

*An Invitation to Join*  
**COMPANIONS**  
*in Christ*

*After completing Companions in Christ, I was so filled with joy that I had to write to you about joining the next session offered by Epworth. Please don't be scared by the commitment. It's the best thing you'll ever do for yourself and for your relationship with God. I thought it was a Bible study...it's not. It's a way to realize your own spiritual journey throughout your life. And then, you learn new ways to pray and to listen to God's call for you.*

*We did look at scriptures and learn new ways of studying them, but the best part for me was applying scripture to my life and to today's world. In the last month or so we discussed spiritual guidance and how this leads to what you'll do next for yourself, for your church, and for God.*

*Please consider joining the next Companions in Christ group. I promise you won't regret it and that you'll probably praise God for calling you to it and to Him.*

*Paula MacNeal*

**Companions in Christ** is small group exploration into faith practices including worship, scripture reading, prayer, discernment, and more. Short daily readings and devotional exercises prepare you for each weekly gathering. If you're looking for a way to connect with others on a Christian journey, to be closer with God, to explore questions of faith in a safe confidential place, to laugh and learn and grow, this is for you! Groups meet for 28 weeks from mid-Oct to early May. Schedule will be determined by participants' schedules...daytime and evening groups expected.

Contact Rev. Erica Robinson-Johnson  
at 508-752-2376 or [pastor@epworthworchester.org](mailto:pastor@epworthworchester.org)  
to learn more.

**Information Meeting**  
**Sunday, Sept. 25, 11:30 a.m.**

**A Heart of Prayer:  
Turning Our Hearts and Minds  
Toward God in All Things**

*Four Wednesday evenings, 7:00 – 9:00, focused on  
praying throughout our lives and days:*

- \*October 19: "Praying With and For Creation"
- \*October 26 "Praying in Times of Difficulty"
- \*November 2 "Praying for Peace and Pursuing It"
- \*November 9 "Not Monks But Praying Always Anyway"

United Congregational Church, 6 Institute Rd.,  
Worcester; \$15/session



**Mass Remembers—Voices of Hope**

Communities of faith across the interfaith spectrum, along with the wider community are invited to participate in *Mass Remembers—Voices of Hope*, a commemorative event honoring those who lost their lives, sacrificed and responded to the tragedy of September 11, 2001. This fall will mark the tenth anniversary of this devastating tragedy in our nation's history. Professional, religious, community and children's choruses from across the Commonwealth will join together in song on

**Sunday, September 11, 2011 at 2 p.m. at  
Institute Park, off Salisbury Street,  
Worcester, Massachusetts**

to mark this solemn occasion. Through the solace and transformation of music sung collectively, we will demonstrate the power of community and renew our dedication to a nation that is committed to freedom and justice for all.

Epworth will be one of several churches opening our sanctuaries that afternoon for anyone who wishes to enter for prayer and reflection.

**9/11 Snack Shack**

Epworth will set up a Snack Shack on our lawn before/during/after the event in Institute Park Sept. 11. You can donate items (bottled water, canned soda, individual snacks, and baked goods) and help staff the concession stand that day. Sign up at the church or call the church office. Thank you!

**Additional Ways to Remember,  
Reflect, and Encourage Hope**  
**All Saints Church 10 Irving St., Worcester**

**Swords into Plowshares: The Transformative  
Power of Reconciliation**

*Co-sponsored by the Kairos Center and All Saints Church to commemorate the 10th anniversary of September 11, 2001. This three part series invites us to hear stories of transformation by people who have experienced great violence in their lives, and yet chose to respond not with more hate and violence, but with forgiveness.*

\***Friday September 9, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. "Beyond Belief"** a film by Beth Murphy about 9.11 widows who responded to their loss by developing bonds with Afghan widows

\***Tuesday September 13, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. "Beyond Retribution"** a film about those who lost family members as a result of 9.11, the Oklahoma City bombing and the war in Iraq.

\***Thursday September 15, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. "Becoming Agents of Reconciliation"**  
Noelle Dattilo leads this evening's program on conflict, reconciliation and transformation.

**Calling all Men...**  
**It's our turn to host the**  
**Welcome Back Brunch, Sept. 18**

Let us know if we can count on you for:

Set Up Saturday, September 17, 4:00 p.m.  
Serve Sunday, September 18, 11:30 p.m.  
Clean Up Sunday, September 18, 1:30 p.m.

Donate: Casserole, Fresh fruit/salad, Breakfast rolls/bread (coffee buns, banana bread, etc), Juice, Milk.

RSVP to:

Darel Nowers Darel06@verizon.net 508-892-4092  
Dick Johnson DickJohn47@aol.com 508-829-5129

**Central MA District Announces Fall**  
**2011 Lay Speaking Course**

These courses are excellent leadership courses for all church members, not only those who want to learn to "preach" or "speak". Talk to Mike Fisher about these great opportunities coming soon.

Each course will meet on three consecutive Saturdays – **September 17, 24 and October 1** - at 1:00 to 6:00 PM. Centenary United Methodist Church, 15 Sanford Street, Attleboro, MA 02703

**Registration Fee: \$35.00**

**Registration Deadline: September 7, 2011**

Description of Courses

**Lay Speaking Ministries Basic Course**

The Lay Speaking Ministries Basic Course focuses on the many ways lay speakers are called to be in ministry. Completion of the Basic Course is required for Lay Speaker certification.

**Lay Speakers Lead Prayer – Advanced Course**

This advanced course will help lay speakers and others lead in prayer ministry, an important resource for healing and wholeness in the congregation and elsewhere. It is used in conjunction with "Dimensions of Prayer" by Douglas Steele.

**Lay Speakers Tell Stories - Advanced Course**

Lay speakers will learn what makes a good story, discover their own style as a storyteller, study the techniques of effective storytelling, and practice creating stories from their own experience. Text: Dancing With Words by Ray Buckley.

**Registration forms available in the church office**  
**OR go to <http://www.neumc.org/pages/detail/34>**

**God's Secretaries:**  
**The Making of the King James Bible**

*The 2011 Harrell F. Beck Lectures*  
*Celebrating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the KJV*  
*With Adam Nicolson*

Monday, October 24, 7:00 p.m.  
First Baptist Church, Worcester, MA  
Free and open to the public  
Sponsored by the Massachusetts Bible Society

**Welcome our New**  
**District Superintendent**  
**Rev. Rene Perez**



Our new District Superintendent began his ministry here July 1, moving from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. From 1993 to 2000, Rev. Perez grew a congregation, Anglo and Latino, in a very challenging neighborhood in Philadelphia. From 2000-2008 he was Director of the Conference Office responsible for congregational development and new church starts – working with all congregations in matters of health, growth, vision, mission and strategic planning. During this time, he also worked as a consultant with the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries, with the General Board of Discipleship and the General Board of Global Ministries. He is a consultant in the Natural Church Development process and has worked with other Conferences, including Kansas West, Baltimore-Washington, Northern NY, and Wisconsin.

Rev. Perez most recently served as senior pastor of the Lititz (PA) United Methodist Church with an average attendance of 450-500. This creative congregation is currently engaged in a church development process with Bill Easum, a noted leader in this field, and is deeply committed to spiritual vitality and mission.

Rev. Perez is married to The Rev. Wanda Santos-Perez and they have three children. He is a graduate of Temple University and Drew Theological School, and has been a delegate to General Conference.

We welcomed the Perez family to worship at Epworth August 7, and hope to see them again as they seek a church home for their family. Thank you to Debbie McMillen and Dick Johnson, who serve on the District Parsonage committee and helped to prepare the home for the Perez family.

**Save the date:** installation service for Rev. Perez  
Sunday, October 23, 4:00 p.m. (location TBD).

*September brings...*

## **Welcome Back Brunch Sunday, September 18**

The Men will host this year's "Welcome Back Brunch," the traditional kick-off to our program year. Worship returns to the sanctuary, choir is singing again, and the kids are back in Sunday School. After worship, we'll join in a scrumptious homemade brunch. Don't miss the chance to catch up on your summer adventures and gather with your Epworth friends.

## **Sunday School Returns in September!**

**Registration:** forms available at the church OR online [www.epworthworcester.org](http://www.epworthworcester.org)

**Registration event:** Sunday, Sept. 11

**Classes Begin:** for pre-k through middle school September 18, 10:00 a.m. (begin in worship, then head to classrooms after children's message).

## **Vision Team Invites the Congregation to Dream With Us Congregational Retreat Saturday September 17, 9-5**

The Vision Team has been meeting all year to focus on Epworth's future. We have celebrated our past, engaged the congregation and community to learn and understand the areas of greatest need, and studied trends and challenges ahead. Now, we invite you to join us as we continue to discern where God is calling us and form a strategic plan for our mission and ministry. Members of all ages are encouraged to participate, as well as those brand new to Epworth—anyone who wants to help fashion and focus new directions for the church in the midst of changing times. Your ideas, hopes, dreams, and creativity are needed as we join together with God to chart our course. To register for the retreat, call 508-752-2376, email [office@epworthworcester.org](mailto:office@epworthworcester.org) or sign up at the church.

## **Coming Soon!**

Spaghetti Supper Sept 10  
Worship returns to sanctuary Sept 11  
9/11 Remembrance and Fundraiser Sept 11  
Congregational Retreat Sept 17  
Welcome Back Brunch Sept 18

## **Church Directory Update**

Our church directory is online and available for download anytime. Go to <http://directory.instantchurchdirectory.com/73892973/churchdirectory.pdf> and enter the password: "EUMCdirectory" (case sensitive). Please contact the church office for missing info and/or corrections. We are in need of several photos, which you can send to the church (digital photos only) by emailing [office@epworthworcester.org](mailto:office@epworthworcester.org), or let us take your photo on Sunday before/after worship in September. If you do not have access to the internet, you can request a paper copy of the directory at the church office.

## **Interested in Joining the Church?**

New members will be received Sunday, October 9, during worship at 10:00 a.m. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a member of Epworth Church, please contact Pastor Erica at 508-752-2376 or email [pastor@epworthworcester.org](mailto:pastor@epworthworcester.org).

## **Beautiful new bread basket given for communion**

Our communion steward, Vicky Copp, commissioned a local Paxton artist, Carol Morin, to craft a bread basket for our use at communion. The basket is beautifully made, has a liner and a divider to allow us to separate the gluten-free bread option from the bread, and eases in serving everyone. Thank you, Vicky, for your generous gift!

## **VASA donates to Sharing the Grace Fund**

Thank you to the members of the VASA Order of America, local lodge of the Swedish-American Fraternal Organization, for their generous donation of \$750 to our Sharing the Grace capital improvements fund. The lodge has been a part of the Worcester Community for 83 years, and has met in the Epworth building for monthly meetings for a very long time. Several Epworth members are also members of the lodge.

## **Save the dates:**

World Communion Sunday Oct 2  
Baptism and reception of new members Oct 9  
Cultural Potluck Oct 16  
Fall Fair Nov 5  
Clothing Sale Nov 19  
Charge Conference November 27 (PM)