

UMMA UpDate #51, March 26, 2007
e-bulletin of the
United Methodist Missionary Association
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"Linking mission workers worldwide and moving forward"

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[1] **JIM'S LAST JOTTINGS by James Dwyer**

As Helen and I urgently pack and turn over responsibilities to others in our congregation in Hamburg, it is time to say "good-bye" as chair of UMMA. As I become ENAMESA Regional Executive Secretary, I will be resigning my post. At the April GBGM Directors' meeting, I will represent UMMA along with other officers at lunch with directors on the oversight committee for the MPPA, staff from the Mission Personnel Program Area and the Treasury for the last time. This has become a tradition valued by all where concerns find expression and accomplishments are registered relative both to the conditions under which "standard support" active and retired missionaries live and work, and to broader personnel and policy concerns related to United Methodist mission in various forms. A week later I officially begin my staff tasks and leave my elected UMMA position, and my wife Helen "joins" the UMMA Steering Committee as Missionary in Residence (MIR) for the next year or two. We hope that the Steering Committee and Administrative Council of UMMA will have regulated the question of an interim or elected successor by then.

Be assured that I will join staff in lifting up the concerns of the mission of the church of Christ, and of the missionaries of the GBGM at every opportunity. May yours be an Easter blessed with the hope of the resurrection and the assurance of the presence of the Risen Christ in all of your endeavors to be in fellowship, witness and service with Him. Please let us know when you may be coming to New York. We'd welcome the opportunity to be in touch, as time permits.

Editor's remarks: UMMA is thankful for Jim's leadership and sad that he is leaving us as UMMA chair. We are happy that he and Helen will be centered at GBGM in NYC. We wish them both smooth sailings – Jim as executive secretary and Helen as our new MIR. He is moving into a very responsible position as Regional Executive Secretary over a vast geographic area. His brains, communicative and pastoral skills will continue to serve all of us in mission. Blessings and Bon Voyage.

[2] CHICAGO! CHICAGO! CHICAGO!

The first Mission Gathering and Forum is being held in Evanston on the northern edge of Chicago, America's Second City where visitors are welcomed to great art, amazing architecture, fabulous food and phenomenal music.

Chicago is the home of the Millennium Park on the lakefront with the famous Anish Kapoor's "Cloud Gate," known as "The Bean" by locals. "The Bean" is one of the biggest sculptures in the world reflecting onlookers close up and Michigan Avenue behind. You have to see it to believe it. While at Millennium Park, you will want to walk in the gardens, sleep in the shade of the trees in the Park and visit Jay Pritzker Pavilion designed by Frank Gehry. There might even be a free concert on Saturday before our Gathering begins. (The schedule is pending.)

While in the area, visit the famous Field Museum complex, the Art Institute, or if you like improvisation, get tickets for "Second City". You also can walk along Lake Michigan next to Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and enjoy the breeze. And there is food, food, food for everyone's tastes.

There will not be time on the agenda to tour the Windy City during the Gathering but you can always come early or stay late. Adapted from *The Honolulu Advertiser & Norma's tips*

[3] REGISTRATION REMINDERS by Norma Kehrberg

Mission Gathering and Forum: August 5-8, 2007 with Opening plenary 7:00 PM Sunday, August 5th and closing at noon on August 8, 2007

Registration Fee until June 15, 2007: \$35

Registration Fee from June 15-July 15, 2007: \$45

One Day Registration fee for drop-in visitors: \$15

Food per day: One Day Food is \$35 (requires registration by June 15, 2007)

Plan to stay for the annual meeting of UMMA from 2-6 PM on Wednesday afternoon, August 8, 2007. UMMA members will be allowed to rent their dorm room in Loder Hall for one more night if they are unable to make travel connections after the 6 PM closure. Confirm with Norma Kehrberg before June 15 to be sure of availability.

[4] OUR READERS WRITE

Hi Ric, I'll be setting up a display of books written by missionaries. We are inviting missionaries to bring books they have written and want to display and sell at the Mission Gathering and Forum this August. The GBGM will also display and sell their books. We want to encourage more missionaries to write for publication or for other media. Book recommendations are welcomed by our readers. – Gene Matthews, retired missionary to Korea *Editor's note: Gene Matthews and Pat Patterson are two of our UMMA Members who wrote and helped edit a recent book called: "More than Witnesses: How a Small Group of Foreign Missionaries Aided Korea's Democratic Revolution". The book is the*

collaborative writing of a number of former Protestant and Catholic missionaries and has received high praise from Koreans and other readers.

* * *

Dear Ric, We have moved to our home in Iowa. Having finally "settled" we got to thinking about the Mission Gathering this August after reading and making hard copies of back issues of *UMMA UpDate*. Thanks for putting me back on your mailing list. – Frank & Rosalie Fritz Amos, retired missionaries to India

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Emana was the recipient of our first All-Women's Team August 2006 and these women came armed, not with hammers and nail sacks or power tools...but with knitting needles, arts and craft supplies, paints and brushes, sewing machines and fabrics, and hearts filled with love for the Lord. Did others come to know the Lord through them? As we celebrate Women this month, look and see for yourself: <http://www.emana.org/photos/index.html> We look forward to your comments and thank God for the opportunity to share Mission in Chile with all of you. May the Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on you, Becky Harrell, Coordinator, The EMANA Project, Advance #14791T, Casilla 832, Iquique, Chile www.emana.org

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Dear Manong Ric, As always, your update is full of information and I thank you for it...Your previous statement at UMMA on the extrajudicial killings in the Philippines was very timely and will serve as an update as well as a venue to mobilize action to stop the killings—including a Congressional Hearing that we are trying to get through the office of Sen. Barbara Boxer and Rep. Lantos, both from California. Thanks much, *Levi*
Editors note: The Rev. Liberato "Levi" C. Bautista, Asst. General Secretary for United Nations and International Affairs, Main Representative to the United Nations General Board of Church and Society, The United Methodist Church, 777 United Nations Plaza 11F, NY, NY 10017
Website: www.umc-gbcs.org/un

* * *

Hi Ric, Another missionary story: The computer "geek" who helped me install my new system turns out to be a "boat person" – escaped from Viet Nam into Thailand. A missionary just "happened" by and saw him and his group landing on the beach. The missionary recognized them and was able to get them into the refugee camp (rather than the usual 6 months of prison first because they did not have papers). They were sponsored by a doctor and Mennonite Church in Indiana. He's now a Christian with his own business here. - Eunice Kirkholm, missionary to Malaysia

* * *

The Holy Spirit Encounter will be April 11-19. This annual gathering hosted here at the New Life Center has become the most important ministry we have each year. We invite ALL of our United Methodist pastors, and their spouses, along with their key leaders from their churches. Each year there have been over 200 attending this special gathering. We are expecting over 300 this year. Rev. Blake Lorenz, from Pine Castle UMC of Orlando, Florida, with his team, have been coming as our key speaker for the last six years. This labor of love is impacting Zambia in many ways. This is the one time each year when our Zambian pastors and friends are treated to an overwhelming amount of love, Biblical teaching, printed materials, models & examples, and witness. Faithfully yours, Delbert & Sandy Groves, United Methodist New Life Center, P.O. Box 20219, Kitwe, Zambia, <http://www.NewLifeZambia.com>

[5] **EASTER HOPES AMIDST CAMBODIAN MISTRUST** by Jim Gulley

In 2004 while preparing to go to Cambodia to manage an agriculture and community development program on behalf of the United Methodist Church, I asked one of my sons who had traveled in Cambodia (as well as other countries in the region and beyond) what Cambodia was like. His response: "I think the Cambodian people are the kindest people I have met anywhere." I found his assessment to be on the mark. Cambodians are welcoming people with whom I have had great satisfaction to work over the past 2-1/2 years.

Paradoxically, these same welcoming Cambodians bear a great burden: a scarcity of trust, rooted in part to their not-yet-distant experience of trust-destruction under the Pol Pot regime (1975-1979). To re-shape Cambodian society built in his own image of an idealized, agrarian past, Pol Pot (Saloth Sar) and his regime systematically broke down traditional social relations and its foundation of **trust**. Meas Nee, a respected community developer, recounts:

*In the Khmer Rouge time **trust** was systematically destroyed. A friend would be asked to spy on a friend, and the next day the second of the partnership would be asked to spy on the first. Even today, people meet and recognize those who betrayed their loved ones. All of the respected people in our village were singled out for betrayal. The monks were killed and their pagoda was totally destroyed. All except one of the 'pious laymen', the 'adjar' as they are called, were killed at the pagoda. The one who was spared was in league with the Khmer Rouge; the village people hated him and blamed him for many deaths. In a terrible vengeance in 1979, widows chased him across the rice fields and up under the roof of his house where they hacked him to death with knives. When even an adjar could be a killer, the people did not know whom to trust." (Towards Restoring Life: Cambodian Villages. Told by Meas Nee with Joan Healy as listener and scribe, 1993)*

Lack of trust remains a burdensome legacy in Cambodia even today. At every level of society, Cambodians are struggling to come to grips with the legacy of **mistrust**. For more than a decade, the international community has urged Cambodia to address the ravages of the Pol Pot / Khmer Rouge Regime.

At the village and district levels, poor Christians in many cases lack confidence to go to district clinics and hospitals for care which should be available to all Cambodians. As a good example of building trust, Ms Irene Mparutsa, Program Coordinator for Community Health and Agricultural Development (CHAD) recruits and trains Health Volunteers and accompanies them as they visit clinics and hospitals to learn how the system works and build relationships with health care personnel. On the agricultural and micro-enterprise project side of the program, congregation-based groups resist involvement of other community members who are not Christians. The culture of mistrust penetrates nearly every corner of Cambodian life, even in villages where former prisoners may cross paths with former jailers. And yet, even our Buddhist brother Meas Nee has this to say:

"Looked at from the outside, religion, the teaching of the monks, music, traditional games, and traditional skills are a way to strengthen the culture. But I see them as not just that. They are the way to build unity and to heal hearts and spirits. They help to create a community where everything can be talked about, even past suffering. They help to create a community where the poorest are cared about. They help to restore dignity."

While teaching community development to Methodist pastors in training at the Cambodian Methodist Bible School (CMBS) in 2004-2005, I asked them to ponder and answer: ***“Can Christian faith ‘help to heal hearts and spirits’?”***

When Methodists do community health and development work, it is good, vital work that can improve physical health and livelihoods. But Methodists as well as Buddhists must know that: *“This [community development] is not [just] a matter of building rice barns and organizing pig banks. It is a matter of rebuilding spirit, life and relationship.”* (Meas Nee)

Christian faith must bear fruit that heals hearts and spirits, re-builds trust and relationships and restores dignity. During my recent assignment in Cambodia, I had the opportunity to facilitate a visioning workshop for Methodist Mission workers in Cambodia. The two-day event brought together 50+ church leaders and missionaries to work on what and how committees carry out their work. In good Methodist fashion, the Methodist Mission in Cambodia (MMC) has committees to cover nearly every base: women, youth & children, men, Christian education, social concerns, property, etc, etc, etc. Remember, these are leaders blended only in October 2005 from diverse Methodist roots: Methodist missions from Korea, Singapore, Chinese Malaysia, France, Switzerland and the U.S.

The most rewarding **sight** of all at the workshop: Seeing mixed groups of church and mission leaders working vibrantly together with markers and newsprint to sketch out for the first time a shared vision of mission and ministry in and through the MMC. The most rewarding **sound**: Hearing a District Superintendent saying enthusiastically: “I really like the way the ‘Ice Breaker’ mixed people from different backgrounds.” When local leaders recognize the importance of breaking down the former comfortable divisions, we know we are making progress! Thanks be to God!

The most valuable output of this initial workshop was not the paper products but the blending of spirits as participants envisioned who the MMC is and began to glimpse what Methodists are called to become in Cambodia. Building trust was a fundamental part of the process and outcome.

Can Methodist Christians in Cambodia be an instrument of transformation of individual and community life in Cambodia? To be the Body of Christ it must. What an awesome challenge for the 10,000+ men, women and children who call themselves Methodists!

We share in common with our Cambodian Methodist sisters and brothers the belief that the love we know through Jesus the Christ is God’s power to transform all of life. We are called simply to be faithful to the task of being instruments of that love. Make no mistake, others are watching.

After I returned from Cambodia (16 Feb), I received an email from a young man with whom I have interacted over the past 2-1/2 years that read: ***“I have actually been watching you and copying you without your realization.”*** He reminded me that each of our lives is a “library” that others are reading. His reminder is humbling.

The Methodist Mission in Cambodia is a library of living books of the Good News which Cambodians have embraced. Daily these blended Methodists work through education, vocational skills training, health care, agricultural production, caring for street children, etc. to make visible the love, the forgiveness, the reconciliation that they have received from God through Christ. In being faithful to the call of the Good News, may we grow with our Cambodian brothers and sisters as instruments of trust that will transform Cambodian society—transforming the mistrust of Friday fear to Easter hopes.

Grace and peace to all our colleagues, both Cambodian and expatriate, who daily work together to make God’s love in Jesus Christ visible.

Editor’s note: Paul Jeffrey, UMMA member, wrote on “Forgetting Pol Pot...” in The Christian Century, Dec. 13, 2005. Click to: <http://www.christiancentury.org/article.lasso?id=1549>

[6] POINTS TO PONDER

More excerpts from Wayne Lavender, a VIM (Volunteers In Mission) Peace organizer:

We have done a good job of REACTING to the events of 9-11. No one will hijack an airplane again with simple box cutters. No one will attempt to blow up an airport by placing a bomb in the airport mailboxes. No one will easily bring explosive devices onto an airplane concealed in their sneakers, beverage containers, nor toothpaste jars. We have closed these potential windows of opportunity for would-be terrorists.

But we have done a poor job of being PRO-ACTIVE to the events of 9-11. We have not lowered the anger threshold of those who hate the United States and what it stands for; we have not answered the basic question on everyone's mind in the days that followed September 11, that being: Why do they hate us so much? In fact, by every reasonable study (including our own CIA and spy agency reports and polls conducted in nations around the world that show global views of the US worsening), we have increased the level of hatred towards our nation from nearly every corner of the world, and will no doubt be subjected to more terrorists attacks in the coming years.

How can the United States reclaim its status as the beacon of hope and symbol of liberty, democracy and freedom in the world? How can we live up to the ideals of our founding fathers and fulfill our place as one of the greatest nations in world history?

The US military budgets that for 2007 will exceed all of the other military budgets of all of the other nations of the world combined at \$540 billion.

It has been consistently stated by many Americans that the United States does not have enough money to help the 2.8 billion people living so far below the poverty level that their daily existence is threatened; the truth is that everything simply boils down to a question of priorities and goals. Do we want to feed the world's hungry, thereby promoting peace? Do we have the desire to provide clean drinking water to all of God's children, giving hope to the world's poor? Would we like to help educate and provide health care for the least, the last and the lost?

In the Human Development Report from the United Nations Development Program (2005), it is noted that a total of only \$7 billion annually for the next 10 years will provide 2.6 billion people with access to clean drinking water, saving 4,000 lives a day. The same report noted that a doubling of our foreign aid, from \$16 to \$32 billion per year, could eliminate global poverty by the year 2025! We are spending excessive (elephant-like) amounts of money on our military (\$540 billion +) and paltry (antlike) sums on foreign aid (\$16 billion).

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Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army. - Edward Everett Hale (1794 -1865) When will we ever learn?

[7] MISSIONARY REUNIONS in 2007, so far known

*March 23-25 Class of 1957 3s – 50th Reunion, Pilgrim Place, Claremont CA “Great time!”

*July 6-8 Liberia Reunion, Lake Junaluska, Wilfred Boayue: sboayue@bellsouth.net

*August 3-5 Congo Reunion, Lake Junaluska, Contact Bill Harvey, harvey@raex.com

*August 5-8 Mission Gathering & Forum with time for India, Philippines and SE Asia Reunions at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL. Please see contact information below in article [9].

[8] **Coordinator's Corner "Easter - New Opportunities" by Fred Price**

May I share two brief points with you. First, many thanks to all who have already sent in their 2007 UMMA dues, I was delighted to receive them. Second, as noted in the earlier issue of the "Update," this year's UMMA Gathering will follow at the conclusion of the Mission Gathering and Forum in Evanston, IL. So please put it on your calendar and plan to join us from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM on Aug. 8 for the annual UMMA meeting. Please get your reservation in early for one of the dorm rooms.

Membership dues for 2007 are only \$25.00 per person for Full Membership which includes the right to vote for Steering Committee members, or \$15.00 per person for Affiliate Membership which does not include voting rights. Second, shortly we will be holding our next round of elections. You will hear more details by email or by snail (regular) mail. We will again be electing persons to the Steering Committee. For active missionaries, this will be by geographic region. Retirees will vote as a single body.

----- Please fill out now, cut off here, and send to the address below -----

Your Name: _____ Spouse's Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Individual Member = \$25.00, Couple = \$50, Affiliate Memberships = \$15.00

Please make checks payable to: "UMMA" and mail to:

Fred W. Price, Coordinator, 165 Grandview Avenue, Pitman, NJ 08071 USA

[9] *This is your invitation to come join the -*

MISSION GATHERING & FORUM

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60201

August 5 – 8, 2007

Opening plenary Sunday evening, August 5 at 7:00 PM in the chapel at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. Music by Joline Bestounes and Stephen Edwards of Community UMC in Naperville followed by Bishop Roy E. Sano speaking on "Biblical Basis for Mission". Program ends at 12 NOON August 8. The annual UMMA meeting is scheduled from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

Housing:

Loder Hall Dormitory Housing on Campus Forty-five rooms at \$186 for three nights for single or double occupancy (Thus, 2 persons would divide this and pay only \$93 each for three nights. If only one in the room the room rate is still \$186). No AC. Bathrooms down the hall. (dormitory style housing). Reservations for dormitory are made on the form below.

Best Western Hotel: Garrett Event Rates \$99 per night plus taxes (about 15-20 minute walk). Parking additional. Limited number of reserved rooms available until July1, 2007. Call Best Western Hotel at 847-491-6400 and ask for the Mission Gathering and Forum group. Airport Express to the Hotel \$22; Taxi, approximately \$35.

Hotel Orrington: \$119 per night, plus taxes (about six blocks from campus). Limited number of reserved rooms available until July 1, 2007. Parking additional. Call 888 677 4648, contact Group Reservations and ask for the Mission Gathering and Forum at Garrett-Evangelical. From O’Hare call American Taxi at 847-673-1000 – Cost \$25.

Other Hotels in the area may be less expensive but farther away.

Wheelchair participants will have an elevator to reach chapel meetings.

Travel: By train: Blue line from airport to downtown, then red line and then purple line to Evanston City Center. Garrett is about eight blocks away from the train station. If driving, parking at Garrett is limited and will cost at least \$5 per day.

Food: \$105 for full three days (\$35 per day). Includes entree for evening meal, continental style breakfast and executive style bag lunches. Limited options for food preferences. Otherwise, meals on your own at cafeteria at Northwestern, a 10 minute walk away.

----- Please fill out, cut off here and send to Richard Vreeland -----

REGISTRATION FORM

For details & forms click: <http://www.umma-global.org/pdf/gathering.pdf>

Name of delegate: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: ___ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Health Insurance Carrier: _____

Plan #: _____ Policy #: _____

Affiliation (Check all that apply): NADAM, NCVIM, UMMA, India Reunion
 SE Asia Reunion, Philippines Reunion, Other (please name) _____

Housing:

- Hotel – I will reserve and pay for my own hotel room.
- Loder Hall Dormitory (Rm. total = \$186. Roommates name: _____)

<u>Item:</u>	<u>Loder Hall or</u>	<u>hotel</u>
Registration per person – Non-refundable	35.	35.
Food per person*	105.	105.
<u>Dormitory (Total for 1 or 2 participants per room)*</u>	<u>186.</u>	<u>_____</u>
Total =	326.	140.

* Refundable until May 1, 2007

Payment: Make check payable to: **Trinity UMC** with \$326 for Loder Hall option, *or* \$140 if you reserve & pay for your own hotel room. PLEASE SEND TO:

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

Information on registration Tel: (636) 825-6351; email: RLVreeland@sbcglobal.net