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THE PURPOSE of the New Mexico Conference NEWS is to tell the story of United Methodism within the New Mexico Conference. PRIORITY is given to:

- (1) stories promoting official programs and emphases of the conference;
- (2) articles reflecting the mission and work of the church as carried out by districts, individuals and local churches within the conference;
- (3) groundbreakings and the consecration and dedication of new churches;
- (4) brief reports of deaths, awards and special accomplishments of pastors and their families and laity who are known throughout the conference due to their conference-level responsibilities.

PERSONAL Opinion articles normally are not used.

ARTICLES for possible use may be sent to the editor at the Conference office.

The United Methodist Reporter's "Letters to the Editor" section may be read online at the UMR Portal (UMReporter Interactive) at www.umportal.org by clicking on the "Letters to the Editor" link.

New Mexico Conference NEWS
D. Max Whitfield, Bishop
Bill Sylskar, Director
Mission & Administration
Karla Abernethy-Thetford,
Editor
nmumrumc@nmconfum.com
(806) 655-2828
Circulation
lorik@nmconfum.com
Conference Offices
11816 Lomas Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87112
Phone (505) 255-8786
(800) 678-8786
Fax (505) 265-6184
WEB SITE nmconfum.com

A banner ministry

By SUSAN WALTER
Bethel UMC

Bethel United Methodist Church has a series of new banners that are adding interest and excitement to the congregation in Moriarty.

The Hope banner had its debut in 2006 as a processional banner at New Mexico Annual Conference in Glorieta.

The remaining banners, Joy, Love and Faith, were presented to Bethel UMC during Advent season last year.

The banner committee wanted to create a series of colorful banners that would complement the original Hope banner. Each banner has its own symbolism and

meaning.

The open hand in the Hope banner symbolizes Bethel's outreach to church, community and world.

The rays symbolize faith and peace. The butterfly symbolizes Jesus Christ.

The hearts located on the butterfly's wings represent Christ's love.

The colors of the banner are bright and cheery, symbolizing joy and love as we rejoice in the glory of God.

The Joy banner, in shades of red and yellow, shows our joy through the African American as he stands on the edge of the world with his arms reaching out

in praise. Laced within his open hands are several colorful, free-flowing ribbons.

The Love banner, in shades of blue, shows Mary holding baby Jesus in her arms.

The baby is reaching towards Mary's face. The flow of circular lines that spiral from Mary's face through her gown around to the center of Jesus' head depicts Jesus is at the center of our lives.

The round head and arced arm show God's perfection.

Humanity is shown through the blue-clad Mary.

Divinity is shown in the white circle that encompasses the figures.

Credit needs to be given to the

artist, Frank Wesley, for this design which he named Blue Madonna.

Finally, the Faith banner shows a chromatic array of colors from the golden rays of reds and yellows found at the beginning of a sunrise.

At the top of the banner, are deep shades of blue with a bright white morning star depicting hope.

Hope can be found at the beginning of each day.

At the bottom of the banner is a silhouette of person praying. Through prayer we have faith and trust in God and in His promises through Christ and the Scriptures.



Photos by LEE ROSS

McMurry University to host symposium on honoring Native American cultures

Honoring Native Americans is organically important to McMurry University, reaching well beyond the issue of an athletic team mascot.

McMurry University will explore how an academic institution, along with individuals who take seriously the respect and dignity due all persons, can appropriately honor Native American peoples and cultures

at "The Quest: An Academic Institution Seeks to Honor Native Americans," to be held March 11-12.

Three experts on Native American culture and policy will gather along with the campus community, including faculty, staff, and the general public, to hear ideas and opinions on this topic. All activities will be held in the Garrison United

Methodist Campus Center.

Noted guest speakers will include Dr. Richard King from Washington State University at Pullman, a noted authority on the Native American mascot controversy.

King has expanded his inquiry into the radicalization of sporting worlds, examining on the one hand the rich heritage and lasting significance of athleti-

cism in Native America, while on the other hand interrogating mainstream and extreme accounts of race and sport. King will speak on "The Social and Cultural Challenges for an Academic Institution to Honor Native Americans."

Dr. Gordon Bronitsky, noted anthropologist from Albuquerque

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McMurry

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que, New Mexico, will speak on "The Institutional Challenges for an Academic Institution to honor Native Americans."

Bronitsky was trained as an archeologist and anthropologist and received his PhD in anthropology from the University of Arizona in 1977.

Bronitsky's early research and explorations, both academic and in the field, laid the foundation for his ongoing career and the establishment of Bronitsky and Associates – he was able to literally "unearth" the foundations of early material cultures of local indigenous peoples and their communities

and was, through this point of entry, given the privilege and shared insight into their values, customs and art practice. Over the past 15 years, he has brokered performance opportunities, international tours, exhibitions and trade opportunities for indigenous people and folk artists from every continent.

Dr. Thomas White Wolf Fassett, an internationally recognized champion of human and civil rights and an outspoken defender of Native and indigenous rights, has traveled through the world assisting those whose voices are not heard.

Fassett is founding Minister

of Urban Mission in Rochester, N.Y. and continues to work in the fields of faith, public policy and social justice. He has served as Special Assistant to the United States Senate and House of Representatives conducting investigations into Federal Indian policy.

Fassett will be speaking on "The Theological and Ecclesiastical Challenges for an Academic Institution to Honor Native Americans."

The symposium will offer small groups for discussion purposes, and the event will also present a panel discussion featuring the three scholars.

RETHINKCHURCH

St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Odessa

St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Odessa continues to reach outside walls through service.

The church continues to participate in the stamp program for wounded soldiers. Total collected since start of stamp program is 131,884 stamps for a total of \$2,637.68 that has gone to help wounded soldiers.

The church also is participating in a coupon program for military families overseas. Total collected since starting the coupon program is 518,641 coupons for a total of \$414,294.92

The baby pantry is another program offered through St. Luke's UMC.

In December, 114 babies were helped through the baby pantry.

For 2009, 463 families and 789 babies benefited from the program.

Items given in 2009:

21,704 diapers
523 diaper wipes
278 cans of formula
516 bottles of shelf milk
895 cans of juice
166 boxes of baby cereal
1,760 jars of baby food
603 baby snacks
244 boxes of toddler cereal
3,022 jars of toddler food
411 bottles of baby wash
386 bottles of baby lotion
419 bottles of baby shampoo
391 tubes of destine
107 Q-tips
121 tubes of toothpaste

Happening on the Mountain

There will be a **UMW Spiritual Enrichment Retreat** March 19-21 at Sacramento Methodist Assembly. Marty Singleterry will be the leader. Theme is Prayer. Attendees should have a Bible, notebook and pen. Further details available from UMW members.

Summer Camps and Backpacking Adventure dates and information now available at www.sacramentoassembly.org or the New Mexico Conference website, www.nmconfum.com.



Raised to date:
\$6,309.64

Goal: \$157,550

Health Kits for Haiti

In response to the Haiti earthquake, the New Mexico Conference Disaster Relief Team and Volunteers In Mission offices are asking for items for health kits.

A list of items is available at <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/prints/kits/>.

Do not assemble the kit. Drop off items and a check for \$1 per kit to assist with processing and shipping costs. Items will be picked up and delivered to United Methodist Committee on Relief Sager Brown Depot in early March.

New Mexico Conference drop off locations:

Albuquerque District

St. Stephens UMC

4601 Juan Tabo Blvd. NE, Albuquerque

Clovis District

Trinity UMC

1320 W 21st, Clovis

Call (575) 309-7234 before bringing items

El Paso District

St. Marks UMC

5005 Love Rd, El Paso

Odessa Area

First UMC

415 N. Lee, Odessa

Monetary donations also may be made to the ADVANCE using the number for Haiti emergency relief - 418325.

For more information, call Mary White at (915) 494-3177 or by email, mwhite1@elp.rr.com.

around the conference and beyond

PERFORMANCE

On Feb. 14, Blackwood Legacy will be performing at St. Luke's United Methodist Church, 1601 E. 42nd Odessa, TX 79762.

Send recommendations to Will Steinsiek, nmarchives@nmconfum.com.

Winners will be announced at Annual Conference.

AWARD DEADLINE

Deadline to apply for the Bishop's and Vitality Awards is Feb. 15.

For more information, go online to the Conference website at www.nmconfum.com.

NOMINATIONS FOR LIVING ARCHIVES

The Commission on Archives and History will hold its Annual Meeting at 9 a.m. Feb. 26 at St Paul's UMC, Albuquerque. At that time they will consider nominations for our Living Archives.

The procedure for nominating someone as a living archive is simple. Write a letter (or email) describing the reasons you believe that the individual deserves consideration. That letter should share their spiritual journey, any offices held, recognition or honors received, and their contribution to the life of the New Mexico Annual Conference.

The Commission will be looking for individuals who have participated on a Conference level in some way, as a witness to history, and/or who helped to shape some part of our heritage through their service.

Letters from other individuals also are helpful.

FOUR CORNERS

Four Corners Native American Ministry partners, Bill and Beth Keasler recently launched the Navajo Tool Trailer project on behalf of the ministry.

The project of providing the ministry with a fully-furnished portable tool trailer will expand the church and home improvement program to more remote locations, while providing mission teams with the necessary tools to complete their work.

Information on how to contribute to this project, including an itemized list of needed tools, can be found at: <http://www.navajo-tool-trailer.com>.

VIM TRIPS 2010

A couple of the Volunteers In Mission trips planned for 2010.

Matagalpa, Nicaragua

March 6-13, 2010

Western Hills El Paso

Medical/Construction

Cost:\$1,800

Andi Wallace-Team Leader

mseditor2@aol.com

Hurricane Relief

March 13-19

St. Marks El Paso

Construction/Repair

Mike Hackett - Leader

ephacketts@juno.com