

# UM Connection

The newspaper of the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church

www.bwcumc.org



**Bold faith builds hope**



## NOMINATING DELEGATES

This May, seven clergy and seven lay people will be elected to represent the Baltimore-Washington Conference at the General Conference to be held in Tampa, Fla., April 24-May 4, 2012.

The delegates will be elected in a series of ballots at the annual conference session in Baltimore May 26-28.

The 1,000 General Conference delegates from around the world will set the official priorities and policies of The United Methodist Church for the next four years.

In addition, seven clergy and seven lay delegates will be elected to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference, scheduled to be held July 18-20, 2012, in Charleston, W.Va.

Before April 1, any clergy person wishing to be considered as a prospective delegate or to nominate someone else, must submit a petition of support bearing the names of 15 clergy who are full members of the conference to the conference secretary, the Rev. Mary Jo Sims (msims@towsonumc.org). The nominee will also provide the secretary with a 150-word written statement of their qualifications and relevant experiences.

Lay members who wish to become a nominee, or nominate someone else, shall return an electronic petition to Sims and Lay Leader Delores Oden (deloreso@hotmail.com) before April 1. These statements should include the nominee's full name, address, phone number, home church, district and, in 150 words or less, a brief explanation of qualifications and relevant experiences.

These statements will be published in the UMConnection and on the conference website by May 1 to allow annual conference members time for prayer and discernment before casting their ballots.

The forms for the petitions are available on the conference website.

Campaigning by the nominees, caucuses or groups supporting a nominee will not be permitted.

For more information, visit [www.bwcumc.org/content/2011annualconferenceoverview](http://www.bwcumc.org/content/2011annualconferenceoverview).

Our faith sustains us, each day, in quiet, essential and meaningful ways. But sometimes faith demands a more bold response that is both sacrificial and profound.

BY MELISSA LAUBER • UMCONNECTION STAFF

Members of the Baltimore-Washington Conference recently experienced such a response when they donated half a million dollars to the Imagine No Malaria campaign and gave \$10,000, along with their efforts, to build a dormitory for orphan girls in Zimbabwe.

The \$10,000 was part of a \$35,000 gift which the Board of Child Care and the General Board of Global Ministries also contributed.

"There are moments when God calls us to move beyond what's expected to make sacrificial gifts to impact the lives of God's children, opportunities when we are called to partner with God to transform the world," said Bishop John Schol. "We're living in a time when United Methodists can eradicate malaria from the continent of Africa. How can we not sacrifice to be a part of a miraculous healing?"

With the \$500,000 gift to the denomination's Imagine No Malaria campaign, the Baltimore-Washington Conference becomes a leader in churchwide efforts to raise \$75 million to eliminate

malaria deaths in Africa. This is part of a \$2 million dollar commitment the Baltimore-Washington Conference has been asked to fulfill.

"Every 45 seconds a child in Africa dies of malaria. Malaria claims more than a million lives a year and consumes 40 percent of Africa's public health funds. With the Nothing but Nets campaign we started a movement; this new 'nets-plus' approach, which systematically addresses the epidemic, could change millions of lives for generations to come," the bishop said.

"Reaching out beyond one's daily ministries also revitalizes people's faith," said Schol, who recently led a group of Baltimore-Washington Conference leaders on a trip to Zimbabwe. Part of the trip included visiting a new dormitory for 68 orphan girls, ages 11-15, who will live at the Murewa Mission School, built in part with funds from Baltimore-Washington Conference apportionment funds.

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COURTESY CHARLIE MOORE AND JOHN SCHOL  
**BWC leaders, like Charlie Moore, top left, assist orphans, build churches and clinics and are now installing a communications system to equip our partners in Zimbabwe, who include Bishop Eben Nhwatiwa, above .**

## Trinity UMC plugs into new ministry

BY CARRIE MADREN  
UMCONNECTION CORRESPONDENT

Using today's technology, the Rev. John Rudolph is creating a new kind of United Methodist "circuit rider."

Each week, more than 80 people log online to hear Rudolph's short video clip of God's Good News. The weekly webcast is a six-month-old ministry of Trinity UMC in Emmitsburg, which will continue to grow into a full service website for worship and virtual church community. This new ministry venture is called Studio 4:40, which references the biblical number "40" that suggests complete or enough.

Since June, a weekly webcast has been posted to Studio 4:40's website a five-minute version of the Sunday morning message. "One critical piece that we discovered in the last six months is that the Web piece has to be efficient and brief," said Rudolph. Statistical tracking revealed that users would only watch a clip shorter than five minutes.

Before Studio 4:40 evolved into an online webcasting project, the plan was to add an additional worship site. "We wanted to reach new people in a new place," said Rudolph, pastor at Trinity.

Space at the Outlet Shoppes of Gettysburg, Pa., seemed perfect, but

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# Orphanage: BWC grows in partnership with Zimbabwe

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Jo Chesson, the conference's associate director of Growing Spiritual Leaders, met three of the girls walking along a dirt path at the school. They will live in the dormitory, which is opening this month. "What does this mean to you?" she asked.

"Hope," said the first girl, who grew up in a middle class home until her father died in an accident and then her mother was lost to malaria.

"It means a chance to study, to learn," said the second.

"It gives me a future," said the third, whose name is Tatenda, which Chesson learned means "thank you" in Shona.

"She was a walking symbol of thanks and we were able to give her a future," Chesson marveled.

The completion of the dormitory at Murewa stems from efforts by area United Methodists, like Charlie Moore of Community UMC in Crofton, who this month, will lead his 15th Volunteers in Mission team to Zimbabwe.

The group will include students from McDaniel College, a new partner in the conference's efforts in Zimbabwe.

When considering per capita income, Zimbabwe is the second poorest country in the world. In addition, AIDS wiped out a whole generation. One of every three children is an orphan, that's more than a million orphans in the country, Moore said. "What they've suffered through in the past 10 to 15 years is a tragedy."

"What gives them hope is their faith in Christ," Moore said. "The United Methodist Church is exploding in Africa. Zimbabwe is part of that exponential growth."

And their hope is contagious. As its vision statement for mission in Zimbabwe, Community UMC adopted the theme "Hope Lives, Because He Lives."

It was a conviction that this hope is real that spurred Moore and others to believe a dormitory at Murewa School, which was only 50 percent completed and abandoned because of a lack of funding, could be completed.

Moore approached the Board of Child Care in Randallstown, which 10 years ago had contributed an ambulance (still in operation today) to Old Mutare Hospital in Zimbabwe.

Thomas Curcio, the Board's CEO, enthusiastically supported the opportunity to contribute

## How to ask for money

When VIM teams from Community UMC in Crofton travel in mission to Zimbabwe, individuals will pay their own travel costs, which can exceed \$3,000. In addition, the project itself can cost \$40,000 to \$50,000 or more. While there are always fundraisers, much of this money, said Charlie Moore of Community UMC, comes through direct appeals to our friends and family.

It's not easy, Moore said. But in the end, the people who contribute will welcome an opportunity to be a part of this international ministry. "It's a true partnership - like chopsticks, one stick moves, while the other stick remains stationary. But they're both essential."

When asking for money Moore offers a few suggestions:

- Be specific. Let people know exactly how their giving will make a difference.

- Photos really are worth a thousand words. Share photos, especially pictures of people helping themselves, to help bring home the reality of the need.

- Ask for a specific amount. Moore often asks for \$100, but he also stresses that no gift is too small. Some people give less, others give more.

- Open up. Share a little about why this is important to you.

- Follow up. Say thank you and share how the experience went.

- Ask. People give because they are asked. The response will always exceed your expectations.

Community UMC also publishes a Christmas catalog of alternative giving ideas for people who want to give to mission in honor or memory of loved ones.



toward the \$35,000.

Children are at the center of all the Board does, Curcio said. "When you have money and others are in need, you share what you have."

Inspired, the Baltimore-Washington Conference and the General Board of Global Ministries also combined resources to contribute an additional \$21,500 to fully complete this project.

This month, Moore and a team of 15 students

and faculty members from McDaniel College will work at the dormitory, painting and putting on the finishing touches.

"When we reach out this way, with a ministry of presence, in a very real sense we're extending Christ's hands to our brothers and sisters across the world," Moore said.

[Imaginenomalaria.org](http://Imaginenomalaria.org)

## Studio 4:40: Innovation key for building online community

FROM PAGE 1

the new site was out of the church's boundary; plus, it was a 15-minute drive. "We had support, but it never really panned out as an additional worship site," he said. Then, through prayer and discernment, the vision shifted: the church could still use the space to reach new people, but as a studio for webcasting.

Matt Saylor, a young adult who has a degree in film, helps with the tech side, recording, editing and posting.

The outlet mall studio has a backdrop, a quiet space for recording and chairs for a small live studio audience. After six months of using the outlet

space, the church decided to bring the studio back to the church as they shopped for more local studio space.

"We're looking at where is God taking our church, what's the next step in terms of Web presence," said Rudolph.

Since September, the site has gotten 900 visitors, not including 300 YouTube hits. About 80 viewers watch Rudolph's five-minute message each week, almost matching the 90 people who attend the live Sunday morning worship service. Viewers are both local and regional, and from across the country.

Amy Hiett attended high school with Rudolph and connected to Studio 4:40 through Rudolph's Facebook profile. Hiett lives in White Sulphur Springs, W.Va., and works on Sundays. She doesn't have Internet service at home, where she only gets two radio stations. So, she watches the webcasts on her phone.

"I haven't found a church home here yet," Hiett wrote in an e-mail. "I can watch Studio 4:40 on my break at work or listen to it while I'm driving. It's great as little reminders of what our purpose is in life and how much greater God is than the small things of everyday life."

Trinity member Joe Fox first watched Rudolph's webcast during the 2010 blizzards, then when Studio 4:40 started in June, Fox hopped on to listen. He and his wife, Lori, both work in printing, putting in 12-hour days Thursday through Sunday.

"With us working on Sundays, there's days when we can't make it there (to church)," he says. "I listen whenever I get the opportunity," he said, which usually means Sunday night or Mondays.

"When you can't get to church, sometimes you can feel like you're not a part of the church," said Fox, "and seeing the pastor delivering a

message makes you feel like you're still going to church even if you can't physically be there every week."

The next step, said Rudolph, is making connections between viewers. Trinity hopes to connect online users through video conferencing or scheduled chats. Rudolph also hopes that ever-evolving technology will soon provide a third option that will ease outreach and connections between viewers.

Special for Christmas, the Studio 4:40 webcast was the live message delivered on Christmas Eve, to which viewers were invited to join by Facebook and e-mail. "We have a following that we hope will watch in a group, adding their own music and forms of response," Rudolph said before Christmas. "We want them to be using Scripture and music and be in fellowship with one another."

Among the challenges is figuring out how to connect to those new hundreds. Occasionally, a viewer will ask a question or comment, but beyond that, the anonymous viewer remains anonymous. "We want to help people and have authentic fellowship and inspire people to respond to the Word," said Rudolph.

