

APPALACHIAN LINK

SUMMER 2009

The United Methodist Appalachian Ministry Network—P. O. Box 2231—Hagerstown, Maryland 21741-2231
Phone & Fax 1-301-791-7355 —Email umadc@aol.com — Website www.appalachia-umc.org

APPALACHIAN ASSEMBLY

“Linking Hands Across Appalachia”

October 28-31, 2009

The Appalachian Assembly will focus on two learning modules that are being developed by UMAMN for use in a variety of settings when local churches, districts and conferences are seeking to strengthen small membership churches, rural and urban. The modules are Eradicating Poverty and Equipping Leaders. The modules, also, mirror two focus areas identified by General Conference for the quadrennium.

Recognizing the geographic barriers of the region, Mobile Modules are being developed by UMAMN because members believe that local leaders must be equipped for leadership in settings as local as possible.

Thursday’s program will concentrate on Eradicating Poverty with plenary presenters, response panel, ministry stories, small groups centered on specific aspects of the modules, and a fun Poverty Simulation game.

Friday’s program will center on Equipping Leaders with a similar program outline. The evening will be entertainment led by a bluegrass gospel group, “Shiloh Mountain Trio” from Athens, OH.

Each day Bishop Ernest S. Lyght, Episcopal leader in the West Virginia Area, will lead the Bible Study, also, centering on the two focus areas.

Mountainside Conference Center offers comfortable rooms, good food and great outdoor space. The planning team is looking forward to seeing lots of folks at the Assembly.

Registration brochures are available on UMAMN’s web site www.appalachia-umc.org or from the office by email umadc@aol.com or phone 301-791-7355.

Wilkins to head UMAMN

During the spring meeting of UMAMN, a Search Committee recommended that Rev. Robert “Bob” Wilkins be hired to serve as the Executive Coordinator of UMAMN. Wilkins will succeed N. Sharon Leatherman who is retiring after 15 years with the organization. The transition will conclude following the fall Appalachian Assembly.

Wilkins currently is serving an appointment from the West Virginia Conference as mission project director at Heart and Hand House in Philippi, WV. He will be retiring as the mission project director and as an elder in the WV Conference.

He takes the staff position as UMAMN moves into new avenues for equipping church leaders in strengthening the United Methodist witness in Appalachia. Wilkins brings to this position his longtime involvement with non-profit management as well as his grounding in scripture, UM doctrine and polity, his passion for communication and developing a team approach to community ministry. He also has a background in local government, having served as an elected official for ten years and on several community boards and agencies.

Wilkins describes UMAMN as “an inspiring and encouraging voice in Appalachia by providing accurate information to people so that responsible decisions can be made about their environment and other critical issues. It is through such ministries that people see the hand of God through the action of a neighbor.”

The UMAMN physical office will be moving from its current location in Hagerstown, Maryland to Buckhannon, WV. Wilkins will also have a home office in Philippi, WV

The Mission of The United Methodist Appalachian Ministry Network is to partner with annual conferences, districts, local churches and general agencies to develop and support leaders within the United Methodist Churches in Appalachia.

APPALACHIA HUNGER AND POVERTY GRANTS

Two clarification on policy were made, at the spring meeting, to the criteria for Hunger and Poverty Grants: Mission projects that hold General Advance Special status *may only receive funds for new and emerging ministries,*” and “*priority will be given to projects that address systems and barriers related to hunger and poverty.*” These clarification arose from discussion over the past quadrennium on using funds from one advance special to provide grants to another, and that guidelines upon which the status of General Advance Special was granted was, **addressing systems and barriers (systemic causes) of hunger and poverty**, therefore, priority must be given these applications over those that only address food shortage/distribution. Application forms have been updated to reflect these decisions.

Twenty-two requests were received in the spring 2009 cycle. Ten grants totaling \$14,238.00 were made to the following projects:

Genesis House in Olean, NY; Outreach Food Ministry, Radford, VA; St. Andrews Center/LaPaz de Dios, Chattanooga, TN; Good Shepherd Preschool, Hancock, MD; Open Door Ministry, Moorefield, WV; Jordan’s Chapel UMC, Pulaski, VA; Seeds of Life, Williamsburg, KY; Food Depot of Tishomingo County, Iuka, Mississippi; Good Works, Inc., Athens, OH; and First Broad Street UMC, Kingsport, TN. A gift was also presented to the Greater Clarksburg Parish ministry Open Heart Ministries on behalf of Smith’s Chapel UMC who hosted UMAMN’s for an evening meal and program.

A special “Thank You” to all churches and individuals who provide funds for these grants!!

ERADICATING RURAL POVERTY IN APPALACHIA: The Church’s Response to God’s Call

First Broad Street United Methodist Church, Kingsport, TN, will host a two-day conference., September 11-12, 2009. Elements of the program will address: Understanding the Multiple Dimensions of the Root Causes of Poverty, Long-range solutions to Poverty; Congregation-Based Models for Asset-Building and Policy; Attacking the Root Causes of Poverty: Impact through Policy Change, Workshops addressing several Congregational Models for Ministries to Eliminate Poverty.

For more information, contact Rev. A. Clark Jenkins, Pastor of First Broad Street UMC—Phone 423-246-4471 Email: cjenkins@fbsumc.org



Rev. Brent Watson presents a Hunger and Poverty Grant check to Dan Kauffman and Charlie Blachford of Good Works, Inc. Athens, OH.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARD

The UM Association of Health and Welfare Ministries, an affiliate organization of the General Board of Global Ministries located in Vandalia, Ohio, has joined forces with PS Card, a free prescription drug discount card that offers uninsured consumers access to discounted pricing for prescription drugs and diabetic strips, to offer economic assistance to many of the 32 million people served by the association annually. Free PS Card membership will be offered through more than 105 association-affiliated local outreach centers, including soup kitchens, job training centers, and family service centers, as well as through the Web site <<http://www.umassociation.org/>> and many local congregations. Regardless of medical conditions, income level and even citizenship status, a consumer can obtain immediate discounts off the retail pricing for FDA-approved drugs at virtually any pharmacy in the United States using a PS Card, according to Mearle Griffith, president of the association.

—UMNS

SUMMERTIME READING

Summertime often provides time for catching up on reading, so here are a few suggestions that you might want to check out:

“*Uneven Ground,*” Ron Eller

“*Creekeere: A Woman’s Journey,*” Linda Scott

Both authors with University of Kentucky Press.

“*Clay’s Quilt,*” Silas House

“*Prodigal Summer,*” Barbara Kingsolver

“*Saints at the River,*” Ron Rash

“*Oral History,*” Lee Smith

“*Red Helmet,*” Homer Hickman