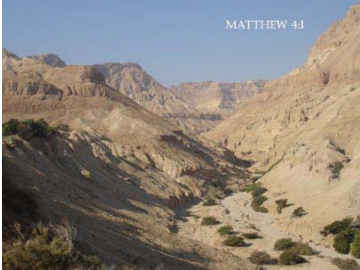


THEN JESUS WAS LED UP BY THE SPIRIT INTO THE WILDERNESS...

MATTHEW 4:1



Update, the E version

February 2008

Volume 2, Number 2

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Links

<http://www.ucc.org>
This is the home page for the United Church of Christ

<http://www.stillspeaking.com>
This is the site for God Is Still Speaking

<http://www.cacucc.org>
This is the site for the Central Atlantic Conference

NJA Website:

<http://www.njassociation.org>

What's Up -

The January Association Meeting was attended by 77 people who ate bagels and worshipped and talked in large, small groups about their church's experience and questions with the Open and Affirming process. **NJA Moderator Heather Cherrey** shared the resolution at the beginning of the meeting (it's on the web site and every church has received a copy) and **Greg Rupright**, pastor of the Rutherford congregation opened the discussion and led worship.

NEXT STEPS include making resources available for your congregation to talk about the resolution and/or the ONA process. Some folks from our churches have volunteered to visit your church and tell their stories. **NO TIME LINE HAS BEEN SET FOR A VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION.** It cannot happen before the 2009 Annual Meeting at the earliest. Now is the time for conversation.

Thanks to all who came and shared. And thanks to **Rutherford** for their warm hospitality.

CONGRATULATIONS! On December 14, 2007, The National Coalition for Burned Churches showed their appreciation for the work of volunteer team leaders and teams who have given a decade of service to rebuilding southern black churches. **The Rev. Jim Leamon** was one of those honored at The Gala "Grateful Awards" Banquet at the Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. The President and Executive Director, Rev. Terrance Mackey, said this, "They come, they pay their own way, bring other people with them and they work. To serve the way they serve, to give the way they give, to love the way they love, and to inspire hope the way they inspire hope makes presenting these awards a privilege. They have stayed the course remaining committed to this cause and for that we are eternally grateful."

We thank you Jim.

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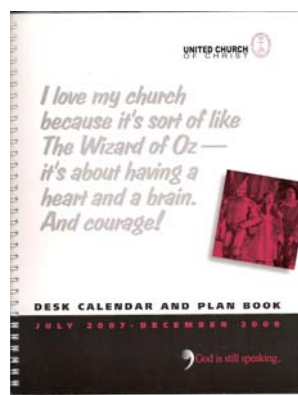
What's New(s)?

"I sometimes wonder if the Internet and Technology isn't the savior of American Religion"
Scott Thumma

Don't miss the **New Jersey Association Annual Meeting on April 19, 2008** with Scott Thumma from the Hartford Institute for Religion Research as our guest speaker on "The Church and The Internet." And now, more from Scott: "The current religious forms are clearly not appealing to an increasingly larger group of Americans - the form, practices, reality of 'traditional' church just doesn't cut it. But introduce a projection screen, web sites, pod casts, CD ministry, electric guitars, an email newsletter and the church grows. Why? I think the data ...is clear that it is a different attitude, a contemporary, relevant way of doing church that says, 'this is not church like your grandparents did it.' This has something to say about life today. But it is also more than that. These technologies resonate with the lives of 80% of people- and 100% of young people. They also enhance the things that congregations do-they make the work get done easier and worship is much more lively and interesting. And most of all they can allow even small churches to give the consumers of faith in their congregations a bit more flexibility in how they craft their individual religious experience."

Look for additional information in the next **E Update**, and on the web site - www.njassociation.org

Dates to Remember:



2008

April 19th - NJA Annual Meeting **NEW DATE**

May 16th – 17th Boundary Training for C&M Commission members

June 13th – 15th CAC Annual Meeting (NJ is the host Association)

July 24th – 28th National Youth Event