WORK-ship 2013: April 21

This year’s hands on worship service will be an immensely fun, hands-on and rewarding experience for anyone of any age. We’ll be packaging meals for Stop Hunger Now, an international hunger relief organization. A group of 40-50 volunteers can package 10,000 meals in just two hours. Our goal is to pack 30,000 meals, and we need all hands on deck!

Stop Hunger Now meals pack a big punch. Every dehydrated rice/soy meal is fortified with 21 essential vitamins and nutrients. Research has shown that one in three people in developing countries are adversely affected by vitamin and mineral deficiencies. Addressing the problem of hunger is the single point where we can leverage relief for all humanitarian issues.

With your support, relief organizations such as Stop Hunger Now have the means to deliver to ongoing school feeding programs that sustain lifelong change. Providing a hot meal during school gives parents an incentive to send their children to school. Through receiving a primary school education, the cycle of poverty can begin to be broken by leveraging change in many other issues including education, maternal health, childhood mortality, gender equality and combating HIV/AIDS.

Sign up for WORK-SHIP today! In the print issue of this newsletter you will find a slip to fill out and return to the church. You can also sign up online at:

www.brecksvilleumc.com

Working Together to End Hunger

“I am so happy that I got the chance to be a part of a great cause of this magnitude! The atmosphere was electrifying!” - Iris Pina, meal packaging volunteer

“What’s fun about it is sending food to people who need it. You know it’s going to a good cause and people who are hungry and starved. You know you saved their lives. A child’s life.”

-Charles, 12, meal packaging volunteer

Contact a member of the Mission Committee to volunteer:
Dave Podolny
depodolny@sbcglobal.net
or
Alan Scheufler, Bob Lundholm, Ken Wise, Janet Kelekner
Donan Sibits, Catherine Vastartis

Together, we can feed multitudes. One meal package feeds 6 people!
Fish Stories

Cookie Break

That’s why, when I heard of the solid trust you have in the Master Jesus and your outpouring of love to all the followers of Jesus, I couldn’t stop thanking God for you—every time I prayed, I’d think of you and give thanks. But I do more than thank. I ask—ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for his followers, oh, the utter extravagance of his work in us who trust him—endless energy, boundless strength! - Ephesians 1:16-19

A woman was out shopping one day and decided to stop for a cup of coffee. She bought a bag of cookies, put them into her purse, and then entered a coffee shop. All the tables were filled, except for one at which a man sat reading a newspaper. Seating herself in the opposite chair, she opened her purse, took out a magazine, and began reading.

After a while, she looked up and reached for a cookie, only to see the man across from her also taking a cookie. She glared at him; he smiled at her, and she resumed her reading.

Moments later she reached for another cookie, just as the man also took one. Now feeling quite angry, she stared at the one remaining cookie—whereupon the man reached over, broke the cookie in half and offered her a piece. She grabbed it and stuffed it into her mouth as the man smiled at her again, rose, and left.

The woman was really steaming as she angrily opened her purse, her coffee break now ruined, and put her magazine away. And there was her bag of cookies, unopened. All along she’d unknowingly been helping herself to the cookies belonging to the man she had shared the table with.

It seems to me that when we talk about stewardship, a large part of it is really about hospitality. How can I help to make a way for another using the resources God has entrusted to my care? Sometimes we do it without even realizing it, and that is OK. We don’t give to have God pat us on the back, or to have others think of us and give thanks. But I do more than thank. I ask—ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory— to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for his followers, oh, the utter extravagance of his work in us who trust him—endless energy, boundless strength!” Praying we can all be so gracious in sharing our cookies.

Peace for the day.

Old Stamps = Tools!
The UMW collects cancelled postage stamps (except any first class including the Forever stamp and postcard stamps) for National Church Women United. The stamps help “Tools for Hope” an effort to provide tools in developing countries around the world. Bring your stamps to the box in the cloak room. It’s an easy, cost free way to help others!

Fellowship Hour Hosts for April

____TBD!_____
Who will step forward for this important ministry?
Open Table Worship Service

Brecksville United Methodist Church welcomes
Reconciling Ministries Network
to an Open Table Worship and Communion Service
lovingly created to honor full inclusion of all God's children in our church.

All are welcome!

Please join us for incredible worship!
Sunday, April 28, 2013, at 6:00 pm
Leadership Planning Meeting (Before Open Table)
Starting at 6:00 PM (All Are Welcome)
Donations may be made at Open Table or mailed to:
East Ohio RMN, c/o Bill Watts, Treasurer, 3727 Sweitzer St. NW,
Uniontown, OH 44685

Save The Date!

Benefit Golf Outing
Saturday, June 15, 2013
Briarwood Golf Course

18 Hole Scramble with Dinner
1:00 pm Start Time
Proceeds Benefit BUMC Music Scholarship Program
More Information Coming Soon!

Food Pantry Help

Our Winter Canned Food Drive for the Parma Heights Food Pantry collected 93 cans of soup and 99 cans of fruit. Our brothers and sisters in need are a little less hungry because of you!

When Jenny dropped off our donation, she learned of a new need: toiletries, paper supplies and cleaning products. Food stamps can’t be used for these items, even though they are necessities. Let’s help! Bring your donations to the coat room through May 5. Half of the donations to this drive will be shared with Brookside’s pantry!

The Pantry’s rent has been raised and they’ve been forced into smaller quarters, meaning they have to abandon their clothing and book drives. Let’s show them there are neighbors who care!

Membership Classes to be Held in April

Are you considering becoming a member of Brecksville United Methodist Church? Do you have questions about membership, or what it means to be a United Methodist? You’re in luck! A New Member class will be offered in April. On April 14 at 10 am, April 21 at 9 am, and April 28 at 10 am there will be a session of information and orientation which will last approximately 45 minutes. New members will be received in the 11:15 worship service on Sunday, April 28. A goal we set at charge conference this year is to grow our membership by 30 before the next charge conference. Can we do it? If you are interested, or want to know more, please contact the church office by phone 440-526-8938 or e-mail: office@brecksvilleumc.com.
As people of faith, we find God’s presence in those who have been blessings to us. At our weekly Staff Meetings, we have recently lifted up the following people in prayer, thanking God for them and the way they touch the lives of others. Kathy Holmes and Sue Dietrich were so involved in the “behind the scenes” work with Music with a Mission. Thank you to them, to our performers, and to the kids and adults who prepared our meal. What a terrific event! Catherine Vastartis is such a special part of our church family. She always finds time to tell others about Brecksville UMC and to invite them to worship and to special events. Stephanie Sak was instrumental in our celebration of Girl Scout Sunday, and helped line up liturgists, ushers, and acolytes for the day. Dan Auble stepped out of his comfort zone to sing with the praise band last Sunday and we’re so glad he did! We are thankful for each of you. Amen!

Just want to express my appreciation to the congregation for all the cards, prayers and food that came my way during my recent surgery. I am now walking with a cane and hope to be back at church on Palm Sunday. A kind deed is like water for a flower; it makes the heart bloom. Thank you all for being such great friends.

- Karen Thielman

Joy, Stacy and Morgan Parker have a new addition to their family: a puppy named Cooper! He’s a happy ball of energy. Welcome to our church family, Cooper!

As You Pray This Month Consider
Those in recovery.
Those traveling for spring break.
“Snow Birds” who are headed home.

Do you have news to share? Contact Melanie!
office@brecksvilleumc.com or 440-526-8938

Please keep Phil Hines, Wally Servey, Les Buttolph, and Karen Thielman and their families in your prayers as they are all undergoing rehabilitation from recent surgeries.
Acme Receipt Drive Ends
Thanks to everyone who took the time to shop at Acme and return their receipts to the UMW, our mission fund received $84. That's a lot of money for a little effort. Thank you!

Box Tops Collection
Henderson Settlement Mission in Frakes, KY sent us a “thank you” for Labels for Education and Box Tops for Education we collected for them. Please remember to save the UPC code from Campbell products, Post cereals, Pepperidge Farm products, Emerald snacks, and others. We hope that you will continue to support this project. Thanks!

Quilters Wanted
Attention all quilters! Flat Rock is looking for anyone who would like to share their talents and donate a quilt for their October 13 Quilt Auction, which will be held at Faith United Methodist Church in North Canton. They are looking for full size quilts, baby size quilts (new or antique) or wall-hangings. They are hoping to raise $17,000 to help with the therapeutic and life giving programs for the developmentally disabled. For information, call Amanda Nicol (Flat Rock) 419.483.7330X1128 or Ruth Herman 330.467.3237

Donations for Girls
During the month of April, UMW will be collecting underwear, bras, and socks for the Westside Community House Sisterhood project. The girls in the program range in ages from 10 to 16 and are all sizes (small, medium, and large). There will be a labeled box in the coat room for your donations. If you have any questions, please call Gretchen Mates 440.526.6481

Work with Brookside Center Continues
UMW’s work with the Brookside Center is a year round effort. The need for men's clothing (especially socks) and food products for the food pantry is great. On our last visit, they were down to one box of mac and cheese and a can of tuna. If you are moved to help, donations can be placed in the labeled bin in the coat room. A speaker from Brookside will be at the May UMW meeting. Come learn more about the program. Support of Brookside is part of our UMW mission and we thank you for your support of this important ministry!

Meet Me on Lake Erie, Dearie!
The Thursday, April 4 UMW meeting will begin 9:30 with a continental breakfast and fellowship. The 10:00 program will feature John Vacha, discussing his book Meet Me on Lake Erie, Dearie, a narrative of the 1936-37 Great Lakes Exposition in Cleveland. Mr. Vacha is associated with the Western Reserve Historical Society. All are welcome (including men!) Join us for an interesting and informative morning!

SAVE THE DATE
June 2, 2013
An important Sunday for our youth, their families, and our church family!

Graduation Sunday
8:45 Service
Confirmation Sunday
11:15 Service

If it's spring, it must be time for the Nordinia Men's Church Softball League! Dust off your glove and sign up for the team! The games will start early May and run through early July, Tuesday nights with a couple of Saturday nights as well. All games are double headers at Longwood Park in Macedonia. Men ages 16 and older are encouraged to join the team. Sign up today! Contact Bob Lundholm, 440-546-1815 or bob.lundholm@regalbeloit.com
East Ohio Summer Camps

East Ohio Camps provides children and youth with a variety of opportunities to have fun, explore their faith and make new friends. The choice is yours! You will find that Camp Aldersgate, Camp Asbury and Camp Wanake have camping programs that are distinctly unique to each camp site. Also offered are additional opportunities for youth: CYF held at Malone College and Reach Out and Institute held at Lakeside.

The Summer Camps website www.eocsummercamps.org provides everything you will need to know about the 2013 line-up. Check them out and register early! If you need assistance, please contact Margaret at 1-800-831-3972 at ext.108

Medical Mission Trip

Our own Karen Pace is going on a medical mission trip to the Dominican Republic with the Cleveland State University School of Nursing. They are in need of unopened vitamins and over the counter medicines which will help provide medical treatment to the impoverished people of the region. If you are moved to help, please bring your donations to the bin in our coat room by April 29. Aspirin, Tylenol, antibiotic ointments, and more are needed. For a complete list of need items look on the church website: www.brecksvilleumc.com or contact Karen Pace at: 440-717-0111

We’ve set a goal of bringing 300 people together for worship on Sunday mornings. We fell a little short this month. See you Sunday?
Our New Business Manager, Mike Memmer

We are excited to announce that Mike Memmer has stepped forward to become our next Business Manager. Mike and his family have been members of BUMC for 35 years and he has served on Trustees twice, Finance, Stewardship and other committees over the years. Mike comes to us with a wealth of experience, having spent 30 years with Ohio Bell/AT&T. He has been a school bus driver for the past 12 years, and is attempting to “retire” from that to something new. Mike took the job because he thinks this is a great way to get reconnected with the church. Mike and his wife, Karen, have been married 41 years, and they have lived in Brecksville since 1975. Their daughters, Alison and Stacie, both grew up in the church and reside in Brecksville. Mike was very active in his church in Defiance growing up, and he became an Eagle Scout in the church’s troop. He graduated with a BA in Physics from Defiance College. For the past 20 years, he has been very active in the Brecksville Kiwanis and has served as President, Lt. Governor and Chairman of the Horse Show. Mike is an avid golfer and enjoys fixing up homes. He used to go on the ASP and YSP trips with his daughters. He will stay busy balancing work with his golf game during the summer months. We are thrilled that Mike has volunteered to fill this important position! Please join us in wishing him ALL THE BEST in his new job!

- Robin Raybuck

A New Home for Pastor Libby

Rev. Bob Kuntz has been appointed to New Philadelphia Broadway UMC and will begin his ministry there in July. He and Pastor Libby will be relocating to New Philadelphia, which is about 74 miles south of Brecksville, due south on Route 77, then east on 250. Pastor Libby and Bob ask for your prayers during this time of transition. If you want to keep in touch, their new address as of July 1 will be:

406 Springbrook Drive, SE
New Philadelphia. OH 44663
Phone: 330-339-1490

Friends, the day you have been waiting for has finally arrived: The United Methodist Men’s Annual Chili Cook Off! On this day talented BUMC cooks concoct award worthy chili, and hungry folks get to sample these culinary delights. If you have a favorite chili recipe you’d like to share, sign up in the Parlor on Sunday. Everybody come on down and enjoy a great evening of fellowship and fun!

Want to get involved?
Contact
Skip Smith: austinfini@gmail.com
or 440-526-4264
Doug Huth: doug084@gmail.com
330-467-3046

Crib and Toddler Room Volunteers Needed. If you have a heart for service, please consider taking a turn in the crib and toddler room. Volunteers are especially needed during the 11:15 worship service.

This is an important ministry, and one way that our church family shows care for one another. If you can help, or need more information, please contact Jenny Gee: 440-526-8938.

Thank you!

Toys Bring Joy to Russian Orphans

Let’s send Bruce McCrodden, Bill Webb and Tony Cipolla to Russia with suitcases full of toys for the special needs kids of Down Syndrome Boarding School #5 in Kursk. The school is in need of sports and recreation equipment for boys and girls ages 5—18, things like balls, jump ropes, games, puzzles, temporary tattoos, sidewalk chalk, and the like. The toys can be new or gently used. If you can help, bring your donation to the collection box in the coat room near Fellowship Hall by May 12. Please keep the Kursk students, the care givers and the Volunteers in Mission team in your prayers. Thank you!

Tony and Kolya

Tony and Kolya
We’ve got some great events coming up! Mark your calendars, and watch your bulletin and the church website for more information!

April 7 - Laura De Young from Spicy Lamb Farms
Join us this morning to learn about the Urban Shepherds. The Urban Sheep Project places sheep on vacant city lots around the city of Cleveland. Sheep provide holistic land management and brush and weed control through grazing. Cleveland has 3,300 vacant parcels and spends $3.3 million per year mowing. Sheep grazing will cut costs and pollution and will aid soil health. Come learn more about this exciting project!

April 14 – IRTF (InterReligious Task Force)
Join Sarah Sommers from the InterReligious Task Force on Central America for an informative look at economic justice around the globe. As people of faith, we measure the economy against one fundamental truth: the earth and all that is in it belong to God (Ps. 24:1). Before we begin working to change the economic system, we must first discern, as best we can, a vision of God's will for our society and our economy.

April 21 - WORK-SHIP
There will be no Sunday School as all are encouraged to participate in Workship. Nursery care will be available!

April 28 – Ten Thousand Villages
Come learn more about some of the artisan groups that Ten Thousand Villages work closely with and their mission of developing fair trade opportunities in developing countries. Ten Thousand Villages encourages artisans to use environmentally responsible processes. They strive to improve the livelihood of tens of thousands of disadvantaged artisans in 38 countries. Product sales help pay for food, education, healthcare and housing for artisans who would otherwise be unemployed or underemployed.

May 5 - Fair Trade Fair
Use the education hour to learn more about fair trade at the Fair Trade Fair in Fellowship Hall. Tell your friends and family about this unique opportunity to shop for a cause!

May 12 - Our Changing Planet
Cleveland Metroparks naturalist Kelly McGinnis will present an informative program about the changing landscape of northeast Ohio through time. How have animal populations changed from the early years up until now? What caused the changes? What is our responsibility toward the land and how can we be better stewards of this wonderful planet?

May 19 – Organ Rededication Day
There will be no Sunday school for adults on this date. Instead, take time to enjoy a special concert in the Sanctuary featuring a number of guest instrumentalists.

May 26 – Memorial Day Sunday
No Sunday school for any age.

June 2 – Graduation Sunday and Confirmation
Extended coffee hour and cake reception. No Sunday school for adults.

June 9 – Summer Worship Schedule Begins
Everyone’s invited to enjoy pancakes after the 10 o’clock worship service. Let’s celebrate the volunteers who helped with education programming this year!
Brecksville United Methodist Church

Fair Trade Fair

Sunday, May 5, 2013
8 am until 2 pm

Shopping With a Conscience

Come visit over fourteen vendors in the church Fellowship Hall. Your purchase supports the artisan or farmer working to provide food, shelter and education for his or her family!

Brecksville United Methodist Church • 65 Public Square • Brecksville, Ohio 44141
Phone: 440.526.8938  E-mail: office@brecksvilleumc.com
www.brecksvilleumc.com
Have you noticed the recycling bin parked next to the shed in our church parking lot? Every time we fill that bin with paper, we’ll earn money for missions.

You heard that right, folks! We’ll be paid by the ton for unwanted paper. Right now, the money we earn will be used to fund our meal packaging event on April 21. Every time we fill that bin, we’ll earn enough to feed at least 60 people. In addition to that, the paper will be turned into paper towels, napkins, insulation, cardboard, wall board, greeting cards and more! So don’t throw it away, bring it to church!

The bin will be emptied every other Thursday starting March 21. Questions? Call the Church Office! 440.526.8938 or e-mail office@brecksvilleumc.com.

If you answered yes to any of these questions, we need your help with Vacation Bible School!

The theme for this year’s Vacation Bible School is “Everywhere Fun Fair: Where God’s World Comes Together.” We’d like to start gathering and making decorations now, because the more folks who can help with the huge undertaking the better!

Last year, we had 86 children take part in VBS — and 52 of those were first time visitors to our church. This is an important ministry. What’s more exciting than helping kids learn about God’s love?

If you’d like to get involved, contact Jenny Gee at 440.526.8938 or education@brecksvilleumc.com.
Music with a Mission was a great success with a wide variety of talent taking the stage and shuttling us Around the World in just 90 short minutes! Congrats to High School Choir with their Gangnam Style, Youth Quartet singing Waka Waka by Shakira, and Children’s Choir who impressed us all by singing in Spanish! Many thanks to all the performers and people who helped gather props and costumes, clean off the stage and manage all the other details of the show! Special thanks to Paul Calovini for running sound, Michael Lee, Craig Kotnik, Bob Hudacek and Eli Shively for playing in the band, and John Brachna, Chuck Gezze and Linda Rollins for mc’ing the show. That was some fine bagpipe playing, John!

We had a wonderful Student Recital on Saturday, March 16. Ten of our own BUMC youth played piano, saxophone, flute, violin and sang. Thank you to all the performers and their teachers for an evening of wonderful music! Look for the First Annual Music Scholarship recipients to be announced soon!

There is still a LOT going on in the Music Department this Spring. Mark your calendar for these great events:

Sunday, April 21 at 4:00pm
Brecksville Community Chorus & Youth Chorus

Saturday, May 4 at 7:30pm
Harp/Flute/Viola Trio Concert featuring Joseph Rebman

Sunday, May 19 at 10:00am
Organ Rededication Recital (details below)

Saturday, June 15 at 1:00pm
Scholarship Benefit Golf Outing (see page 3 for more details)

Organ Rededication Sunday

The Music Department is pleased to announce our official Sunday of Organ Rededication on Sunday, May 19 – Music Sunday! We will be joined in worship at both services by trumpet player, Josh Rzepka, and will feature special anthems for Chancel Choir and organ.

During the education hour (10:00 – 11:00), we will enjoy an organ recital featuring solo repertoire and a variety of guest instrumentalists! Mark your calendar now and be sure to be present in worship and during the education hour on Sunday, May 19!

Handbell choir will be rehearsing on Thursdays, April 18 & 25 and May 2 & 9, in preparation for playing in worship on Sunday, May 12. If you are able to make a short-term commitment and join us, we would love to have you. The group is fun and focused and always welcomes new ringers!

If you have never tried handbells before, we have a great opportunity for you! Watch for exploratory handbell sessions, to take place during June and July. This will be a great opportunity for anyone who is a little “out of practice” reading music or is feeling anxious about trying out something new. Watch your Good Word for more details and consider giving handbells a try!

Contact Joy or Chris Toth for more information:
Joy, 440.526.8938 or music@brecksvilleumc.com
Chris, 216-406-0228 or tothchristopher@att.net

YSP Plant Sale!

It’s time to think spring with the Annual YSP Plants. Order your flowers, herbs, and hanging baskets now, and pick them up on Saturday, May 11 from 10 until Noon—just in time for Mother’s Day!

Get your order form in the print edition of The Good Word, in the Parlor, or on the church website:
www.brecksvilleumc.com
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<td>7 p Bible Study</td>
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<td>6:30 Dawnbrkrs</td>
<td>5:30 Youth Worship</td>
<td>9:30 UMW</td>
<td>4 Wo Emmaus</td>
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<td><strong>Elaine Geringer and Janet Nelson</strong></td>
<td><strong>Easter Monday Church Offices CLOSED</strong></td>
<td><strong>Brecksville-Broadview Heights City School District Spring Break</strong></td>
<td><strong>Paper Bin Gets Emptied today!</strong></td>
<td><strong>No Finance Meeting This Month</strong></td>
<td><strong>World Malaria Day</strong></td>
<td><strong>New Member Sunday</strong></td>
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7 8:45 Worship
10 Ed. Hour - *Urban Shepherds*
11 Confirmation
11:15 Worship
2 Hiking Club

8 7 p Bible Study

9 11 Staff Mtg
5 Children’s Choir
7 Ad Board
8 Super Tuesday

10 11:15 Worship

11 6:30 Dawnbrkrs
4 Youth Quartet
5:30 Youth Worship

12 9:30 Asbury Bre
4 Wo Emmaus
5 Men’s Group
6:45 Men’s Ens.
7:30 Choir

13 7 Emmaus Reun
9 Men’s Bible Study
3 HS Ensemble

14 8:45 Worship
10 Ed. Hour - *IRTF*
10 New Mem Cl
11 Confirmation
11:15 Worship
12 Pizza with the Pastor

15 7 p Bible Study

16 9:30 Staff Mtg
10 Stitch’n’time
5 Child. Choir
7:30 Trustees

17 6:30 Dawnbrkrs
4 Youth Quartet
5:30 Youth Worship
7 SPR

18 10 History Club
4 Wo Emmaus
5 Men’s Group
6:15 Bell Choir
7:30 Choir

19 7 Emmaus Reun
9 Men’s Bible

20 7 Emmaus Reun
9 Men’s Bible
3 HS Ensemble

21 9 New Mem Cl.
10 WORK-ship
11 Confirmation
4 Community Chorus Concert

22 7 p Bible Study

23 9:30 Staff Mtg
5 Child. Choir

24 6:30 Dawnbrkrs
4 Youth Quartet
5:30 Youth Worship

25 4 Wo Emmaus
5 Men’s Group
6:15 Bell Choir
7:30 Choir

26 7 Emmaus Reun
9 Men’s Bible
9:30 UMW Bd
3 HS Ensemble

27 10 New Mem Cl.
10 WORK-ship
11 Confirmation
4 Community Chorus Concert

28 New Member Sunday
8:45 Worship
10 Ed. Hour - *Ten Thousand Villages*
10 New Mem Cl
10 Confirmation
11:15 Worship
6 p Open Table Worship

29 7 p Bible Study

30 9:30 Staff Mtg
5 Child. Choir

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*YSP Plant Orders Due!*

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*Paper Bin Gets Emptied today!*

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*World Malaria Day*

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*No Finance Meeting This Month*

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*New Member Sunday*

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*Ten Thousand Villages*

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*World Malaria Day*
New churches in U.S. surpass goal
NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Church planters established 684 new United Methodist churches in the United States during 2008-12, surpassing the denomination’s new church development goal for the quadrennium by 34.

Prayer webinar postponed
NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The webinar “When Congregations Pray,” originally scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 21, has been postponed to 7 p.m. CT Thursday, April 25. The next session in the series of free “Teach Us to Pray” webinars will be on “Praying the Scriptures” at 7 p.m. CT Tuesday, March 19. Learn more: http://tinyurl.com/aqrsa8e

Devotionals to go to Newtown first responders
NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Responders who rushed to the mass shootings in Newtown, Conn., will be the first to receive a new daily devotional designed specifically for first responders but patterned after a manual that has given comfort to countless U.S. military since World War II. United Methodist Men will present the first copies of Strength for Service to God and Community to 250 first responders to the mass shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School where 20 children and six adults were killed Dec. 14, 2012.

Young people make big impact in Las Vegas
LAS VEGAS — To take church outside the four walls of a building and into the community, those who attended the young adult conference Relevance X helped clean up parts of the city as part of Impact Las Vegas. On Feb. 16, more than 500 volunteers loaded onto buses and headed into the city. The volunteers, more than one-third 18-to-34-year-olds unconnected to a church, picked up trash from the streets and alleys of the Palos Verdes neighborhood and cleaned up parts of a nature trail.

UM teen’s documentary on C-SPAN
SPANISH FORT, Ala. — Trevor Warren, a high school senior and member of Providence United Methodist Church in Spanish Fort, is a third-prize winner in C-SPAN’s national 2013 StudentCam competition. He will receive $750 for his documentary, “The Strangers: Illegal Immigration in America,” which will air at 6:50 a.m. ET April 14 on C-SPAN. Warren’s documentary focuses on immigration from biblical and law-enforcement perspectives.

Church’s school break program a blessing
SYRACUSE, N.Y. — A week off from school ... For students, it means no homework and sleeping in. For parents, it means trying to find supervision. And for Erwin First United Methodist Church, it is an opportunity to reach out and fill a need in its neighborhood. The Upper New York Annual (regional) Conference reports that the church for the past eight years has offered “Safe Space” week during the February school break. The program accommodates 25 young people ages 8 to 13.

United Methodist women making history
NASHVILLE, Tenn. — In 1987, the U.S. Congress designated the month of March that year as Women’s History Month. The annual observance continues to this day. United Methodist News Service invited a number of women, both lay and clergy, in The United Methodist Church to share their stories. You can follow those stories at www.umc.org/women.

Grants aim to fight poverty among seniors
NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The denomination’s Committee on Older Adult Ministries will distribute grants to help local congregations deal with issues surrounding “old age poverty.” The committee is administratively related to the United Methodist Board of Discipleship. The grants will be available to local churches that identify ways to be in ministry to older adults who face poverty issues, including financial exploitation. For more information, go to www.gbod.org

Study Finds Common Themes in Congregations
Reaching Toward Vitality
A new study about how a group of United Methodist congregations successfully dealt with change says three key elements were almost always present: a pastor not afraid to lead, laity who will partner as a team with the pastor and a God-led purpose or vision. www.gbod.org