First Friday Letter

The World Methodist Council September 2021

Greetings from the General Secretary

Grace and Peace to you in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

Many people expressed disappointment that Conference22 in Gothenburg, August 10-14, 2022, was postponed. COVID-19 has disrupted our lives in too many ways to mention. The Conference will bring the Methodist family together to share our pain and joy as life continues to change for our people and member churches.

Given all the hard work done by our host and the Conference Planning Committee, I wrestled with our exciting theme: *On the Move – Pilgrimage, Migration, and Illumination.* I found the work of renowned missiologist Wesley Granberg Michaelson, *Without Oars: Casting Off into a Life of Pilgrimage?* as well as his reflections in Christian Century, *Has the Pandemic prepared us for Pilgrimage* and *How to find our Way Forward* in U.S Catholic Magazine very helpful.

Michaelson defines *pilgrimage* as "a journey with holy purpose toward a place of spiritual significance." He offers us three steps to guide us on our way forward. First, all pilgrimages begin by walking away from our settled past and comfortable routines. Second, we surrender our need to control, and third, a pilgrimage slows us down and opens up the space where more profound questions can emerge. As I reflected on our recent Steering Committee decision, I believe that the Council is on a pilgrimage of fresh encounters with God and fellow travelers covering new terrain. The big question is, "Are we open to the leading of the Holy Spirit to traverse the unknown in a post-COVID world?"

This year's Season of Creation runs from 1 September to 4 October, the World Day for Prayer for Creation. The 2021 theme is **A Home for All? Renewing the Oikos of God.** Let' make a commitment to work of a more just and sustainable world for all of God's creation.

In this issue we cover the 2020 and 2021 Peace Award recipients, the WMC's new office headquarters, the great work of the Methodist family to help each other, and more. Please read what is happening and remember to share what you and your church are doing for future *First Friday Letters.*

Let us go into the Season of Creation in the knowledge and confidence that God is greater than the rough terrain or storms we might encounter in pilgrimage on our journey.

Peace!

Ivan M Abrahams

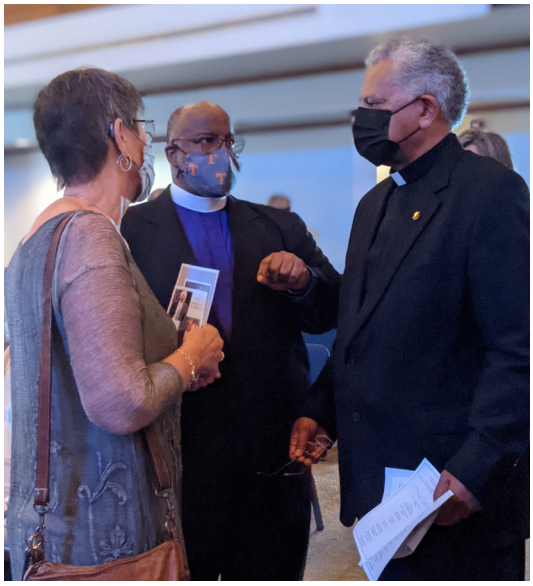
Eddie Fox remembered

As Bishop Ivan Abrahams greeted those attending the service for the Rev. Dr. H. Eddie Fox on behalf of the World Methodist Council, he said he celebrated the life and witness of this teacher, mentor, icon and friend, noting that none was more committed than Eddie. He said that his wise counsel, passion, and razor-sharp wit along with his treasure-trove of stories would long influence the Methodist family. He thanked wife Mary Nell and the family for sharing Eddie, explaining that they were owed a debt of gratitude as many lives had been transformed and enriched by Eddie.

Bishop Abrahams joins the WMC family in praying for the Fox family and who continue to deal with the loss of a husband, father, grandfather and close friend.

A number of others who have been part of the World Methodist Council paid tribute including Bishop Michael Watson who delivered the gospel message, Rev. Dr. Maxie Dunnam, Rev. Allen Black, Rev. Grace Imathiu, and Bishop Darryl Starnes.

Bishop Ivan Abrahams *brought greetings from the President, officers, members and staff of the World Methodist Council to the family and friends of the late Rev. Dr. H. Edie Fox. He joined a number of others in the Methodist family who remembers the many contributions Fox made.*



Members of the WMC Steering Committee *Bishop Ivan Abrahams, Rev. Dr. Kimberly Resiman and Bishop Darry Starnes greet each other at the memorial service of the late Rev. Fox.*

WMC Names Recipients for 2020 and 2021 Peace Awards

Recipients of the World Methodist Peace Award for 2020 and 2021 are announced by World Methodist Council General Secretary Ivan Abrahams. "This Award is given annually by the World Methodist Council to individuals or organizations who have contributed significantly to peace, justice and reconciliation," Bishop Abrahams said, "and it is a privilege to announce these two outstanding individuals for their untiring efforts."

The recipients were chosen at the Council's Steering Committee meeting held in August. The Committee did not choose a recipient last year, so both the 2020 and 2021 recipients were named this year as the Committee met virtually.

Both men have boldly worked for peace and justice in their respective areas of the world but have also been instrumental in inspiring others to work for peace globally.

The late Bishop John K. Yambasu, the 2020 Peace Award recipient, was chosen for being a courageous peacemaker in his home country of Sierra Leone and across the United Methodist connection for many years. He provided critical leadership during the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak and the 2017 mud landslide, both of which killed thousands of his fellow citizens. He was known for choosing to speak truth, even in difficult situations, while at the same time living peaceably with all people and was a role model to the United Methodists in Africa and across the connection, his nomination stated.

Bishop Yambasu grew up in poverty and is quoted as having said, "I know through and through what poverty is. I have slept with it and I have woken to it. Countless times, I went to bed without food. I have not only experienced poverty, but for almost ten years I had to wrestle with it. Today in Sierra Leone, I live side by side with poverty and misery." He then said, "I am totally fed up!...We need to embrace each other" Red and yellow, black and white, poor and rich, have and have-nots, gay or straight, bisexual or homosexual, polygamists, we all need to engage each other… We need to torment God with our prayers and give us sleepless nights until we can look at each other in the face and say, 'We are brothers and we are sisters'."

Bishop John K. Yambasu

The Bishop was creative in thought and action and was consistent throughout his life. He served the people around him as the focus of his call to ministry. He was a leader in the "Imagine No Malaria" campaign, the Ebola crisis, and COVID-19 pandemic. He was a teacher to young people, founder of the Child Rescue Center, and shortly before his death in an automobile accident, was elected Chancellor of Africa University.

His nominees said that Bishop Yambasu was a man of peace: peace for those living with illness, peace for children struggling in poverty, peace across nations and continents. He exemplified the best in Christian peacemaking.

Continued on page 4

Michaela Bryson will return to work at the Council's Headquarters in September. She and husband, Curt, say they are thrilled with son Bennett Kash's arrival and are blessed to have such a happy, healthy baby. They are excited to start this journey as first-time parents.

Peace Award Recipients continued...

The Rev. Olav Pärnamets of Estonia was named to receive the 2021 Peace Award. His contribution to world peace began with Europe in the second half of the 20th century. The tiny Baltic country of Estonia enjoyed less than a quarter of a century as a free republic during the first half of the 20th century. Still, during that time, the Methodist Church planted roots and grew. Born in 1937, Rev. Pärnamets spent most of his childhood and adult ministry under the strict and oppressive control of the Soviet Union, his nominees explain. Yet, this man served as a pastor and district superintendent, displaying great courage when the government of Estonia oppressed those who even participated in religious activity. Worship, theological study and evangelical activities were suppressed with the threat of punishment. But he traveled the world to share about the faithfulness of the people called Methodists in this Baltic country.

One of Rev. Pärnamets greatest strengths is creativity. With little to no money and Big Brother watching, he led by faith, and his unique ability to bring together people from different cultures, nations and backgrounds is evident in the vital Estonian church.

"Whether challenged to abandon God for the state as a child, to give up his Bible while conscripted in the military, or faced with needs and not enough resources, Rev. Pärnamets has always leaned on God's grace," said his nomination. His actions as a child, a youth worker, a deacon, pastor, superintendent and ecumenical leader are evidence of his life-long peace efforts. His vision of a Baltic Mission Center became a reality through the generosity and friendship of people he influenced worldwide. There is a Baltic Theological Seminar that equips and sends clergy all over Europe. More than 90 percent of todays' clergy in Estonia were educated there. Retiring in 2014, Rev. Pärnnamets remains active.

"The Peace Award is the highest honor of the World Methodist Council," Bishop Abrahams explains. The criteria for the Peace Award are courage, creativity and consistency in one's witness to peace, justice and reconciliation.

Rev. Olav Pärnamets

Previous recipients of the award include, among others, Presidents Jimmy Carter, Anwar Sadat, Nelson Mandela, Boris Trajkovsky (Macedonia), Father Elias Chacour, The Community of St. Egidio (Rome) and the Grandmothers of the Plaza De Mayo (Argentina).

More information on the 2020 and 2021 Peace Award recipients will be available when the public presentations are made. The dates for the presentations will be announced when available.

Alert! WMC Conference further postponed

Due to the continuing challenging times from the COVID-19 Pandemic, the twentysecond Conference of the World Methodist Council was further postponed.

At the two-day virtual meeting of the Steering Committee in August, it was unanimously agreed that the global WMC family from around the world could not safely gather in Gothenburg, Sweden in August of 2022. President J.C. Park announces that a new date for the Conference will be set in the Spring of 2022.

WMC Program Chair Rev. Dr. Martyn Atkins and members of the host committee including Bishop Christian Alstead, Uniting Church President Lasse Svensson and others were consulted. Everyone agreed that a more meaningful Conference could be held at a later date. *On the Move* will continue to be the theme, and the issues of Migration, Justice and Hospitality are evident to be more pertinent now than when the theme was initially chosen.

More information on the Conference will be published as available in this newsletter, on the web pages of the Council and Conference, and Twitter.

Thank you for staying with us in partnership, as we the Methodist, Wesleyan and United church family, continue together *On the Move.*

Standing with Haiti amid quake and storm

United Methodists are reaching out with their prayers and pocketbooks as Haiti faces a devastating earthquake and encroaching major storm.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief is collecting financial donations through its International Disaster Response and Recovery Advance #982450. The relief arm, part of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, also is in conversation with partners on the ground about next steps.

"In the aftermath of Saturday's earthquake, we grieve alongside the people of Haiti as the staggering loss of life and level of devastation becomes clear," said Roland Fernandes, the top executive of Global Ministries and UMCOR.

"UMCOR stands firm in its commitment to alleviate suffering and is working with partners on how to best meet basic and immediate needs as it has done in the past."

Many individual United Methodists also are working with their longtime partners in the Caribbean island nation to extend a helping hand.

Still, a variety of factors complicates the church's response to the second catastrophic earthquake to ravage the impoverished nation in 11 years. Those factors include the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak and a severe economic downturn made worse by gang violence and political unrest. Just a little over a month ago, the country's President Jovenel Moise was assassinated.

So far, the death toll has climbed to some 1,300 people following the 7.2-magnitude quake that struck Haiti's southwest peninsula Aug. 14. The temblor — with an epicenter about 78 miles (125 kilometers) west of capital Port-au-Prince — triggered landslides, collapsed buildings and sent aftershocks across the country.

David Draeger, mission volunteer coordinator for the Methodist Church in Haiti, told the Michigan Conference that church buildings in the region have sustained damage and many Haitians still do not know the fate of loved ones.

With thousands of people injured and others still trapped in rubble, Haitian authorities are racing to ramp up rescue efforts and relieve overwhelmed hospitals. Tropical Depression Grace is lashing the island with heavy rains, even as many sleep outside to stay clear of crumbling structures.

A mobile medical team from Petit Goâve near Port-au-Prince already has deployed to the affected region. The team is funded by a partnership between Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas and the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas.

Highland Park United Methodist, in the past week, also sent disaster-relief funding through Food for the Poor to help respond to the country's ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.

"HPUMC has a longstanding strong commitment to the people of Haiti, and although our physical presence has been limited due to the pandemic and political instability, we are committed to continued service to our friends and neighbors there," said Caroline Hazlett, the congregation's impact coordinator for health partnerships and disaster response.

Hazlett's father, Dr. Otto Willbanks, and other church members established an eye clinic in Haiti in 1976. A team from the church was working at the clinic on Jan. 12, 2010, when a 7.0 earthquake near Port-au-Prince caused the death of hundreds of thousands of people and caused the clinic's roof to collapse. Team member Jean Arnwine died of her injuries.

That earthquake also cost the lives of two executives from the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries — the Rev. Sam Dixon, who then led UMCOR, and the Rev. Clinton Rabb, head of Volunteers in Mission.

But amid the tragic loss, United Methodists quickly returned to the country to join hands with the Eglise Méthodiste d'Haïti (Methodist Church of Haiti) in recovery efforts. That included Highland Park, which rebuilt and expanded the Polyclinique Siloe to care for more than people's eyesight.

United Methodists also participated collectively in relief, donating some $45 million to UMCOR for the earthquake response.

Debra Buzard, outreach director for First United Methodist Church in Kearney, Missouri, was among those who volunteered in rebuilding efforts. Her church now aims for sustainable development. The church started the ministry Partners in Education Haiti, which provides scholarships to some 30 students and also supports their families.

Buzard also serves on the advisory council of a Haitian orphanage for about 40 children with disabilities. Both the orphanage and the students are located miles away from the epicenter in Port-au-Prince, but they still felt the tremors.

"They are all OK, but there is a lot of fear," she said. "Here is the problem that is going to affect the orphanage and the families we work with. It's the perfect storm."

Continued on page 6

Standing with Haiti continued...

She pointed to COVID-19, the ongoing crisis in government and the extreme gang violence as part of that perfect storm. Gangs have taken over key access roads to parts of Haiti, including around the quake's epicenter near Les Cayes. Relief workers initially used helicopters and boats to bring aid.

A gang leader said Aug. 15 that the armed groups had declared a truce along the road to Les Cayes, and a convoy has arrived by ground.

The United Nations is calling for a "humanitarian corridor" to allow relief supplies to pass through gang-held territories.

Valerie Mossman-Celestin is among those looking toward more sustainable development that can promote stability and economic independence.

The United Methodist deaconess is U.S. executive director for Haitian Assets for Peace International, or HAPI, which helps fund a clinic and a vocational training center in Mizak. The community is also miles away from the quake's epicenter; however, the vocational training center HAPItech is still recovering from a July fire that claimed its computers and more than $5,300 in cash.

"What we're trying to do is to give real opportunities to women in Haiti through better health care, education and jobs," Mossman-Celestin said.

She acknowledged that some people might feel like they are trying to "fill a bucket with a hole at the bottom."

She said God calls people to respond with compassion and relief to disaster. "But we also need to build in an approach that continues to break the cycle of dependency," she said.

Bishop Kenneth Carter, in an email to the Florida Conference, encouraged United Methodists to remember: "God is our refuge and strength… And Jesus is with us in the midst of the storm."

He also urged Florida Conference churches to receive a special offering for Haiti this coming Sunday, Aug. 22.

"May we draw near to God and to one another in a spirit of generosity toward our neighbors in a moment of crisis and with faith that God will provide," he wrote.

From UMC News, Heather Hahn. Hahn is assistant news editor for **UM News**. Contact her at (615) 742-5470 or newsdesk@umcom.org. To read more United Methodist news, subscribe to the free Daily or Friday Digests.

Haiti immediately after the earthquake with people coming out of their destroyed houses, still confused.

Photo 17652369 / Haiti © FabioConcetta | Dreamstime.com

‘A New Vision for a sustainable future’

When we made the decision to postpone our 14 th World Assembly for a year, we recognised that 2021 could feel like a long ‘fallow’ year of separation, isolation and waiting. It could also provide an opportunity to bring Federation women together virtually, and to gain experience of organising a global online event in case the pandemic prevented us from meeting physically in 2022.

The aim of the two day event was to celebrate God’s activity through the women of the Federation, and to focus on our response to the current climate crisis, which became ever more urgent as the months passed.

Work started early and the theme was chosen to reflect the biblical texts of Revelation 21:1-5 and 22: 1-5 as well as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 Climate Action.

World and Area Officers and Helen Kim Memorial Scholars were invited to contribute news items, biblical reflections, music and prayers. The goal was to include something from every geographical Area of our Federation and to involve as many young women as possible in this global event.

A member of the Connexional team of the Methodist Church in Britain recommended P H Productions as a company that had provided technical support for the Methodist Conference in 2020. I approached them and a contract was signed. They provided excellent support throughout, editing items that we uploaded to their drop box, training both myself and the team of interpreters we engaged for 7 languages (French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Chinese Mandarin, Korean and Cambodian). Many of these were professional interpreters, well used to working with the World Methodist Council, but few had much experience of working online for such an event as ours. An almost full script and access to unscripted videos were made available to all interpreters before the event began. This aid to preparation was much appreciated, as some contributors spoke rather fast!

Registration was organised by Rachel Allison, a young British woman already experienced in using Eventbrite. She also recruited a small team of other Helen Kim Memorial Scholars to monitor the chat box and Q and A messages that flowed as soon as the Zoom Webinar event began. Around 900 registered as attendees, but some watched in groups viewing one screen. Those who were due to speak live, interpret or monitor the chat box were invited to join via a special link for panellists. P H Productions ran a training session for these individuals the day before the Webinar.

The programme for the event was posted on our website and Facebook and twitter a few days beforehand. An evaluation form was sent out via Eventbrite afterwards and the recordings of both days uploaded to our brand new Youtube.com/WFMUCW. Speakers on Day Two included Jo Swinney from A Rocha International, Liz Lee from United Methodist Women, Mollie, Irene and Jessica, Climate ambassadors with ‘Climate Justice for All’, and Hilary Evans from Methodist Women in Britain. The technicians ensured the live speakers, powerpoint slides and videos all occurred in the correct order and the programme proceeded smoothly. One technician was assigned to support the interpreters throughout the event, helping teams of two for each language to work effectively.

A copyright licence was obtained for use of hymns and the appropriate acknowledgements included in PowerPoint slides. Interpreters were invited to send in their invoices promptly and were generous in their charges, recognising we are a non-profit organisation run by volunteers with a limited budget. We were extremely grateful to the British Methodist Church for their grant towards our costs for providing interpretation.

A report from Alison Judd, World President WFMUCW

A book review on 'Queer Theology: Beyond Apologetics'

Book Publisher: Cascade Books. Eugene, Oregon. 2018.

Author: Linn Marie Tonstad

The core of Tonstad's Queer Theology is found unapologetically in the work of the late, Latin American, liberation and womanist theologian, Marcella Althaus-Reid. As with most liberation theologians, theology and dogma are critiqued by the philosophies of Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx. The "thingification" or "false abstractions of theological categories which become "real" become the standard by which "real realities" (like our messy lives) are judged unreal, insufficient or unimportant. Althaus-Reid argues that for this reason, dogma exists "to re-order reality". Marx agrees that Feuerbach, in his "The Essence of Christianity", completes the critique of religion is not about God but about human beings and our relationships with one another. However, says Marx, it is insufficient to recognize the underlying, real truth of "The Holy Family" (what Marx refers to as the "bourgeois family"). The task of the philosopher is not merely to interpret the world, says Marx, "the point is to change it."

A critique of the nuclear family reveals that monogamous, reproductive, heterosexual marriage is not primarily about the highest fulfillment of love of two individuals in relation as it pretends to be. First, children are needed for the continuance and growth of capitalism. Then again, the accumulation of private property is legitimized for the sake of our children and so gives a sense of sanctity and authenticity to the nuclear family. The enforcement of monogamy and demand of virginity before marriage ensures that the reproductive capacities of women belong to men, either the father or husband. Capitalism does not (or cannot, we say) put a price on a mother's love and the net result is that a mother's labour is free nor does it produce a sphere of the private to protect colonization of our lives. Tonstad calls this misrecognition of a nuclear family's function a non-economic function. Religion gives these arrangements an aura of holiness, divine will and ethical responsibility. For Marx, religion is the basis on which injustices are tolerated and sanctioned in reality, "the opium of the people".

In a sense Marx claims a connection between religion and capitalism saying, it appears at first an extremely obvious, trivial thing. But its analysis reveals that it is a very strange thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. The word "strange" here is sometimes translated as "queer". Althaus-Reid says that all contemporary theologies respond in some way or other to Feuerbach and Marx even though most theologies are not atheist. Queer theologies reflect the way in which religious or theological categories, economic exchanges and those processes of misrecognition and mystification all relate to one another. "Terrible is the fate of theologies from the margin", says Althaus-Reid, "when they want to be accepted by the centre."

Linda Marie Tonstad is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology of Yale Divinity School and also author of God and Difference (2016).

Part 2 of this review will follow in the October FFL

This article is from The Rev. Keith Vermeulen, researcher for the WMC. The opinions expressed are his own and not necessarily those of the World Methodist Council.

Mozambique crisis continues to cause concern

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) is gravely concerned about the situation unfolding in the Cabo-Delgado Province – Mozambique. The information received from Methodist people and organisations working in the country, indicates that this conflict is likely to impact the entire Southern African region.

Rampant are issues of human rights violations, human-trafficking, drug smuggling and the fight for natural resources. The attacks have severely impacted the lives of innocent people namely women, youth, and children. This violence is of a brutal and violent nature in which many have been left homeless and destitute and hundreds of people murdered.

We note the health implications of the violence during a deadly pandemic such a Covid-19 and are concerned about the health services that are seriously hampered by this violence. This is likely to lead to more deaths and even greater psycho-social and mental health issues both now and in the future.

The deadly combination of poverty, unemployment, inequality, lack of development opportunities and vice especially amongst the youth has been fertile ground for radical elements to grow, leading up to the 3 year old insurgency we see now. Widespread social, economic and political problems throughout Mozambique have also been deemed to have played a huge part in the insurgency we witness today.

These attacks which have led to the deaths of hundreds of people including civilians, with hundreds of thousands more displaced into exacerbated poverty and debilitating levels of food insecurity.

The MCSA therefore joins the religious organisations, international and regional non-governmental organisations and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) who are already working in this space in providing psycho-social, spiritual and humanitarian support.

The MCSA has held several meetings and as part of an accompaniment process the church commits to support the people of the affected Cabo Delgado province through the interventions which include:

- Monetary contributions towards providing humanitarian aid.
- Through a process o engaging the SADC secretariat, to lobby and advocate for the insurgency crisis to be put on the SADC heads of state agenda. An advocacy strategy that will tap into interfaith collaboration and corporation is being developed.
- Important to note as well, is the fact that the insurgency is not just a Mozambique problem but one that is likely to affect the whole SADC region and the broader African continent. Closely related to the insurgency are the issues of drug smuggling and human trafficking; areas that the MCSA is already involved with and working with organisations such as International Organisation on Migration and the Counter Trafficking in Persons.
- Inter-faith engagement especially between Muslims and Christians is integral to providing the required support for the affected communities. This will also assist in encouraging collaboration and peace-building initiatives.
- Peace and development workshops with the youth in Cabo Delgado to encourage them to become part of the solution that builds on the peace preached in both Islam and Christianity is another initiative to build sustainable outcomes.

The MCSA remains committed to the vision of A Christ-Healed Africa for the healing of nations.

Rev. Purity Malinga, Presiding Bishop

UMCOR supports Afghans in need

For more than 40 years Afghanistan has been wracked by wars, civil strife, invasion and massive amounts of arms shipped in from outside forces. It is one of the poorest countries in the world, with high infant and maternal mortality rates, and millions of Afghans have been displaced as refugees over these many years. Today the country is again at a point of transition with great uncertainty about the future. Thousands of Afghans are seeking to flee violence and a fear of persecution. Roland Fernandes, general secretary of Global Ministries and UMCOR, expressed his sympathy for the Afghan people, stating: "The situation in Afghanistan is uncertain and unfolding. It is a tragedy of epic proportions. We pray especially for all of those left behind who now live in fear and for the many communities across Afghanistan also facing extended drought and hunger."

Global Ministries and the United Methodist Committee on Relief have long-standing partners in Afghanistan, with projects and programs dating back to the mid-1960s. The work has been, and continues to be, in partnership with local Afghan communities, as well as with other humanitarian agencies concerned with health, community development and human rights. UMCOR is working with these partners to determine what assistance is most helpful at this time and the best avenue for ensuring humanitarian relief reaches the country. Through one project, UMCOR will provide cash assistance to displaced families residing in the Kabul area, enabling them to prioritize their most urgent needs such as food, shelter or medicine.

UMCOR is also prepared to assist with refugee resettlement through its partnership with Church World Service and is currently in conversation about assisting Church World Service with temporary housing for Afghan refugees. Those interested in supporting the UMCOR-CWS partnership can make gifts online here or by checks sent to Global Ministries/UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087-9068, with Advance #3022144 in the memo line.

"The United Methodist Church is one of the denominations that helped launch Church World Service in 1945 and CWS remains UMCOR's primary partner in refugee resettlement work," said Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton of the New York Conference, president of UMCOR. "It is imperative that we continue this long-standing tradition as United Methodists by being active in this humanitarian effort." In the last few years, CWS has resettled thousands of refugee families in the U.S. with visas issued under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and SIV Program, a Special Immigration Visa created by Congress to ensure that no U.S. ally is left in danger. Those interested in assisting locally in the resettlement of Afghan refugees can learn more at https://cwsglobal.org/take-action/community-sponsorship-2/

Story from: Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church

Photo 14277286 / Afghanistan © Andrei Moldovan | Dreamstime.com

General Secretary Ivan Abrahams and Treasurer Kirby Hickey visit the WMC office for the first time since its move to Waynesville, NC. COVID-19 prevented travel earlier but both expressed pleasure at the new headquarters layout and ability to meet the Council's needs as it continues to be more virtual in order to serve its worldwide constituency.

Apply for Youth and Young Adult Scholarship

Scholarship opportunities for the 22nd World Methodist Council Conference are open now. Register by clicking on the link below.

https://worldmethodistcouncil.org/what-we-do/youth-and-young-adult-scholarship/

Photo by The World Methodist Council

Photo credits: Perkins School of Theology/ R. Hipps

Please send press releases, articles and resources! Submissions should be a page or less (500-700 words), edited and ready to publish. Contact us by **Friday, September 24** at communications@worldmethodistcouncil.org if you would like your story to be included in the September edition of the First Friday Letter.

On the Web

This and past First Friday Letters can be found online at FirstFridayLetter.worldmethodistcouncil.org.

The World Methodist Council's website may be found at worldmethodistcouncil.org.

The World Methodist Council's Conference website is at worldmethodistconference.org.

To subscribe to this newsletter, please email communications@worldmethodistcouncil.org.

About the First Friday Letter

The First Friday Newsletter is a monthly publication of the World Methodist Council.

Publisher: Bishop Ivan Abrahams, General Secretary

Communications: Michaela Bryson

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