



# MEMPHIS CONFERENCE

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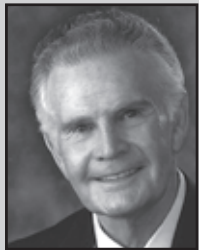
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January 12, 2007

## Briefly

### CHAMPIONS OF CHRIST BREAKFAST TO FEATURE DR. JIMMY BUSKIRK

Champions of Christ Breakfast, sponsored by the Men's Ministry at Christ United Methodist Church in Memphis, will feature noted speaker Dr. Jimmy Buskirk, Chair of the Board of Trustees of Asbury Theological



Jimmy Buskirk

Seminary. The deluxe breakfast will be served at 7:30 a.m. in Seabrook Hall on Saturday, February 3. Then Dr. Buskirk will speak in Wilson Chapel at 8:15 a.m. The event will conclude with communion and prayer. Tickets are \$5.00 each and can be purchased at Christ Church or by calling the church at 901-683-3521. Christ Church is located at 4488 Poplar Ave., across from the Oak Court Mall.

### NOTHING BUT NETS

#### CAMPAIGN GETS \$3 MILLION

The *Nothing But Nets* campaign will receive a \$3 million challenge grant from the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** for the purchase and distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito bed nets to prevent malaria among children and families in Africa. The United Methodist Church and other *Nothing But Nets* partner organizations are working to raise donations for bed nets that save lives. The grant will match contributions dollar for dollar up to \$3 million. •

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# West Kentucky Christmas Project Team builds 'God's miracle home'

By CATHY BURKHEAD

The time of the miracle was close when the Littlest Angel asked, "What, oh what, could a small angel give that would please the Holy Infant?" These words were whispered by the four-year-old cherub in the classic children's story, *The Littlest Angel* (author, Charles Tazewell).

Many first-time participants with the Paducah District Christmas Project Team traveling to Mobile, Alabama wondered the same thing as they began their six-day mission trip on December 26.

Like the littlest angel, they knew God had touched their hearts to serve Him on a special project, but many of the group members had little to no experience in building homes. And the goal was to build a new home for the family of John and Peggy Adams.

Starting with only the foundation in place, the group would attempt to completely finish the exterior and do as much interior work as possible in four days (realizing that the interior work would be limited by needed plumbing and electrical installation).

### Day One begins with the team determined to fulfill God's mission

As the first work day arrived, the seven excited Adams family members welcomed us with smiles, love, kindness and many stories to share. They couldn't believe that 36 energetic adults and three children had traveled twelve hours to come build their new home. The team had three professional carpenters, other skilled workers, and many novice workers.

It didn't take long to "know" why God had sent them for this project. After listening to the Adams family's Katrina disaster



The Paducah District Christmas Project Team traveled to Mobile, Alabama to build a home for a family displaced by Hurricane Katrina. The Adams family, three adults and four small children, have been living in a 30-ft. camper for 15 months.

story, the team was even more determined to fulfill God's mission.

John and Peggy Adams and their three small grandchildren lived near Pascagoula, Miss. in a river front mobile home close to the Gulf. They were given only 30 minutes to pack and leave their home before Katrina came crashing into the area. With their three grandchildren and a boat attached to their truck, they quickly left town.

Returning to their property after the storm, the Adamses found nine feet of water in their home.

"We lost everything to Katrina," Peggy Adams said. They decided to relocate near their daughter in Mobile.

John bought some land and cleared it, purchased a 30-ft camper, dug a well, purchased a generator, and then moved his family into their new camper home. After living in the camper for 15 months with three growing and active grandchildren (ages three, six and seven), along with their grown daughter and Peggy's nephew (age two), the family had become painfully aware of how cramped its quarters were.

John commented, "Our camper gets smaller every day!"

In April of 2006, the relief agency Volunteer Mobile, Inc. approved their application to receive grant money to build a home.

John, a mason by trade, laid

the blocks and poured a concrete pad for the foundation for their new home.

Bill Carr, team leader, and the three lead carpenters – David Norwood, Bob Alexander and the Rev. Jamie Lee — were happy to have the foundation already in place.

On the first building day, the house was completely framed inside and out, and hurricane rods were installed around the outside perimeter frame. Most of the trusses were set in place.

### Day Two lasted 12 hours

On Day Two, trussing was fin-

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# Is global warming an issue for faith community?

By **JIM DEMING**, FIELD ORGANIZER  
Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign  
in Tennessee and Arkansas

On a rainy evening in November, I had the opportunity to be a guest at a covenant group meeting at First United Methodist Church in Conway, Ark. Jay McDaniel, a professor at Hendrix College—a United Methodist related institution—got permission from the group for me to hear the discussion as they worked their way through a curriculum on “Choices for Sustainable Living” published by the Northwest Earth Institute ([www.nwei.org](http://www.nwei.org)).

The group of about 20 represented a variety of ages, from parents of young children to retired seniors, and it seemed to me that they had a profound respect for the ideas and opinions of the other members.

No one interrupted or dominated the conversation, folks responded to each other with follow-up questions and suggestions for resources, and the group seemed to build consensus around the task of educating themselves and others about humankind’s impact on God’s creation.

It was a wonderful evening that reinforced my faith in the power of people of faith listening to each other and planning with each other to change the way we humans use the resources God

has given us to sustain life.

My name is Jim Deming and I am working with the Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign in Arkansas and Tennessee to help build a grass-roots movement in the faith community that will have a significant positive impact on global warming and climate



change. Why? Because our current practices are harming the very place we call home—God’s creation. Scientists are now in agreement that our present life-style choices and energy choices are having increasingly detrimental effects on the climate: air pollution and childhood asthma for the most vulnerable among us, melting glaciers and polar ice caps with the resultant rise of sea water, warming seasons that increase the incidence of disease, and many more harmful effects on creation.

For United Methodist Christians, the two great command-

ments are to love God and love our neighbors as ourselves. Since these are the fundamental values of the Christian tradition (and values we share with other faiths), we must look anew from an environmental perspective if we are truly “loving” God and God’s creation and “lovingly” sharing the earth’s

resources with our neighbors. For Americans, who are 5 percent of the world’s population yet consume 25% of the world’s energy, we who profess a Christian ethic are called to respond to the Biblical imperative to change—to let go of old ways of being and begin new ways of living.

Most of the people I meet with are now aware of global warming, though they are not in agreement on what to do about it.

Global warming and climate change can be approached from a variety of directions: *politically* because we must build consensus

to change current and future national and local energy policy; *architecturally* because we must build more efficient structures to lessen our impact on natural resources; and *economically* because the cost of energy and negative health effects are absorbing greater percentages of income for all people.

However, I believe the most compelling argument for addressing the effects of global warming, one that can drive all the other motivations, is *spiritual*. Biblically-based creation care can provide a long-lasting motivation that honestly sees the future, can create change based on the values of stewardship and sharing, and can compel us to act to leave a healthy legacy for generations to come.

When I work with communities of faith, I ask them to act not out of guilt or fear, but rather to begin to act out of responsibility and justice. I ask them to begin to work at three levels:

- Personal*—Develop a budget and do both minor and major things such as change types of light bulbs, invest in energy-efficient cars and appliances, and add insulation. Reduce consumption and live so that others may have enough.

- Congregational or Community*—Complete an energy audit of your current structure and planned structures. Develop a plan, a budget and a timetable to become a

witness in the larger community to your values of creation care.

- Public Policy*—Tell your elected officials at all levels that we need new standards for energy production and consumption and for design of structures and transportation systems. Acting out of the values of love of God and love of our neighbor, call for changes that are ethical and sustainable.

If you are interested in engaging your United Methodist Church in dialogue about climate change and energy consumption as an issue of faith, please call me at 615-438-7133 or e-mail me at [jimdeming@comcast.net](mailto:jimdeming@comcast.net). I can meet with you and members of your church, offer audiovisual and curriculum resources, and lead a discussion on God’s call to stewardship and responsibility. •

*Jim Deming, an ordained United Church of Christ minister, currently serves as an interim pastor at First United UCC in Nashville. He will be one of the featured speakers at the Memphis Conference Caring For Creation Conference, Feb. 18-19, at Our Lady Queen of Peace Retreat Center, in Dancysville, Tenn. For more info., contact Christy Smith, [ctsmith923@bellsouth.net](mailto:ctsmith923@bellsouth.net) or Martha Lyle Ford at [mlford1@bellsouth.net](mailto:mlford1@bellsouth.net). Check the Memphis Conference website for registration details: [www.memphis-umc.org](http://www.memphis-umc.org).*

## Christmas Project team builds ‘God’s miracle home’

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ished, roof decking was placed, windows and doors were set and other exterior tasks were completed. Roofing began with The Reverend Jamie Lee, a professional carpenter, and a roofing team composed primarily of women leading the way on this very large task. By the end of this twelve-hour day (the team’s longest), and with virtually everyone pitching in on the roof after darkness had fallen, the shingles were 75 percent in place.

**Days Three and Four** saw the completion of the team’s work. Roofing was finished, siding was installed, all doors and windows were trimmed out, soffit and fascia trim was completed and a front porch was added.

Much work was put into

clean-up of the site, inside and out, as the mission drew to a close. The house exterior was essentially 100 percent complete upon departure.

With many prayers from friends, families, churches and the Project Team, the goal WAS completed in three and one-half days! The Adams family couldn’t thank team members enough.

As the Christmas Project Team prepared to leave, those who felt like “The Littlest Angel” in the beginning discovered that even they had talents they didn’t recognize. They, too, had been able to contribute greatly to the building of God’s “miracle home.”

Even He had left a gift for the Adams family and their new home. Mrs. Adams found her large family Bible unharmed by

Katrina and the nine feet of water that ruined everything else in their home.

Peggy said, “When I found my Bible, I knew God was watching over us and would take care of us.” The team left their new and grateful friends, and God’s richest blessings warmed their hearts.

Team members included Bob Alexander; Chris Atkinson; Tom Barlow; Cathy and Joe Burkhead; Bill Carr; Lynda Cochrum; Brad Colson; Jim and Sara Cothran; Rob Estes; Jim Greer; Patti and Anne Hancock; Pat Johnson; Betty and Ron Jones; Bobby Knight; Reverend Jamie Lee; Rick and Jenny Leeper; Mary Margaret Luker; David, Jessica, Natalie and Carter Norwood; Wendell Norwood; Carolyn and Ed Rickman; Kem and Jessica Riddle;



The team worked 12 hours on Day Two.

Cyndi, Mark, and Ben Stephens; Reverend Tricia and Tanner Trull; Lynn and Wayne Workman; and Lela Yahr.

Churches represented were Benton First United Methodist, Benton First Baptist, Brooks Chapel United Methodist, Faith Center of Paducah, Gospel Mission, Hardin United Methodist,

Olive United Methodist, Mt. Carmel United Methodist, Reidland United Methodist and Symsonia United Methodist Church.

Along with Mobile Volunteer, Inc. grant money, other donations were given by the area’s local churches, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), and many individuals. •