

UMCConnection

Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church • Becoming fully alive in Christ and making a difference in a diverse and ever-changing world • www.bwcumc.org • Volume 27, Issue 03 • March 2016

Love offering creates fitness center



An artist's rendering shows the proposed fitness center on the campus of Africa University, in Zimbabwe. A "love offering" for Bishop Marcus Matthews is going towards building the facility. Visit bwcumc.org/love to learn more.

Eunice Mathews remembered

IN MEMORIAM

LOVE. REVERENCE. AWE.
It's hard to think about the life story of Eunice Jones Mathews without feeling the compelling love of Christ shine through.

Bishop Susan Morrison called her "the last of Methodist royalty." Daughter of the world-renowned missionary E. Stanley Jones and wife of Bishop James K. Mathews, who as a child played with monkeys and fell asleep reading under the moon in India, Eunice Mathews died Feb. 27.

She was 101 years old.

She was a member of Metropolitan Memorial UMC in Washington, D.C. In 2004, Mathews was called before the General Conference in Pittsburgh so that United Methodists from around the world could celebrate her life and wish her Happy Birthday.

In response, Mathews simply said, she did not want to be defined by her relationships. "I am free to be myself," she said, "a freedom I have in Jesus Christ."

This freedom, wrote Martha Gunsalus Chamberlain in a biography of Mathews and her mother, manifests itself in the scriptural mantra Mathews adopted and carried with her throughout the years: "It is not I, but Christ within me."

Over the years, Bishop Marcus Matthews developed a special relationship with Eunice Mathews. "She saw in me, what I did not always see in myself my early days of ministry. She was brave. She spoke truth even when it placed her at odds with others. She was a person of integrity. She was never silent when it came to issues of justice."

These values were instilled in Mathews when she was a girl, growing up in India.

In the book, "A Love Affair with India," Chamberlain explores how Eunice, born on April 29, 1914, in Lucknow, India, was able, with the help of her Muslim cook, Bhulan, to sneak hot curries to eat. She had a pet monkey who she taught to do tricks, and a mongoose named Rikki, who cleared poisonous snakes from the family's home.

Growing up, Mathews was deeply influenced by

her faithful and indomitable mother, Mabel, also a Methodist missionary who was a pioneer, creating and leading a boy's primary school in northern India.

After taking a typing course, Mathews brought a valuable gift to her father, E. Stanley Jones, editing and typing 25 of his books.

Her father's writings changed the world, influencing such thinkers as Mahatma Ghandi and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

In addition to inspiring a non-violent approach to dramatic social change, Ghandi shared with Jones that Christians needed to live more like Christ, practice their religion without toning it down, emphasize love, and find the good in non-Christian religions.

As she grew into an adult, Mathews did all of these things.

In 1939, she met the Rev. Jim Mathews, who was 25 and a new pastor, serving as a missionary. He went to hear her famous father speak and admitted that at his first meeting with Eunice, he was "smitten when she walked into the room and into my life."



Eunice Mathews, in 2014, at the dedication of a plaque honoring her and her husband.

Not too much later, Mathews sold his typewriter and used the money to help buy a wedding ring. The couple married June 1, 1940, and began a partnership of love,

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Church uses author's life to reach youth

BY MELISSA LAUBER
UMCConnection Staff

AS A PASTOR, the Rev. Vivian McCarthy is always listening for what's going on in the life of the community as it unfolds around Reisterstown UMC. Recently, she heard a story that was helping to shape the moral imagination of the people in her church and beyond.

The story was told in a New York Times best-seller, "The Other Wes Moore." Two young boys named Wes Moore were born in Baltimore, just blocks apart, within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar troubled neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods. One of them, the author, grew up to be a Rhodes scholar, a decorated veteran and a White House fellow.

The other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence in Jessup.

Their common journeys, how their paths diverged and the relationship they forged forms the foundation of the book.

"The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates," was featured in Franklin High School's "One Book, One Community," initiative last summer and read by every student and teacher in the Reisterstown school.

Reisterstown UMC was going through some struggles and McCarthy decided she needed to preach a series on coping. The story of the two men named Wes Moore came to mind.

On Jan. 10, she preached the sermon, "Keep Calm and Trust God." In her preaching, she stressed Moore's quote: "The chilling truth is that his story could have been mine, the tragedy is that my story could have been his."



Wes Moore

See Wes Moore, page 3

... well said

(a chance to express what that word means to you.)

By MANDY SAYERS
Pastor, Covenant UMC, Gaithersburg

I HEARD JOHN MAYER's song, "Waiting on the World to Change" on the radio today. I really don't like that song. It's whiney. It's about a generation that isn't old enough to take the lead, so they're just waiting on the world to change. It sounds a bit like a cop-out to me.

I'll grant you that it's hard to know how to lead when the man you're following was crucified by the powers that be. It's hard to lead people like Jesus would have led because that sort of leadership tends to end with nails and a cross.

When the Son of God took the form of a servant and modeled a leadership that looks like washing feet, well, that's a hard thing to put on a bumper sticker. That's a leader that's neither "electable" nor likely to "make America great again." (Note the bipartisan nature of the reference).

But God has always been in the leadership development business. The ones God tends to choose are often a surprise: Moses stuttered; Jeremiah was too young; Sarah was too old; Saul persecuted Christians; and David...well, he violated almost all the commandments.

Consider all the prophets that God woke up in the middle of the night, all the people God called to lead when even the church didn't recognize their call — people like Sojourner Truth and Jerena Lee.

God is still raising up leaders, who at first may not know they are leaders. When the great "I Am" whispers, so often the response is "but who am I to go and lead anybody? I'm just waiting on the world to change." That's where the church can step in — naming spiritual gifts and graces, training and encouraging new leaders, being an Eli to help a Samuel recognize God's voice.

Leading sometimes means doing the hard thing, the unpopular thing. It sometimes means speaking truth to power. It sometimes means keeping your mouth shut. Leadership is both skill and art, requiring a curious balance of courage and humility. Servant leadership in the name of Jesus requires knowing that "leaders" are also first and foremost "followers." We follow Jesus and we lead others to him. We follow the Savior whose model of greatness was about being a servant of all.

Leading is about speaking up and speaking out and taking risks in Jesus' name. Leading is about disciples washing feet, breaking chains, sowing hope. They're not waiting on the world to change. They're disciples of Jesus. It's their job to change the world.

... well said



**LEARN.
LIFT.
LEAD.**

A love offering to celebrate the ministry of Bishop Marcus Matthews

Send your contributions, marked Bishop's Love Offering, to the Conference Treasurer at 11711 E. Market Place, Fulton, MD 20759.

bwcumc.org/love

Ancient church mothers and fathers often greeted one another with the phrase, "Give me a word." This greeting led to the sharing of insights and wisdom. Today we continue this tradition with this monthly column.

By DARYL WILLIAMS
Pastor, St. Paul UMC, Oxon Hill

ONE OF MY favorite games to play as a child was "Follow the Leader." It was a relatively simple game: all you had to do was follow the leader. What the leader did, you did. Where the leader went, you went.

It was always interesting to see what the leader was going to do next, and see if you could keep up. When the leader ran, we ran. When the leader climbed, we climbed. When the leader stopped, we stopped, until there was a new leader. That new leader would be the person that we would now begin to follow.

It is interesting the things that a child's game can teach adults. Leadership is crucial in the world. You see, leaders in "Follow the Leader," and in all other facets of leading, have one job: to get people from here to there. The job of a leader is to see a new, better place and lead people there; to lead them when they can't see what the leader sees; to lead them when they are not sure if they want to go; to lead them because where the leader is trying to take everyone is in the best interest of everyone.

Many times, what people miss about leading is that it is both a responsibility and a stewardship at the same time. Leaders have the responsibility to lead. One can not be a leader and stand still permanently. That's because "leading" is a verb; it is an action. Leaders are hard-wired to go somewhere and take people with them. They are hard-wired to make things happen, but they have the responsibility to make sure the right things happen.

To lead one must have conviction, courage and, most importantly, faith. Leaders must have conviction that they're doing the right thing, courage to be unpopular and the faith to see things through.

Finally, leadership is a stewardship. Leadership is temporary in that it is given to people for a period of time, to do the best they can, and then it moves to someone else. If you are going to lead, you have to be a good steward of the opportunity. It is up to you to lead for the greater good, lead to brighter places and be accountable to those who you lead and the God that gave you the opportunity.

So make a difference, my friends. Make something happen. Take people to higher heights and deeper depths. In short, when it is your turn, lead.

... well said

EVENTS

'Weird Church' Workshop
April 6, 10 a.m. to 12 noon
BWC Mission Center, Fulton

Authors Paul Nixon and Beth Ann Estock will speak about their new book, "Weird Church: Welcome to the 21st Century." Weird Church offers a clear vision of a good future, so long as church leaders are willing to live into a few critical shifts. Bring copies of the book for signing. Free. Register at <http://bwcumc.org/event/weird-church-workshop-and-book-signing/>.

Bishop's Farewell Gatherings

United Methodists across the conference will have the opportunity to honor Bishop Marcus Matthews this spring as he plans to retire in September. Regional gatherings will begin at 3 p.m. on:

- **Baltimore Region:** April 9 at Epworth Chapel UMC in Baltimore;
- **Frederick Region:** April 10 at Middletown UMC near Frederick;
- **Southern Region:** April 16 at Westphalia UMC in Upper Marlboro;
- **Washington Region:** April 17 at Asbury UMC in Washington, D.C.

Pre-Conference Briefing
April 30, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
First UMC, Hyattsville

All clergy and lay annual conference members are encouraged to attend the Pre-Conference Briefing. This informative session will include an overview of the proposed 2017 budget, a glimpse at proposed legislation and an opportunity to ask questions about Annual Conference.

Farewell Celebration for Barbara Matthews
May 28, 1 p.m.

A farewell celebration honoring Barbara Matthews, the wife of Bishop Marcus Matthews, will be held at the BWC Mission Center in Fulton. Tickets are \$25. Details will be available soon.

BWC Annual Conference
June 1-4
Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, D.C.

Churches are advised to budget for attendance for their clergy and lay members. The cost for a three-night stay, including registration and parking but not including meals, is \$833. Breakfast at the hotel is \$26; lunch is \$35, and dinner is \$45. More information about the Annual Conference Session is on page 5 of this issue, or online at <http://bwcumc.org/sessions/2016-session/>.

ASBURY BICENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE

It was 200 years ago this spring that Francis Asbury, the first bishop of the Methodist Church, died. His life and legacy will be celebrated Sunday, April 3. The observance begins at Lovely Lane UMC in Baltimore, where the Rev. Fred Day, chief executive of the General Commission on Archives and History, will preach.



Later in the day, there will be a pilgrimage to the Bishop's Lot at Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Baltimore. To mark this historic remembrance, the BWC Board of Trustees and Historical Society are creating a new monument to Methodism's first bishop.

 This symbol appears with stories that show your apportionment dollars at work, making a difference in people's lives.

UMConnection

Bishop Marcus Matthews Maidstone Mulenga	Resident Bishop Assistant to the Bishop, Director of Connectional Ministries
Melissa Lauber Erik Alsgaard Alison Burdett Kat Care Linda Worthington Kayla Spears	Director of Communications Managing Editor Multimedia Producer Web Content Manager Communications Associate Communications Coordinator

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BWC upgrades IT services with United Methodist vendor

By Erik Alsgaard
UMConnection Staff



THE BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON CONFERENCE will achieve significant savings on its annual IT services contract with a new arrangement with the General Council on Finance and Administration’s Shared Services department. The savings represent nearly \$75,000 per year, according to BWC treasurer, Paul Eichelberger.

The conference was at the end of a three-year contract with its previous vendor, said Eichelberger. “That was a long contract in the IT world,” he said, “and a lot of things had changed in that time period.”

GCFA was the lowest-priced bid of five the conference received, Eichelberger said, and even though that was one of the most important factors in selecting them, it was not the only reason.

“GCFA offered us the best technology at the best price,” Eichelberger said.

Joseph “Moe” Battley, who serves the BWC as its Facilities/IT Manager, said that GCFA improved many areas of the conference’s IT structure.

“They increased our ability to use remote access to our e-mails and files,” Battley said. “They improved our firewall security and data backup, and are now providing around-the-clock monitoring for our IT.”

GCFA is one of 13 general agencies of the UMC and is thus part of the worldwide United Methodist connection.

“This was very important,” Eichelberger added, “because it helps them to offer more personalized customer service. They are coming in with a missional purpose.”

Customer service was also important in the new contract, Eichelberger said, along with GCFA’s ability to work remotely with BWC staff to resolve any problems. GCFA, he said, provides IT support for the church’s missionaries

around the world, “so they specialize in this remote access which we knew was the new model for IT.”

Another factor in making the decision to go with GCFA, Eichelberger said, was that they are situated in Nashville, Tenn., home to numerous technology companies. “There’s an over-abundance of IT professionals that they can tap into,” he said. As part of The United Methodist Church, GCFA is non-profit so they don’t add a built-in profit margin to their costs, Eichelberger added.



The decision, he said, wasn’t just driven by cost; the people at GCFA made the difference. The enthusiasm of Derek Preston, who heads the Shared Services area, along with Shannon Logan, Shared Services Specialist, was contagious. Both Preston and Logan, along with other Shared Services staffers, were on-site at the BWC Mission Center for 10 days in early February as the new IT solutions were rolled out.

For Logan, working to help conferences throughout the connection with IT needs is part of her ministry.

“Our purpose at GCFA is to work in the ministry of administration,” said Logan. “It’s our vision and what we feel we’ve been called to do. Under the leadership of our General Secretary, Moses Kumar, his desire is to make administration, financial services and IT truly a ministry and a way to serve the connection.”

Kumar started the Shared Services department several years ago, Logan said, and branching out to serve annual conferences is the next step in its progression. At present, Shared Services does not offer assistance for local churches.

For the BWC, Shared Services is providing information technology solutions and managing the conference’s IT needs.

“We’re assisting with everything from managing your firewall to hosting your servers,” Logan said. “We’re also making sure you have the most up-to-date software on your computers.”

Logan’s Shared Services department is also working with the New England Annual Conference. “In the end, it’s all about how can we save dollars for the conferences so that that frees up additional monies that they can use in the conference,” she said.

The start-up with GCFA took place “at the worst possible time,” said Eichelberger, when the Mission Center was closed for five days during the January snowstorm. But the

closure helped prove a point: “All that snow didn’t deter anything,” Eichelberger said. “They just treated us like we were missionaries in some far-off country.”

“I love that, because of my job, I’m able to get out and meet people throughout the connection,” Logan said. “I think that sometimes we get in our own little world... that you forget how many people are out there that are connected because of this connection. There’s a lot of good that goes on in this church, and I get to see that.”

Wes Moore: Reaching out to the community through story

From page 1

McCarthy led the congregation through the truth highlighted in the book that “small decisions become big decisions.”

The story took on an extra and tragic poignancy because the man who was killed in Wes Moore’s robbery was Baltimore County police Sgt. Bruce A. Prothero, a loving husband and father of five who was a member of Reisterstown UMC.

According to the Baltimore Sun, Prothero was shot three times Feb. 7, 2000, as he chased four men out of a jewelry store during a robbery at the store, where he was working a second job as a security guard.

Moore was convicted of felony murder later that year, based on testimony that he and his half-brother held a clerk and customer at gunpoint while two accomplices smashed jewelry cases and fled with more than \$400,000 in watches.

McCarthy remembers when Bishop Felton May, then the resident bishop of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, returned from Prothero’s funeral service. He spoke of policemen lined up for more than a mile to honor the officer.

Prothero’s death shook the community and the emotional and spiritual pain lingers.

In her listening to the community, McCarthy had heard that the school invited Wes Moore, the author, to speak to the students. He was unable to do so. But McCarthy thought she might have something to contribute, so she

contacted the author’s representatives and told them the compelling story of how the church and community were connecting to the book. She shared what a difference it might make for the author to bring a message of the two Wes Moores to youth struggling with choices, consequences and the many factors that lead to success or failure.

His executive assistant heard McCarthy’s plea and Moore agreed to wave his more than \$25,000 speaking fee.

The church paid a portion of Moore’s travel expenses and bought each student a copy of his new novel for young adults.

The money came from a grant managed by the church library at Reisterstown UMC.

On Feb. 18, Moore spoke at Franklin High School. “The kids were entranced, they were riveted on what he had to say,” McCarthy reported. “Wes answered questions and the kids stood in line, some for an hour-and-a-half, to get their books signed. He took pictures with the kids and talked to them like they were the only person in the room.”

The next Sunday, Reisterstown UMC had more than 260 people in church, significantly more than the 215 who regularly attend worship. Many of the visitors had teenagers with them.

McCarthy doesn’t know if they attended because of the church’s involvement in

bringing Moore to speak to the high school students, but she celebrates the church being willing to reach out and be a part of the community’s story.

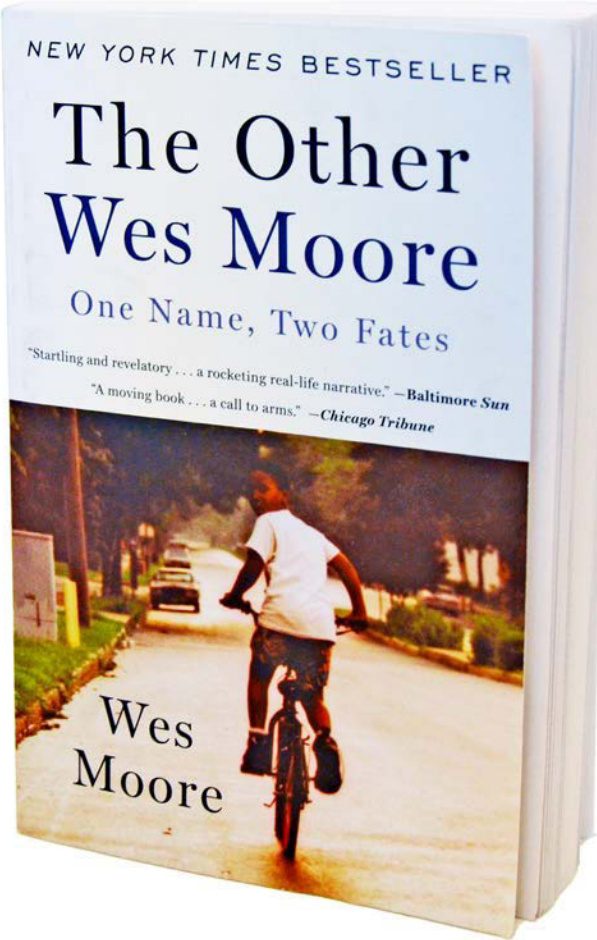
At one point in the book, the other Wes Moore visits his mother’s church and is unable to connect. He recounts a moment of despair and anger where he says, “If he does exist, he sure doesn’t spend any time in West Baltimore.”

McCarthy is glad the church is willing to genuinely wrestle with the difficult realities facing the community. “It is truly a God moment,” she said.

In the promotional materials for the book, it’s noted that in December 2000, in the same issue of the Baltimore Sun, there was a small story of Wes Moore receiving a Rhodes scholarship and, just pages away, the story of a manhunt for the killers of a police officer – one of whom was named Wes Moore.

As she worked on her sermon and Moore’s speaking engagement, the factors that led these boys to live out such different stories fascinated McCarthy. It’s her prayer that the church will be present in ways that illuminate good choices for today’s youth.

“Our daily life is what we have to give back to God,” she said. “It is often messy and doesn’t always sound very spiritual, but it’s our gift to God nonetheless.”



STUDY GUIDE AVAILABLE

For many of her sermons, the Rev. Vivian McCarthy compiles a weekly study and devotional guide to supplement that week’s message. A copy of her Jan. 10 sermon and the guide for “Keep Calm and Trust God I: The Other Wes Moore” is available at <http://rumcweb.org/worship/sermons/keep-calm-and-trust-god-i-the-other-wes-moore>.

Calvary UMC's re-birth a lesson for churches in conflict

By ERIK ALSGAARD
UMConnection Staff

THE REV. DAVID Simpson is set to retire – again – at the end of June. He tried to retire once before, in 2015, but ended up being called by Bishop Marcus Matthews to help out a church in need. That church, Calvary UMC in Frederick, has made a drastic turn-around in the past 15 months under Simpson's leadership. It's a story any church facing conflict and decline can replicate.

Simpson was appointed to Calvary in late February 2015. The bishop asked him to serve as an interim pastor for four months in addition to his then-duties of being on Conference Staff and co-leading the Imagine No Malaria campaign.

When Simpson arrived at Calvary, a cathedral-like church built in 1929-1930 in downtown Frederick, he found the congregation in chaos. There was no vision, no goals, no objectives, he said, and the church was losing both members and money.

"It was really ugly," he said. Various groups in the church were in "open warfare."

The first thing Simpson did was establish a four-point plan: stabilize, create order, establish a vision, and promote healing and reconciliation.

"Everything starts and ends in worship," Simpson said. "I had to stabilize worship, so I preached every Sunday. The church needed to see the same person in the pulpit every Sunday."

He then set about to stabilize the staff. Simpson informed the staff that everyone's job was safe, but they had four months to prove they belonged at Calvary. He began holding staff meetings every Tuesday, but with intentional changes to the agenda. Instead of diving straight into business, the meetings opened with prayer and times of what Simpson calls "loving on each other." They also shared a meal together at every meeting.

Simpson also sought to stabilize the church's finances. Staring at a projected deficit of \$50,000 in a \$660,000 budget, Simpson simply asked from the pulpit. "We need your support," he said, "and people responded." He also made numerous one-on-one visits with people who used to support the church both with their presence and their gifts but who had left in the midst of the troubles.

At the same time as this was being done, Simpson worked on "order." For example, he said, the order of worship was not dependable from week to week. He placed this ministry in the hands of the Rev. Julie Wilson, a Deacon serving at Calvary, and instructed her to follow the United Methodist Book of Worship, "not because this is what David does, but because this is what United Methodists do," he said. "She has stepped up to the plate on this."

To help create order, Simpson said that he hearkened back to an old saying he learned from Bishop Joseph Yeakel, who served the BWC from 1984 to 1996. "The bishop would say, 'No secrets, no surprises, no subversion,'" Simpson said. "I've said that so often here that I'm sure people are tired of hearing it."

The Staff Parish Relations Committee, for example, used to meet in secret, a violation of the church's Book of Discipline. Simpson put a stop to that and called for transparency in everything.

But the hardest part – and the on-going part – is healing and reconciliation, Simpson said. It was clear last March that this would take longer than the four months Bishop Matthews had appointed Simpson to Calvary. Simpson agreed to delay retirement one more year.

And again, he used worship to affect change.



The Rev. David Simpson works at his desk in the office of Calvary UMC in Frederick.

In the spring and summer of 2015, Simpson preached on what it means to be church and what it means to be a child of God. He knew that, like every church, there were three groups in the church: those on either "extreme" end of an issue or subject, and the vast majority in the middle. He needed to address the people in the middle of the issues, he said, and assure them of God's never-ending love. In addition to the sermons, he met one-on-one and in small groups with those on the edges, spending 20 hours per

week meeting with those people. To emphasize that the church is one family, Simpson turned to a portion of worship that makes many people cringe: the passing of the peace.

"I became directive" during this part of worship, Simpson said. "I would say, 'Find someone you don't know and talk with them.' Or, 'Find someone you've had a disagreement within the past and talk with them.' I didn't allow this time to be perfunctory."

Simpson also helped the church decide to combine their worship services for the summer. All of this, he said, in an effort to show people that they were one body, one church.

He also sought to bring about reconciliation through creating projects that would bring people together. He recruited two women, for example, who were on opposite sides of an issue, and invited them to lead the effort

to refurbish the church's library. The church's fellowship hall was re-painted which, again, brought people together to work side by side.

Perhaps the largest project is the church's pipe organ, a source of pride for the congregation along with its carillon peal bells. The organ is on its last legs, Simpson said, and a study committee is working on recommendations for replacing it which may cost \$1.5 million.

Even with the success of getting people back to working together on a common project, the danger in all this, Simpson said, is that the church may become too inward-focused. "I don't want them to forget," he said, "that it's not about us; it's about the people in our community and in our neighborhood."

Simpson said that he could not and did not do this ministry alone. He cited the support and work of two retired pastors working alongside him, the Revs. Harry Cole and Ken Humbert, who have provided pastoral care and visitation ministries to the congregation.

"I asked my staff to step it up," he said, "and they did."

Slowly but surely, the changes have worked. As Simpson prepares to retire and hand over the reins to a new pastor July 1, the church's worship attendance has stabilized at 300 and is beginning to grow again. The church's finances are such that, for 2015, they will finish with a surplus of about \$40,000 with all bills paid.

Calvary UMC, Simpson said, has a bright future in Frederick, a city, he said, that is growing, vibrant and alive. "We need to be a part of that," he said. "We have to catch up with the city, and to do that, we have to turn our focus outward."

"We're a family; we're God's people," Simpson said. "Some people had just forgotten that."

Mathews: 'A life-giving force in our church; she will be missed'

From page 1

service and faith.

In 1946, their first child, Anne, was born. The new family settled in New York City. In due course, they welcomed their second daughter, Janice, and son, Stan.

In 1960, while service as the Associate General Secretary of Global Mission, Jim Mathews went on a trip to the

(then) Belgian Congo. When he returned home to New Jersey, his family seemed shaken and Eunice broke the news to him.

The Jurisdictional Conference had met. He had been elected a bishop *in absentia*. Unable to contact him, they informed Eunice. The family packed quickly and drove to Washington, D.C., arriving at 3 a.m., Chamberlain wrote. That morning they were presented to the Conference

and learned of Jim's appointment to the Boston Area.

As mission leaders in the church, their work took them to every state in the U.S. and six continents. Together, they spoke to presidents, Queen Elizabeth II and Pope Paul VI.

Mathews authored the book "Drug Abuse: Summons to Community Action," and co-authored with her father, the book "The Divine Yes." Later, she was elected as the first female vice-president of the denomination's

General Commission on Archives and History.

In 1972, Jim and Eunice Mathews moved to the Baltimore-Washington Area, where he was assigned to serve as bishop. As an American citizen with no hometown, Mayor Donald Schaefer made Eunice a citizen of Baltimore.

In 1975, Bishop James K. Mathews ordained Marcus Matthews as an Elder in the Baltimore Conference.

Thirty-seven years later, in 2012, having himself become a bishop in The United Methodist Church, Bishop Marcus Matthews walked down the aisle of Metropolitan Memorial UMC as part of a service celebrating his becoming the leader of the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

Over the years, Eunice Mathews had welcomed Marcus Matthews and his wife, Barbara, into their home, sometimes to dine with ambassadors and other dignitaries. "Eunice had the gift of global hospitality," he said.

Bishop Matthews walked the length of the gothic sanctuary and on the altar turned and saw Eunice Mathews. He didn't hesitate. The bishop walked back down the aisle and embraced her.

"She was a tremendous presence, a life-giving force in our church," the bishop said upon learning of her death. "She will be a missed."

A Memorial Service will be held for Eunice Jones Mathews Saturday, March 19, at Metropolitan Memorial UMC in Washington, D.C.



James and Eunice Mathews



Annual Conference Session set for June 1-4

By MELISSA LAUBER
UMConnection Staff

“YOU HAVE THE Power” is the theme of the 232nd Annual Session of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, which will be held June 1-4 at the Wardman Park Marriott Hotel in Washington, D.C. The Conference features a packed schedule. On Wednesday, June 1, a mandatory clergy session will be held 2 p.m. The laity session will be held that same day at 7:30 p.m. In addition, the retiree luncheon will start at 11 a.m., and the dinner for extension ministers is at 6 p.m. Throughout the day, courses in variety of topics will be offered for those who register. Online registration for this event is now open (<http://bwcumc.org/sessions/2016-session/>). The cost is \$129 before April 14 and \$159 after. Churches are expected to pay the registration expenses of lay and clergy members. One of the highlights of the session will be a farewell celebration for Bishop Marcus Matthews, the resident bishop of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, who is retiring Sept. 1 after 42 years of ministry. The celebration will be June 3 at 7:30 p.m. A Memorial Service, honoring those who have died in the previous year, will be June 3 at 10 a.m., and the Service of Ordination will be held Saturday, June 4, at 9 a.m. Bishop James R. King Jr., the episcopal leader of the South Georgia Annual Conference, will be the preacher for both of those services. Bishop Matthews will preach at the conference worship service June 2 at 7:30 p.m.



Have you heard?
Every Annual Conference, the internet is all atwitter! Join the conversation by using:
#bwcumc16

A Bible study, led by Bishop Young Jin Cho, of the Virginia Annual Conference, will be June 3 at 8 a.m. All of these services, and other portions of the plenary session will be live-streamed on the Conference website at www.bwcumc.org. At the laity session, Munashe Furusa, vice chancellor of the United Methodist-affiliated Africa University in Zimbabwe, and BWC Lay Leader Delores Martin, are expected to be the featured speakers. The Rev. Ann Ross Stewart, a much heralded pastoral counselor, will speak at the retiree luncheon and extension ministries dinner. Included in the plenary session will be a report from the BWC’s 12-member delegation on the proceedings of the General Conference session, which will be May 10-20 in Portland, Ore. At this quadrennial session, the law, structure and budget of the denomination will be decided. Members will also vote on the endorsement of the Rev. Cynthia Moore-Koikoi as their candidate for the office of bishop. Moore-Koikoi, superintendent of the Baltimore-Metropolitan District, was endorsed by the BWC delegation in February. The episcopal elections will be held as part of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference, July 11-15 in Lancaster, Pa. Lay and clergy members will hear reports on conference ministries, including expanded options for clergy health care; come together in mission in Circles of Prayer; vote on the 2017 budget; and consider resolutions on matters of rules and administration for the conference and local churches.

A Pre-Conference Briefing, to answer any questions members may have about these issues or other matters concerning the Annual Conference Session, will be held April 30, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at First UMC in Hyattsville. No registration is needed to attend the Pre-Conference Briefing. Information about the annual conference session can be found online at bwcumc.org/sessions/2016-session/

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

One of the goals of the Annual Conference Session is to model radical hospitality. **Highlighters**, who greet members and guests, provide information and answer questions, are being sought to assist in this ministry. Training is available. If you would like to volunteer, contact Julia Maxwell at 202-726-0536, or mrsmax11@hotmail.com. **Pages and Tellers**, who assist with voting and other proceedings, are also being sought. Contact Lillie Skinner at 301-782-4579, or e-mail lillieskinn@comcast.net. If you would like to serve as an **Usher or Marshal**, contact the Rev. Yvonne Mercer-Staten at 202-882-2122, or e-mail rocka13@aol.com.

TRANSPORTATION

Parking at the hotel is limited. The cost for self-parking is \$41 per day. Daily valet parking is \$46. Opportunities for online pre-paid reserved parking options at near-by garages will be posted on the BWC website 30 days prior to Conference. The BWC is offering **three bus routes** to the Annual Conference Session in Washington this year for members in the Western, Southern, and Northern regions. The cost will be \$50 round trip and include a boxed lunch on the way home Saturday. You can sign up for the bus during the online registration. If you have any questions, contact the Rev. Gary Sieglein at parsonumc@gmail.com.

SPECIAL MEALS	
Thursday June 2	Black Methodists for Church Renewal (lunch) BWARM / MFSA (dinner)
Friday June 3	Wesley Nexus (breakfast) United Methodist Women/United Methodist Men (lunch) Wesley Seminary (lunch) Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members (lunch)

Note: Special meal registration is open until April 13.

Bill Weller’s marble ministry a sign of God’s love

By MELISSA LAUBER
UMConnection Staff

SMILES TEND TO follow Bill Weller around. But the laughter has a purpose, it helps point people to God’s love. Weller, the president of the Baltimore-Washington Conference United Methodist Men, is quick with a joke. He also shares his faith with a Marble Moving Ministry. This is how it works. He stocks up on marbles at the dollar store and carries them in his bag or pocket. When he sees someone he would like to share his faith with (and he likes to share his faith with everyone), Weller approaches them and says,



“Hi, there.” He then launches into a simple script: “I want to share with you that in my church I am part of a group of people who are called Marble Movers. When we find someone that has helped us or we can just tell they need an encouraging word, we give them a gift. Have the marble already in your hand, Weller explained, and extend your hand so they can tell you want to give them something. As you place the marble in their hand and gently fold their fingers around the marble you say, “When you feel this in your pocket, when you touch it, when you look at it, when you think about it, when you pray about it, when you share it with someone, it will remind you of God’s love. Have a blessed day.” If it feels right, Weller invites people to join him getting a positive start on each day with a morning prayer group that meets on the phone.

“Each day at 5:55 a.m., there are about 20 of us that try to move a marble every day. We also read a scripture and have a meditation,” he said. The number for the prayer group is 605-562-3000; the PIN is 710605#. As president of the conference United Methodist Men, Weller’s ministry is one of being a prayer advocate and alerting people to possibilities that come with God’s love. “Men’s ministry is critical to the vitality of our churches and communities,” he said. Those interested in learning more can visit www.bwcumc.org.



Bishop Marcus Matthews, left, receives a marble from Bill Weller.

Bishop's Farewell Gatherings



United Methodists across the conference will have the opportunity to honor Bishop Marcus Matthews this spring as he retires on September 1.

Regional gatherings will be held at 3 p.m. on:

Saturday, April 9: BALTIMORE Region

Epworth Chapel UMC, 3317 St. Lukes Lane, Baltimore

Sunday, April 10: WESTERN Region

Middletown UMC, 7108 Fern Court, Middletown

Saturday, April 16: SOUTHERN Region

Westphalia UMC, 9363 Darcy Road, Upper Marlboro

Sunday, April 17: WASHINGTON Region

Asbury UMC, 926 11th St. NW, Washington, DC

Throughout his ministry, Bishop Marcus Matthews has been led by the love and imagination of God. As he retires later this year, that sense of love and creativity will live on in an innovative building project.

This love offering will build a health and fitness facility at the United Methodist-affiliated Africa University in Zimbabwe that will provide a much needed place to heal the body and soul of future leaders.

Send your contributions, marked Bishop's Love Offering, to the Conference Treasurer at 11711 E. Market Place, Fulton, MD 20759.

bwcumc.org/love



**LEARN.
LIFT.
LEAD.**

A love offering to celebrate the ministry of Bishop Marcus Matthews

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Asbury youth visit Board of Child Care



Members of Asbury: Jessup UMC pose with Easter bags at the Board of Child Care.

JESSUP — On Saturday, Feb. 27, youth and their adult leaders from Asbury UMC journeyed to the Board of Child Care in Baltimore as part of their Missional Project during Lent. This was the first mission project for the youth. While at the Board, they learned about the partnership between them and the BWC and had a tour of the campus.

The Asbury youth unanimously voted to visit the Board of Child Care after contributing to the 2015 Christmas giving project, according to their pastor, the Rev. Gay Green-Carden.

While at the Board, the youth created personalized Easter bags for the residents. One of the youth leaders, Betty Matthews, made 60 colorful blankets. The youth also provided snacks, candy and other goodies to fill the Easter bags.

Bethel delivers 45,000 pounds of potatoes

SMITHSBURG — Bethel UMC in Smithsburg held its first potato drop Feb. 20.

About 70 volunteers from Bethel and other churches distributed 45,000 pounds of potatoes.

"God gets blessings to us, so that he can give blessings through us," said Mark Claybourne, a member of Bethel UMC said. "We're just thankful that we're able to be used as a vessel to do this ministry and to reach out to those that are less fortunate."

Claybourne said the Society of St. Andrew sent a tractor-trailer with 900, 50-pound bags of potatoes to Bethel. Volunteers unloaded the potatoes and packaged them into 5-pound bags for distribution to senior citizen apartment complexes. Remaining bags were picked up in the parking lot by food banks and rescue missions.

Roger Gordon, a member of Asbury UMC in Frederick, picked up bags of potatoes to take to low-income residential areas and senior citizen complexes.

"I just made a call to one senior citizen residence to let them know we've got the potatoes and we're on our way to deliver. The lady was so happy she started crying on the phone," Gordon said. "We just want to thank God and thank this church for allowing us in Frederick to help the community."

Church makes snow days into fun days

HAMPSTEAD — After three days of school closings in January due to heavy snowfall, the North Carroll



Children participate in a snow day activity at the North Carroll Cooperative Parish in January.

Cooperative Parish decided to host a Snow Day Fun Day. The parish's pastor, the Rev. John Rudolph, gathered a team that included youth, school system workers and adults who lead and staff vacation Bible school in the summer to come up with a plan.

Part of the fun, Rudolph said, was that the idea was conceived, planned and implemented in 24 hours. Thursday, Jan. 28, from 9 a.m. to noon was set as the time.

A social media campaign let the community know that in the event of a Thursday closure, there would be something for the kids to do. By the time the phone calls and e-mails alerted families that school would be cancelled again, dozens had already RSVPed.

Eighty-seven children turned up, more than half from the larger community, Rudolph said.

"We're right in the heart of the community, so we opened our doors," Rudolph said.

Imagine No Malaria impacts global health

The General Board of Global Ministries reported that in 2015, working together in mission in 36 countries, 1,326,540 people were able to protect themselves from malaria because they received mosquito nets; 67,248 were successfully treated for malaria; and 671 community health workers received training to serve thousands of people without access to health care. The BWC was part of this effort, with the \$2.1 million raised in 2015.



Leaders of the BWC's Imagine No Malaria effort celebrated raising \$2.1 million in 2015.

BWC pastor: 'Why I'm running for Congress'

By JEFF JONES*

HAVE YOU EVER thought, "I'm sick and tired of all this mess in politics" and feel like someone ought to do something about that? Well I do and I'm doing something about it. We Can Do Better.

On Groundhog's Day, I signed up to be a candidate for the United States Congress in the 8th District of Maryland, which includes parts of Montgomery County, Frederick County and Carroll County. The primary is Tuesday, April 26.

As far as I can tell, there are four others doing the same. When I was first motivated to do this, there weren't any. Now it's going to be a lot more work.

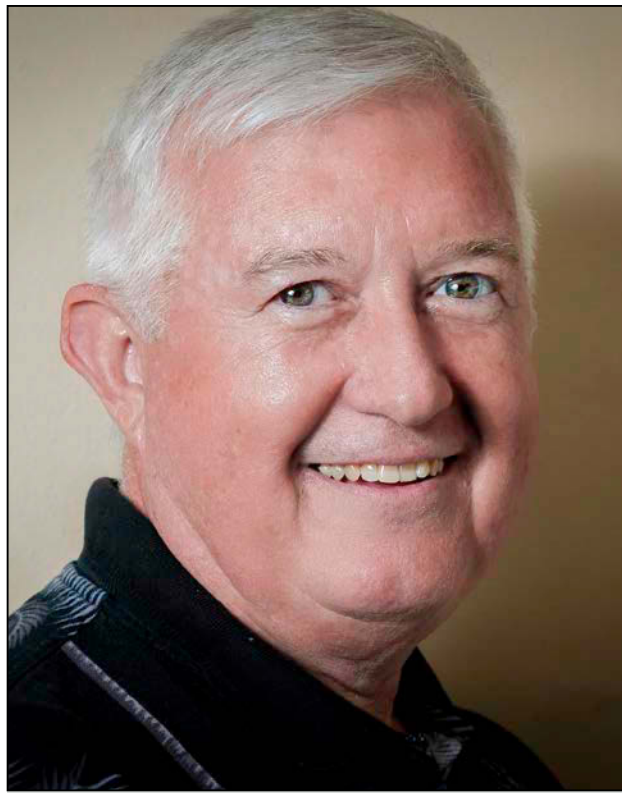
I am running because I really was sick of the gridlock in Congress. I was upset with the apparent staking of claims and not being willing to budge or compromise or move off the position that brought us here, even if it meant the government could be shut down.

I'm also really sick of the treatment some people are getting from some candidates about gun control, immigration, health care, and the list just seems to keep on going. We Can Do Better.

I'm running because of my faith. There is a time to render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's. There is a time when we remember that St. Paul admonished us to pray for our government leaders because it's ordained by God that when it's good, it defends against evil and protects the poor and needy. I don't feel that is what our government is doing anymore. So I'm putting prayers into action.

I am enough of a realist to know that this is an incredible challenge, but we can do better, and I want to try in this election. Running as a Republican in a heavily Democratic district is crazy too. But... I will have some

time to ask people to remember that we ought to govern as Lincoln said so well, so that from this Earth no government will perish that "is of the people, by the people and for the people."



The Rev. Jeff Jones, who is putting his faith into action by running for Congress.

I'm running because we need some good brought back into the system that determines so much of our resources. John Wesley was so right when he said, "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."

I feel that for the time leading up to the primary election, I may get a chance to practice what I've done my whole ministry: build a foundation for good; work as a bridge builder; and help couples and congregations work through the differences to come to a good place. I want to use my experience with coaching, scouting, community service projects, and rehabilitation challenges, to apply it to our government. I hope that there may be some good publicity generated in this campaign that would get people thinking about common sense and the common good for us all.

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8, NKJV).

That's my story and I'm sticking to it. We need a fresh voice to proclaim that we still have dreams. To paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., that we will count, not because of "the color of our skin, or our country of origin, but by the content of our character." I believe that someone should say, "Can't we all just get along?" and recognize what is the best for our nation in the long run. We Can Do Better.

Therefore, I put my hat in the ring. I am now certified — or certifiable (as some may say) — but I love this country and I'm at the age and place where maybe I can use my years of service to serve in another type of parish.

Blessings to you all.

**The Rev. Jeff Jones is pastor of North Bethesda UMC in Bethesda.*

Young Adult Ministry: Learnings from going undercover

By MIKE BEIBER*



ONE OF THE guilty pleasures of being clergy is visiting other churches "undercover" where nobody knows that I'm a pastor. I get to sit in a pew and worship like everyone else, and I get to experience the welcome and fellowship of a church.

One thing I find particularly interesting is the welcome that I, my wife and my son tend to receive as a young family. I always feel bad, because there is no way I'm coming back next Sunday; I've got my own church people to lead and my own sermons to preach, thank you very much.

Wonderful as these welcomes may be, there is often a certain flavor to them that disturbs me both as a visitor and as a pastor: the flavor of desperation. Sometimes it comes across subtly but often it is blatantly obvious through remarks like, "We're so glad you're here — we need young people in our church." (Whoa there hoss, I'm just visiting — I'm not taking vows of membership just yet!)

Then there were the folks that asked for our home address so they could pick us up for Bible study — and offered to stay at our house to watch our son. (I'm pretty sure I saw something like that on an episode of "Criminal Minds" — so no thanks.)

One person even used the term "fresh blood" in their conversation with us. (Thanks for the imagery, well-meaning but creepy church person; we will show ourselves to the door now.)

It felt that they did not see us as people in need of a community in which we could come to know and follow Jesus. Rather it felt as if we were a rare prize to them that they were clawing at, hoping to catch and keep as their own.

While I hope no one reading this has ever said or done anything like this, let's admit something. When a young family darkens the doors of your church, someone's heart is going to skip a beat. "Young people!" church people's souls proclaim. "Surely they have come to join and bring new life to our church!"

Okay, maybe it's not that dramatic, but you get my point.

It's great to welcome young adults to your church. It's important to think of ways to invite and include them into the whole of the church's life, just as it is important to do so for every person of every age. But listen, young people come to churches for many various reasons but they aren't there to save your church or to give it new life.

Jesus is the one who has saved your church. He is the one who will breathe new life into your congregation. That truth is at the very foundation of who we are. How often do we forget this and instead reach out for whatever else we think can give us hope and a future?

Young adults in our churches do not give us these things. Rather, our hope and future and the grace we need to strive towards it are provided to us by God. As the Body of Christ, we are to then offer this hope to people, not expect it from them.

Young adults don't need a church that is desperate for them to be there. Young adults need a church that is desperately in love with its Lord, and freely shares His love with others.

So if you're worried that you might have acted as one of the offenders I mentioned above, don't worry; you're forgiven. Both God and the folks you may or may not have creeped-out know you meant well.

But the next time a young person walks into your church, remember something before you run over to them. God doesn't call us to reach out to anyone because they offer us hope. God calls us to reach out to people so we can share and embody the hope of Jesus Christ with them.

**The Rev. Mike Beiber is pastor of Mt. Zion UMC in Myersville.*



Breaking his "cover:" the Rev. Mike Beiber, right, stands with his wife, Cherish, and son, Oliver.

Capitol Hill UMC pays tribute to local law enforcement

By CAROL ANDERSON*

POP SENSATION ADELE wasn't only at the Grammys. She also was well represented at a Capitol Hill police station.

At the 17th Annual Police Valentine Tribute, a group of church and community members turned Adele's mega-hit "Rolling in the Deep" into "Patrolling City Streets," and honored many officers by name in the lyrics. Soloist Dan Felton handled the more acrobatic parts of the song, with everyone singing the chorus. A second song for

police department for the hard work they do each and every day on our behalf," said Ward 6 DC Councilmember Charles Allen, who regularly attends the celebrations.

Knowing the officers love attention from the kids, Capitol Hill's Deacon of Discipleship, Troy Sims, kicked things off by presenting a "boatload" of valentines from the church's Sunday school kids, which were stuffed inside a big paper boat they had made especially for the police. Sims then gave a brief homily and concluded by

leading children and adults in singing an energetically choreographed "Pharaoh, Pharaoh."

The Rev. Alisa Wailoo, pastor at Capitol Hill, encouraged the officers to come to CHUMC for breakfast or lunch, where they would be warmly welcomed with hearty food and fellowship.

"We are grateful for the officers of 1D1," said Wailoo. "From the moment I arrived on the Hill in 2008, there has been a beat officer ready to partner with us to help those in need and to keep our community safe. We deeply appreciate how you sacrifice for and serve our neighborhood."

After the music, officers dove into the food or started

checking out the gag gifts — or both. Suddenly bubbles appeared everywhere as they realized their "light sabers" were really bubble-making wands. But the 1D1 crew gave as good as they got. They presented the church kids with a box-load of individual bags of candy they had put together as a thank you gift.

"The kindness and generosity of the members of Capitol Hill UMC and Ebenezer UMC will long be remembered," said Captain Mark Beach, interim chief of 1D1. "We are humbled that you would bring our community together to show support and appreciation for the officers who serve this community."

Beach said that the church's efforts don't go unnoticed by the police.

"For the 17th straight year now, this outpouring of love and kindness resonates deeply as America struggles to maintain strong relations between police and the citizenry," Beach said. "It has been my honor to work with such an outstanding group who are committed to serving others. Thank you all so much."

Echoing Beach, Robert J. Contee, the new First District Commander, said he, too, was grateful for the show of generosity toward the officers.

The kids were as excited as the cops. One little boy said, "I've been inside a hospital. I've been inside a fire station. Now my wish has come true — I've been inside a real police station!"

**Carol Anderson is a member of Capitol Hill UMC and coordinator/founder of CHUM Women, which organizes the police tribute each year.*

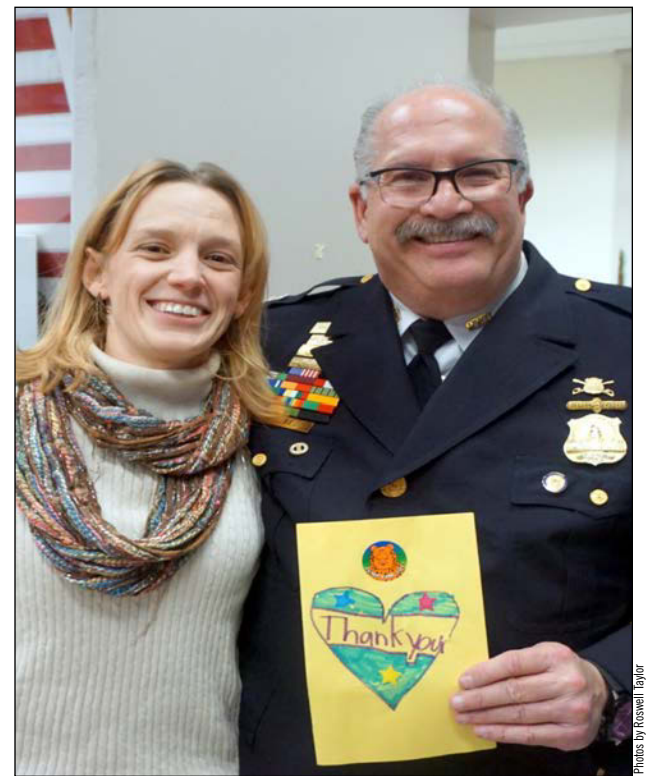


A young member of Capitol Hill UMC hands out Valentines during a visit to the First District Substation in Washington, D.C.

the officers, titled, "Anytime We Need to Call," was sung to the tune of "Ain't No Sunshine."

Each February, members of Capitol Hill UMC, Ebenezer UMC, and other community leaders descend on the First District Substation (1D1) at 5th & E St., SE, in Washington, D.C., to thank neighborhood police for their dedicated service. They surprise police officers with valentines, good food, gag gifts and songs written in their honor. Each time an officer heard his name, a loud "That's me!" rang out.

"This annual tradition is a great way that neighbors share a heartfelt thank-you to the men and women of our city's



The Rev. Alisa Wailoo, left, pastor of Capitol Hill UMC, stands with Capt. Mark Beach.

Inventive 'mompreneur' puts faith into action

SPECIAL TO THE UMCONNECTION

WHEN SELF-DESCRIBED SPECIAL needs "mompreneur" Isabella Yosiuco gave birth to her son Isaac, who has Down syndrome, she could never have imagined where it would lead.

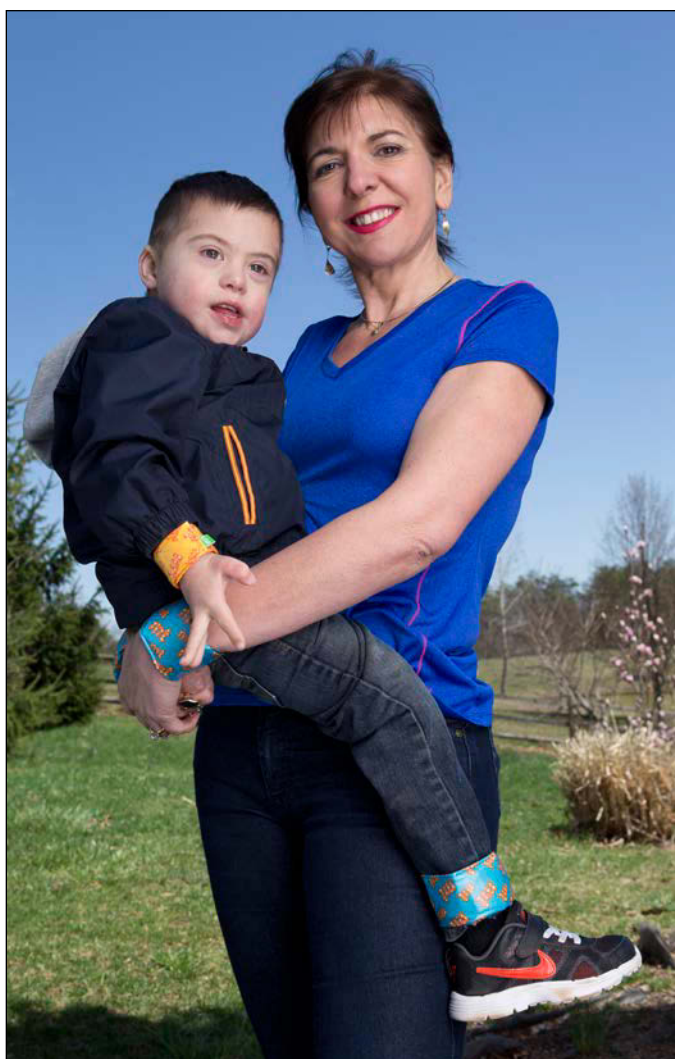
Today, Yosiuco, who attends First UMC in Berkeley Springs, W.Va., (pastored by the Rev. Doug Hoffman) with husband Ray and sons Pierce and Isaac, is marking two major milestones for the company inspired by Isaac. MightyTykes is starting 2016 off having landed its first international reseller as well as leading online retailer wal-mart.com in January.

Yosiuco was told at her 12-week prenatal check-up that Isaac was likely to have a genetic condition. When a diagnosis of Down syndrome was confirmed shortly after Isaac's birth in 2010, Yosiuco learned more about the challenges he would face, including hypotonia or poor muscle tone, common in kids with Down syndrome and many other conditions.

Inspired by the wrist and ankle weights she often used while running on her treadmill, she created a tiny set of weights with some leftover fleece and sandbox sand and started using them with tiny Isaac, soon seeing results.

Isaac's physical therapist was impressed and urged Yosiuco to explore manufacturing them. After much research, Isabella developed some prototypes to share with parents and therapists at hospitals from the US News & World Report Honor Roll of Top Children's Hospitals.

Yosiuco soon learned that the weights could help with many different conditions and challenges including prematurity, autism-spectrum disorders, sensory processing disorder, toe-walking, cerebral palsy, tremors and simple weakness. Encouraged by the positive



Isabella Yosiuco holds her son, Isaac, the inspiration behind MightyTykes.

response, she developed a business plan to secure an economic development loan, launching a company called MightyTykes in May 2014.

In just 18 months, sales have steadily increased and the company has enjoyed a growing following, accolades and extensive media coverage including being singled out during West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin's 2015 State of the State address, having its story featured in Guideposts magazine in July 2015, and securing several national catalog resellers.

In December, MightyTykes also received a substantial order from international reseller exploreyoursenses.com and U.S. mega-retailer wal-mart.com.

"This has been an extraordinarily challenging, humbling and really rewarding experience," Yosiuco said. "Hearing how the weights are helping kids all over has kept me going during the low points and God has been so faithful, even when I wasn't."

Yosiuco explained that she has clearly seen God's hand in the process all along.

"God continues to reveal himself to me," she said, "from seeing how he's personally prepared me to do this, marshalling all my life experience and faith, his miraculous provision of resources and amazing people to help, and just doing exceedingly and abundantly more than I could ask for or imagine."

MightyTykes has also afforded Yosiuco some speaking and writing opportunities through which she's been able to share the Gospel and her own testimony, which she feels is an awesome privilege.

No matter what happens, Yosiuco affirms that the greatest gift of all has been Isaac himself. "At first frightened, angry and disheartened," she said. "I could never have imagined how much joy and wisdom Isaac would bring to me, my family, and all who meet him. He's an extraordinary blessing who just keeps on giving."