synergy, allowing us to accomplish much more.

A review of 21 major peace processes since 1992 indicates that, of all the signatories on negotiated peace treaties, only 2.4 percent are women. So this resolution calls for the protection of women, the prevention of violence against women, and the participation of women in peace building and post-conflict recovery. To strengthen the UN's peace resolution, the Security Council issued other resolutions—1820, 1888, 1889, and 1960—to stop violence against women.

During the Bosnian conflict, many thousands of women were tortured and raped. In the DR Congo, the statistics are equally frightening. For diplomats and international negotiators, state security is of the utmost importance. But too often, *human* security is sacrificed for *state* security. Women's perspectives are not taken into account in peace negotiations. Women should be participating in peace negotiations and in all stages of peace building.

In addition, the implementation and financing of the Resolution 1325 has been poor. So we are trying, with our partners, to monitor whether and how these resolutions are being implemented. A basic strategy is to make sure that women in the affected countries know the content of these resolutions.

The Regional Missionaries' Role

Through United Methodist Women-supported regional missionaries, we can discover the real needs in local contexts because the missionaries are serving in those locales. The information they send—from Latin America, Africa, and Asia—comes from local women with whom the regional missionaries work, as well as local church groups and partner organizations. This valuable feedback from the perspectives of their constituents and clients enhances our global advocacy work and helps us inform the policymakers at the UN about the realities on the ground.

It is also part of our capacity-building program to bring women from the Global South to the place where the policymakers are meeting—the United Nations. These women voice their perspectives,

Regional missionaries Rosangela Oliveira (second from left) from Brazil, and Finda Quiwa (far right) from Sierra Leone take part in a discussion group at the CCUN.

Photo: Jennifer McCallum.



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Some of the 20-member United Methodist Women delegation who participated in CSW-55 in 2011. Photo: Jennifer McCallum.

Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), established in 1946, is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Every year—usually in late February and early March—the commission holds two weeks of events at the United Nations. The theme for 2011 (CSW-55) centered on the participation of women and girls in education, training, science, and technology and included women's equal access to full employment. In 2012, the CSW-56 theme will focus on the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty, hunger eradication, and development.

Each theme shapes our work and advocacy for that year. So each year, we host a different group of delegates from the Global South. This year we brought about 20 delegates—10 from the United States and 10 from other countries—to participate in the CSW-55 events. The delegates included leaders of United Methodist Women, regional missionaries, and young women who could talk about the issues affecting women and girls in their communities. We encourage

young women to voice their concerns. Among the students attending this year were delegates recommended and sponsored by Wesley Center in Japan.

Currently, we are planning a CSW-56 event (February 2012) on the empowerment of rural women. We plan to invite women who are leaders in their rural communities, innovators, and social entrepreneurs to present their perspectives about the challenges they face and to share some of their creative work.

We will continue working with our traditional partners at the United Nations—Ecumenical Women and NGO CSW (a committee of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN)—but we will also be building new partnerships with organizations that specialize in rural development. We expect to invite Asian Rural Institute in Japan and other rural grassroots coalitions internationally and in the United States. It is important that our advocacy be informed by the real experiences, challenges, opportunities, and successes of grassroots leaders.

On October 14, 2011, when the United Nations celebrated both the

International Day of Rural Women and World Food Day, we cohosted a series of panel discussions on the role of rural women in food security. We looked at case studies of successful national food security and nutrition strategies that recognize women as food producers and seek to empower them and enhance their role in food security. Together with the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, we also organized a panel discussion on the current realities of violence against rural women. All the events of that day are helping us frame our advocacy work for the two-week-long Commission on the Status of Women-56 event. Visit <http://UnitedMethodistWomen.org> in February 2012 for more information on the event schedule and how to follow the webcast on United Methodist Women online.

Tatiana Dwyer is executive secretary for Global Justice in the section of Christian Social Action, Women's Division, Church Center for the United Nations. From 2005 to 2009, Ms. Dwyer worked as an associate director for Church World Service (CWS), responsible for Eastern Europe and the Middle East development portfolios. Earlier, she worked as the community development manager for World Vision International in Kosovo. From 1998 to 2001, she managed a multiyear comprehensive youth development program funded by USAID and implemented by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) in the Republic of Georgia, her original homeland.



Tatiana Dwyer (far left) with a few other staff members of the Women's Division. Photo: Felipe Castillo.

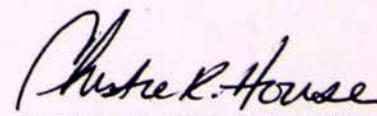
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 Christie R. House, Editor, October 1, 2011

Reflections on Labor Day

by Michelle Dromgold, a mission intern with the General Board of Global Ministries, serving initially with the Evangelisch-Methodistische Salem-Gemeinde Neukölln, Kindertreff Delbrücke in Berlin, Germany.

For me this year, Labor Day took on a whole new meaning as I celebrated the holiday with my first official day of work at the *Kindertreff Delbrücke* here in Berlin. The *Kindertreff* is an afterschool program for underprivileged children in one of Berlin's most impoverished districts. Although my first 'official' day of work was yesterday on Labor Day, I had the opportunity to see some of the kids on Sunday at Berlin's United Methodist district gathering. I attended worship in the morning and was able to reconnect with many of my friends from the church. After a lovely picnic lunch together, I was "interviewed" in front of everyone.

After an eventful Sunday, Monday's "labor" was of a more traditional sense. Together with my supervisor, I went to one of the nearby schools and helped teach a German class of seven children who have recently immigrated here.

Both days, I have been overwhelmed by the greetings from all of the children and youth, who are thrilled that I have returned. I have been plagued with hugs and questions because they are so excited that I will be able to stay here for such a long period of time—seventeen months! It is wonderful to return to a place where I am so appreciated and feel so welcomed, not only from the children and my supervisor but also from my flatmates, friends, and church communities throughout Berlin. I am so thankful! Even if, yes, it does mean that I have to work US holidays and "labor" on Labor Day!



Photo: Cassandra M. Zampini.

Mission Interns and US-2s, class of 2011. Michelle Dromgold is fifth from left.



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CONNECTING THE
CHURCH IN MISSION

"Life Here Is Not Easy"

by Dr. Elma T. Jocson, a doctor at Ganta United Methodist Hospital, Nimba County, Liberia, in August 2011.

A 13-year-old boy came with a big wound behind his right knee. It was bleeding so profusely that his blood pressure was dropping. The story was that he fell onto a blade and sustained the cut. Months before, a covenant supporter from Fulks Run, Virginia, sent her father's leftover medicine here hoping it might be of help. It was Heparin, a blood thinner to prevent clotting. It is not available in the whole of Liberia. Although Heparin has lots of uses in surgery, I never thought I could actually use it! Indeed, both artery and vein were completely cut and we



Dr. Jocson in Ganta, Liberia, with a young patient.

Photo: Courtesy Elma Jocson.

had to join the parts back together (anastomosis). The big nerves were damaged too. For two days now, the leg is showing signs of surviving. The real story was that the stepfather of the boy threw a just-sharpened blade while trying to get hold of the boy. The blade hit the boy's leg causing the cut. There is no law on domestic abuse here, no family court or social service. The police don't interfere with domestic disputes, and there's not even a complaint from the mother.

Now I'm not saying that you should send your unused medicine here. What I am saying is that we need to be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit prompts us to do and then to obey. After years of civil conflict and the ever-present threat of diseases, Liberians are often heard to say, "It's not easy-oh!" It is true, life here is not easy.

Drought Just One Factor in Horn of Africa Crisis

An excerpt from a story by Paul Jeffrey, who recently returned from the Dadaab refugee complex in Kenya, where he had traveled for ACT Alliance and UMCOR.

Habiba Abdi Hassan walked across the east African desert for 30 days, battling hunger, wild animals, and bandits before arriving at the Dadaab refugee complex in northern Kenya. Back home in the Middle Juba Valley of Somalia, it hadn't rained in over two years, and most of her family's animals had died. So she left her husband to care for the remaining goats and set off with her four children on a journey of desperation and hope. "We didn't have any real choice. We could have stayed home, but soon we all would have died like the animals," she said. "By coming to Dadaab, we stay alive, and my daughters can go to school. We'd like to go back home someday, God willing, but it's hard to survive without rain."

The drought is affecting millions of families throughout the Horn of Africa. Animals are dying and families are being displaced in Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia. In Somalia, military conflict and governance issues have made life difficult, and the militant group al-Shabab has prohibited most aid groups from working in territory it controls. Global food prices have soared across the region, the result of climate change and market speculation. So even though many markets are full, most people can't afford to buy the food they need.

UMCOR is supporting partner organizations ACT Alliance, Church World Service, and GlobalMedic in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, with emergency grants to meet immediate food, water, and shelter needs of people displaced by the crisis. Your gift to Horn of Africa, **UMCOR Advance #982450**, supports those efforts.



New refugees with their children and possessions arrive at the Dadaab camp in Kenya. Photo: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance.

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LORD, WHEN WAS IT THAT WE SAW YOU HUNGRY...?

— MATTHEW 25:44 (NSRV)

Chipinge District has the third-highest population compared to any other district in Zimbabwe. At the height of its lean season, Chipinge is also the most food-insecure. In response to the burgeoning food crisis there, UMCOR implemented a six-month pilot project to supply 1,613 metric tons of emergency food to the most vulnerable households in Chipinge. United Methodist's saw the hungry and through UMCOR brought relief to more than 50,300 Zimbabweans affected by severe drought and ongoing economic crisis.



Photos: UMCOR Zimbabwe



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