



THE LAMPLIGHTER

Ministerial Musings

In early April I received this wonderful reflection via e-mail from a good friend. No author was indicated, so I must presume it is by that prolific author, "Anonymous." I have been holding on to it so that I could share it with you in this month of May when we will celebrate Mother's Day. I hope it may touch and inspire you as it did me.

ALL ABOUT MOTHERS Mama/Mommy/Mother/Mom

This is a truly beautiful piece. Please read this at a slow pace, digesting every word and in leisure...do not hurry...this is a treasure... For those lucky to still be blessed with your Mom, this is beautiful. For those of us who aren't, this is even more beautiful. For those who are moms, you'll love this.

The young mother set her foot on the path of life. "Is this the long way?" she asked. And the guide said: "Yes, and the way is hard. And you will be old before you reach the end of it. But the end will be better than the beginning."

But the young mother was happy, and she would not believe that anything could be better than these years. So she played with her children, and gathered flowers for them along the way, and bathed them in the clear streams; and the sun shone on them, and the young Mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier than this."

Then the night came, and the storm, and the path was dark, and the children shook with fear and cold, and the mother drew them close and covered them with her mantle, and the children said, "Mother, we are not afraid, for you are near, and no harm can come."

And the morning came, and there was a hill ahead, and the children climbed and grew weary, and the mother was weary. But at all times she said to the children, "A little patience and we are there." So the children climbed, and when they reached the top they said, "Mother, we would not have done it without you."

And the mother, when she lay down at night looked up at the stars and said, "This is a better day than the last, for my children have learned fortitude in the face of hardness. Yesterday I gave them courage Today, I've given them strength."

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A Month of Sundays

(Worship Services at 10:15 AM in Our Sanctuary Unless Otherwise Indicated)

May 7, 2006 – The Fourth Sunday of Easter / **Sacrament of Holy Communion**

Preacher: John D. Painter Theme: *This Holy Mystery: Extending the Table*

Lectionary Readings: Acts 4:5-12 1 John 3:16-24

Psalm 23 John 10:11-18

May 14, 2006 – The Fifth Sunday of Easter / **Mother's Day** / **"Hat Sunday"**

(Festival of the Christian Home)

Preachers: John D. Painter & Terrilisa Durham Bauknight

Theme: *Crowns of Faith*

Lectionary Lessons: Acts 8:26-40 1 John 4:7-21

Psalm 22:25-31 John 15:1-8

May 21, 2006 – The Sixth Sunday of Easter / **Men's Sunday**

Preacher: John D. Painter Theme: *Touchdown Jesus*

Lectionary Readings: Acts 10:44-48 1 John 5:1-6

Psalm 98 John 15:9-17

May 28, 2006 – The Seventh Sunday of Easter / **Ascension Sunday** /

Memorial Sunday

Preacher: John D. Painter Theme: *FANAFI*

Lectionary Readings:

Easter Seven: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 1 John 5:9-13

Psalm 1 John 17:6-19

Ascension Sunday: Acts 1:1-11 Ephesians 1:15-23

Psalm 47 Luke 24:44-53

Note: The underlined passage in the Lectionary Readings is the primary Scripture readings upon which the morning Message will be based; passages with double underlines indicate the primary reading for the Message when more than one Scripture reading will be used as part of the morning Worship service.



Ministerial Musings (con't.)

(Continued from page 1)

And the next day came strange clouds which darkened the earth, clouds of war and hate and evil, and the children groped and stumbled, and the mother said: "Look up. Lift your eyes to the light." And the children looked and saw above the clouds an everlasting glory, and it guided them beyond the darkness. And that night the Mother said, "This is the best day of all, for I have shown my children God."

And the days went on, and the weeks and the months and the years, and the mother grew old and she was little and bent. But her children were tall and strong, and walked with courage. And when the way was rough, they lifted her, for she was as light as a feather; and at last they came to a hill, and beyond they could see a shining road and golden gates flung wide. And mother said, "I have reached the end of my journey. And now I know the end is better than the beginning, for my children can walk alone, and their children after them."

And the children said, "You will always walk with us, Mother, even when you have gone through the gates." And they stood and watched her as she went on alone, and the gates closed after her. And they said: "We cannot see her but she is with us still. A Mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a living presence..."

Your Mother is always with you... She's the whisper of the leaves as you walk down the street; she's the smell of bleach in your freshly laundered socks; she's the cool hand on your brow when you're not well. Your Mother lives inside your laughter. And she's crystallized in every tear drop. She's the place you came from, your first home; and she's the map you follow with every step you take. She's your first love and your first heartbreak, and nothing on earth can separate you. Not time, not space...not even death!

Shalom,
John

"Hat Sunday" on Mother's Day—May 14th



How long has it been since you've worn a hat to church? Do you still have a Sunday-go-to-meeting hat? We invite and encourage the women of Centenary to wear a hat to Worship on May 14th, Mother's Day. Pastors John and Terrilisa plan to share some special thoughts about women's hats that morning in their joint Message. Look for more information in our weekly Worship bulletins and e-mail announcements. We hope to see you in your Sunday finery.

Men's Sunday on May 21st

Men of Centenary! You will remember what a wonderful experience it was to share in worship on Women's Sunday back in March. Well, your turn has come. May 21st will be Men's Sunday, and we are looking for men to help plan the service, lead the service, sing in the service, and attend the service. If you would be willing to serve as a leader/reader in worship on May 21st, please speak with Pastor John (call him at the Church Office or e-mail him at RevJDP@aol.com). If you are willing to be part of a Men's Chorus to sing that morning, please speak with Shirley Mosteller (call her at the Church Office). Let's put together a powerful service of praise to God just as our sisters did in March.

Flower Chart

Persons are needed to sponsor Altar Flowers for our Sunday Worship services. The **2006 Flower Chart is posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex**. The cost is \$20.00 per arrangement. Information is available from our Flower Chairperson, Linda Serentino (732-940-2135) or by calling the Church Office. Thank you for providing these beautiful tributes for our Sunday services.

Food Collection—Sunday, May 21st

Please Bring cereals, staple food items in plastic jars or cans and paper products to share with persons in need on our area. We are deeply grateful for your generous sharing.

Ozanam Shelter Dinner on May 1st

Centenary will be serving dinner at the Ozanam Shelter on Monday, April 3rd. Please check the information on the bulletin board in the Narthex and sign up to assist with food preparation or serving. For further information, please contact Glenna Gundell (732-463-1431) or Mary Ellen Heim (732-548-2587). Thanks.

Refreshments

Persons are needed to sponsor the time of coffee and refreshments following our Sunday Worship services. Please consider sponsoring a refreshment time and signing up for one of the many available weeks on the **2006 Refreshment Chart in the Narthex**. Information on what you need to provide is available from Pastor Painter or by speaking with Millie Pleuler (732-750-4434). Thank you for providing hospitality on a Sunday morning.

Raritan Valley District Conference—May 21st

Pastor John Painter and Lay Member to Annual Conference Dean Bender will be attending the 2006 Raritan Valley District Conference on Sunday, May 21st from 3:00-6:00 PM at Christ United Methodist Church in Piscataway. This gathering of the Pastors and Lay Members of Annual Conference from the churches of the Raritan Valley District is an opportunity to review and celebrate the accomplishments of the past year, hear information regarding the approaching 2006 Greater NJ Annual Conference (June 1-3 @ Valley Forge (PA) Convention Center), and elect persons to leadership positions in district committees and teams. The Rev. Veronica P. Palmer, Raritan Valley District Superintendent will preside at the Conference.

The Raritan Valley District is comprised of 68 United Methodist churches located in Middlesex, Hunterdon, Somerset, western Union and southern Warren counties.

Any members of Centenary are also invited and encouraged to attend this annual district gathering. Please speak with either John Painter or Dean Bender if you are interested in attending and/or need directions to Christ UMC.

Raritan Valley District Resource Day—May 17th

The Rev. Dr. L. Edward Phillips of Duke University Divinity School will be the featured speaker at the May 17th Raritan Valley District Resource Day to be held at the Union Village United Methodist Church in Berkeley Heights. Dr. Phillips served as the Chairperson of the committee which produced the document *This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion* that was received and approved by the 2004 General Conference of The United Methodist Church as the official statement on our denominational understanding of the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Clergy members of the district will attend an all-day session with Dr. Phillips from 9:00 AM till 3:00 PM. **An evening session specifically designed for laity of the district will be held from 7:30-9:30 PM.** Pastor Painter hopes that members of Centenary will plan to attend the evening session. Please speak with him for further information and for directions to the Union Village United Methodist Church.

“CENTENARY MEN’S REVIEW”

FOR DEFICIT REDUCTION
SATURDAY, MAY 20 @ 7 PM

Bring your checkbook and come help the Centenary Men in their endeavor on 20 May at 7:00 PM. Come and enjoy an hour or so of relaxed entertainment, laughter, fun, love and giving.

We need your help! *Austin Banks, President of the Centenary Men*

PS: Coffee and cake will be served...

Watch for further information in our weekly worship bulletins and through E-mailings.

Sermons “Podcast” on Our Web Site

In addition to being available in print, the Pastors’ weekly sermons are now available as a “podcast” on our Web site. You may listen to each Message as it was delivered in Worship Service. Go to www.CentenaryUMCnj.org to explore this and other new features and links. Our thanks to Web servant Ernie Agtarap for providing this on-line ministry of Centenary.

2006 Summer Camp Programs at Aldersgate Center

The schedule for the Aldersgate Center Summer Program is posted on the Aldersgate Center Web Site at www.aldersgatenj.com. You may find information there about a number of camp programs available for lower and upper elementary children, and for junior and senior high youth, between June 25th and August 25th. All necessary forms for registering your child or youth are available at the site to download and print out. We also have copies of the schedule and registration forms available through the Church Office. Registrations are coming in quickly and space is limited this year, so we encourage you to register your child or youth as soon as possible. **Please remember that limited scholarship assistance is available for those who attend a camp program at Aldersgate through Centenary United Methodist Women and through the Church.** Please speak with Pastor Painter at the time you seek his signature on the registration forms. We are delighted that Aldersgate Center will be able to hold a very active summer program this year despite the loss of Wesley Lodge to a disastrous fire in the fall.

Editor’s Note: Aldersgate only had to drop 5 programs from their Summer Schedule. See article further in this issue.

2006 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference
One in Spirit, All in Ministry: In the Spirit of Worship
June 1-3 at the Valley Forge Convention Center

The seventh session of our **Greater New Jersey Annual Conference** of The United Methodist Church will be held June 1-6, 2006, at the Valley Forge Hotel & Convention Center in King of Prussia, PA. **Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar** will preside at the business sessions of the Conference, which will officially convene with a Service of Tribute and Holy Communion at 10:00 AM on Thursday, June 1st. Annual Conference is scheduled to adjourn following the Fixing of the Clergy Appointments and a Service of Commissioning at 3:30 PM on Saturday, June 3rd. **Dean Bender**, Centenary's Lay Member to Annual Conference, and Pastor John Painter will attend the Annual Conference sessions. They will join with about 1,500 clergy and lay members of Annual Conference for this three-day gathering, representing local congregations and other ministry settings in and beyond the geographical bounds of the Annual Conference (the entire state of NJ; portions of Rockland and Orange Counties, NY; and a portion of Pike County, PA).

The theme for the 2006 Annual Conference session is "One In Spirit, All In Ministry: In The Spirit Of Worship." Bishop Minerva G. Carcano will be the Conference Preacher. She will speak at the 4:30 PM service of Worship on Thursday, June 1st, and again at the 9:00 AM Worship service on Friday, June 2nd. Because 2006 marks the 50th anniversary of the granting of full clergy rights to women in the former Methodist Church, there will be a number of celebrative events marking this special anniversary in our denomination.

Any members of Centenary who may be interested in attending any of the sessions or services of Annual Conference are welcome to do so, and may speak with Pastor Painter or Dean Bender for directions to the Valley Forge Convention Center and for the schedule of events during these three days. (You may also access the information at our Greater NJ Annual Conference Web site: www.gnjumc.org) Of particular interest may be Bishop Devadhar's second Episcopal Address to the Conference during the Plenary Session at 7:30 PM on Thursday, June 1st; and the Service of Ordination, at which Bishop Devadhar will preach, on Friday, June 2nd at 8:00 PM. We ask you to be in prayer for the Clergy and Lay Members of the Greater NJ Annual Conference as they gather in June for "Holy Conferencing."

Seeking Information About Our 2006 College Graduates

We are seeking information about those Centenary members who will be graduating from college this Spring. Please call or e-mail (CentaryUMC@aol.com) the Church Office so we may share in the joy of your accomplishments.



Centenary United Methodist Youth Fellowship

The month of April found the youth fellowship outlining new projects and programs, changing course for the upcoming summer, preparing for Easter celebrations and Native American Sunday (April 30th) of which the youth will be in charge of the worship service.

This summer, CUMYF will make Centenary UM Church – Metuchen, their mission commitment. With the several needs of the church, matched with the numerous and capable hands of the youth, the faith community will benefit as recipients of the services provided and the youth will continue in their striving to continue community service. The pocket change for change project will continue until August. This project was established by the youth fellowship on our return from Maine last summer. The goal was to donate our pocket change in order to assist a mission church in Maine as well as a mission church (both Methodist) here in New Jersey. The jars are tucked away in the counting room.

The Month of Hearts Fundraiser, which continued through the end of March, was not as successful as was hoped. We thank all those who gave and the youth who made the effort. Monies raised will be forwarded to one organization after monies are matched from the youth's own funds.

In early April the decision was made and approved by the Church Council to allow the youth to redo the picture directory in the Narthex. The youth will be on hand in the early weeks of May to take photos for those who wish to have them. There will be a small donation to help defray the cost of developing the pictures. In addition, those who wish to utilize their pictures from our current directory are more than welcome to do so. In addition to still pictures the youth are looking to participate in summer worship with a 'moving picture' alternative worship experience. Stay tuned for further news of what will prove to be an enjoyable experience.

Easter celebrations were supported by the youth as they prepared the dozens and dozens of eggs for the great egg hunt in support of the Children's Ministry. It was a great effort on the part of the youth advisors to keep the goodies from disappearing into the eager mouths of the youth as the treats were being placed inside the egg. The great coordinating of this event by Miss Cathy and the cooperation of Mother Nature with beautiful weather allowed for a successful egg hunt. In addition to this event, cooperative effort on another project led to a quick packaging of some 70+, health kits for disaster victims. The project was coordinated by, Mrs. Sylvia Woodfield (UMW). The youth fellowship along with several other volunteers spent approximately one hour together packaging the items.

The preparation for Native American Sunday will be the fellowships third time in leading worship this year. The youth will continue in their quest to be open and thought provoking while incorporating their own style of worship with the many other worship options available. The day should prove to be joyous and spirit-filled.



Centenary Book Club



The Centenary Book Club experienced time travel during the April meeting to experience the antebellum south in reading Octavia E. Butler's, *Kindred*. The book touched on the need to know one's family history and gave the experience of family members through the eyes of 26-year-old Dana, the narrator and historian, who was a 19th Century Black African American female living in California. She was systematically transported back in time to ensure that her ancestors survived. The historical science-fiction writing gave the club members much to think about.

The club is reading *The Garden*, by Elsie V. Aidinoff. This contemporary version of the Garden of Eden was

written by a 70-year-old first time author. Filled with many thought provoking ideas and statements, club readers will be challenged to look at the events and the key players of the garden (God, Adam, Eve and the Serpent) with different lenses.

Our May meeting will be the last meeting for the Centenary Book Club for this year. We will be reading the *Master Butcher's Singing Club* over the summer months and begin with this at our first meeting in September. Again, the book club remains open to men and women ages 18 and older as well as those who have full schedules but wish to join us as 'outside' readers.

Last Meeting of Tuesday Luncheon Group

Tuesday, May 23, at Centenary will be a Time to Remember the Good Times. We will meet at 11 AM in Room 20. Please bring a sandwich as it will be a salad luncheon.

This will be the last meeting where seniors will meet on the second Tuesday met for 20 years every month from September through May. As Millie writes, "It was great experience to get to know each other from these three churches. A close fellowship and relationship was truly a blessing." Many of the group have moved away and several have passed away. The numbers attending have gotten so small that it became difficult to a few to do any planning due to illnesses.

It is with sad adieu that we will not meet as a group, however memories will linger on. We especially want to thank the pastors of the three churches: Pastor John Painter of Centenary, Pastor John Kwon of Wesley, and Pastor Darryl Deur of New Dover.

Music Committee to Meet

The Music Committee will meet BRIEFLY after the service on April 30. Our primary agenda items will be to replenish the committee and to begin planning a fundraising activity (or 2). Suggestions that have been presented are to celebrate Mozart's Birthday, or to have a silent movie night with piano accompaniment. We would love to have your ideas and input. New member and interested people with or without musical backgrounds are welcome!

For further information or to be added to our committee contact list, please contact Alison Williams at 732-744-9790 or at alisonw@princeton.edu.



Flower Committee – Thanks you!

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who ordered lilies for Easter. We exceeded our goal and they looked absolutely beautiful. I'd also like to extend a special Thank You to Pastor John for patiently waiting for the lilies to arrive. I'd also like to thank everyone who helped arrange the lilies as well; Mike and Cathy Savoia, Sue Brownlow, Sylvia Woodfield, Carolee Szako and Terrilisa Bauknight. I hope I didn't leave anyone out, but if so please know that I appreciate the help. As my mother always says, "many hands make the load lighter."

Of note, there are a number of Sundays where altar flowers are needed. Please take a look at the Flower Chart hanging in the narthex for the Sundays where flowers are needed. The cost for altar flowers is \$20.00.

Faithfully yours,
Linda Serentino



Celebrations and Concerns

We Welcome Our Newest Members: Please greet and warmly welcome the following four new members of our Centenary Church Family. They were received into membership on Sunday, March 26, 2006:

- **Steven & Carol Orzechowski**, who were received by Certificate of Transfer from Trinity United Methodist Church in South Amboy, NJ. Steve and Carol and their daughter, Nicole, reside at 13 Pelham Avenue, Edison, NJ 08817. Phone: 732-985-4861.
- **Pradipkumar & Shobhana Ingale**, who were received by Reaffirmation of Faith. Pradip, Shobhana and their daughters, Moushumi & Mansi, reside at 2 Dayton Drive, Apt. 3B, Edison, NJ 08820. Phone: 732-548-0173.

Congratulations to Erin Beattie and Michael Homer, Jr. who have announced their engagement to be married. Michael is currently attending the University of Georgia, and Erin will be relocating to Georgia in May when she graduates from the University of Tampa. A June 2, 2007, wedding is planned in New Jersey. We extend our best wishes and prayers to the happy couple.

Prayers for Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar: At the 2005 Greater NJ Annual Conference session in June, we were all asked to include Bishop Devadhar and his wife, Prima, in our weekly prayers. We are especially invited to lift the bishop and his family (and support staff/cabinet) in **prayer on Thursdays at Noon**. Bishop "Suda" has acknowledged the invaluable strength he receives from the prayer support of so many as he seeks to serve as Pastor to all of the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey.

2006 UMM Gathering "Come and you will see"

The Leadership Team for Greater NJ United Methodist Men is pleased to announce that its 3rd Annual Spring Gathering will again be at the Great Auditorium in Ocean Grove on Saturday, May 6, 2006. The guest speaker for the event will be Joe Ehrmann. Joe is a former NFL Superstar, an ordained Minister connected with a large Baltimore church, and the founder of Building Men and Women for others.

Joe has been characterized as: "The Most Important Coach in America" based upon his coaching of high school boys at the Gilmore School - "love" is the operative word in the relationships between the coach and boys and among teammates and it works because they win most of their games.

Don't miss this opportunity to hear Joe's life changing message.

Individuals can register for only \$10.00 and Youth for only \$5.00. Go to the UMMen area of the Greater NJ Annual Conference website at <http://www.gnjumc.org/umm.html> to obtain a Flyer and Registration for the Gathering. Box Lunches must be Ordered from John Dewart by May 1, 2006. Questions: Contact - John K. Dewart - 973-927-9399 and/or JKDewart@aol.com. Mailing Address: 6 Kern Drive Flanders, NJ 07836

Reflections on Public Theology: An Introduction
Giselle Esquivel-Cordero

“Moving from Debate to Dialogue”



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

It is in a spirit of gratitude, and some trembling, that I accepted your call to assume the role of “public theology representative”. My gratitude is based on my love of life-long learning and my thirst to grow in a deeper understanding of God’s purpose in my life, but also to share in the growing experiences of our lives as a church family and as part of a connectional and inclusive community in Jesus Christ. Personally, this open attitude to learning usually leads me to be self-reflective and to engage in constructive relational and communal dialogue. Yet, there is still the challenge that comes from the shadow side of my need for conviction. In effect, in an attempt to hold on to the “truth”, I express, and advocate strong opinions in a manner that often sounds argumentative. This opinionated approach can be divisive and often leaves me depleted, upset, and less secure in my beliefs than when I first became swept by the debate. While the open attitude is more tentative and receptive to the perspectives of others, it can nonetheless be conducive to affirming my own experience and to respect and be awed by the many mysterious ways in which God is revealed in each one of us.

My personal experience is not too different from that of our congregation and our larger community as United Methodist Christians at this time in our history. In “Confronting the Controversies”, Hamilton (2005) states that the controversial issues we encounter are many, including abortion, sexual orientation, inclusiveness of ordination, capital punishment, separation of church and state, and euthanasia. While the Book of Discipline and the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church help to clarify the stance of our denomination on these issues, many questions and differences of opinion remain, along with trepidation about engaging in discussion for fear of ensuing conflict. Moreover, because these matters remain covert, they tend to emerge in indirect and oversimplified ways that often misrepresent the issues or fail to encompass their complexity, and thus undermine the integrity of the persons on either side of the values.

Hamilton says of John Wesley that he was able to argue different sides of the same issue because he saw truth and value in different positions. While he could be passionate in opposing opinions different from his own, his tendency was to identify in other positions that from which he could learn and in this way seek a greater and fuller truth. While holding his own strong convictions based on scripture, tradition, reason, and experience, Wesley remained in a questioning and open attitude to the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout his life. In my role as “public theology representative”, I hope to follow Wesley’s model by showing an attitude of sensitivity and respect towards diverse points of view, but yet being true to and willing to share my own experiences with you. My goals are to provide information through the Lamplighter on the Social Principles of our Discipline; foster individual reflection on current critical social issues through newsletter articles, readings, and/or personal meetings at your request; be available as a facilitator for small group discussion as needed; and keep our congregation aware of and updated on relevant current issues as these develop.

I leave you for now with the question: How do we approach as Christians the critical social-political issues and controversies that impact our society and our world at these times? How do we move from debate to open dialogue?

Hamilton, A. (2005). Confronting the controversies: Biblical perspectives on tough issues. Nashville, Tenn: Abingdon Press.



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OUR HEARTS, OUR
MINDS & OUR DOORS
ARE ALWAYS OPEN!

Our Staff

Pastor:	John D. Painter
Asst. Pastor:	Terrilisa Durham-Bauknight
Dir. Of Music:	Shirley Mosteller
Dir. Of Children's Ministries:	Cathy Savoia
Administrative Asst.:	Mary Kay Dangremond

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