



ShalomNexus E-Letter

Fall 2008

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*“Seek the shalom of the city where I have sent you,
for in its shalom, you will find your shalom.”*
Jeremiah 29:7

Interfaith Coalition Promotes Peace in Newark

Special points of interest:

- Shalom zones were first created in 1992 following the Los Angeles riots.
- Next National Summit: October 29-31, 2009, Columbia, South Carolina
- Join Shalom’s social networking site: www.shalomnexus.org
- Support Shalom—Give to Advance #742566 www.advancinghope.org



Above: Interfaith Prayer Service in Bradley Court. [Click here to read full article by David H. Kerr.](#)

Left: Children of Bradley Court.

The Newark Interfaith Coalition for Hope and Peace focuses its work with member organizations on engaging gang culture and reducing gang violence in downtown Newark.

Imam Deen Sharif, Rabbi Matthew Gerwitz, Rev. Reginald Osbourne, Rev. Tanya Bennett, Dr. Michael Christensen and other members of the Newark Interfaith Coalition joined other religious leaders for an interfaith prayer service and resource fair at Bradley Court Public Housing this summer. [Click here to read full article by Mike Oliver.](#)

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Left: Launch event with Muslim, Jewish and Christian religious leaders at Symphony Hall, downtown Newark.

Shalom Initiative Expands

A total of **78 shalom sites** migrated from the General Board of Global Ministries to Drew University on January 1, 2008—when the Shalom initiative found a new home at Drew. See ‘Shalom Comes to Drew’ article at:

www.communitiesofshalom.org

By July 1, 14 new sites had been started, registered or reactivated for a total of **92 shalom sites** in the USA and Africa. They are now being coordinated and equipped by the Shalom Resource Center at Drew.

In 2009, Dr. Christensen and

other representatives from the national office plan to visit and certify as many sites as possible in the 25+ Annual Conferences and regions where Communities of Shalom are active.

Jessie Ball duPont Grant Supports Eight Summer Interns

Eight Drew students, supported by a duPont grant for prophetic leadership, completed their 8-10 week

summer internships at shalom sites across the country, and made presentations to the Drew community about their assignments after a shalom chapel in September. Most registered for 6 academic credits and/or to fulfill their supervised ministry requirement. Two summer interns, now ministers of shalom, Annie Allen and Michael

Oliver, are serving this year as National Site Coordinators in the Shalom Resource Center. The individual interns and their shalom ministry assignments are listed as follows: **Annie Allen** facilitated racial reconciliation in Richmond, VA. **Chad Boling** did community planning and job development work with youth in



Camden, NJ. **Margi Ault-Duell** laid the groundwork for an organic farmers market in Scranton, PA. **Carla**

Gunning provided social services for women in transition in Wilkes-Barre, PA. **Michael Oliver** engaged gang culture to reduce gang violence in Newark. **Rebecca Parsons** protected and empowered children at Agape Center in Horntown, VA. **Brian Schlemmer** did grassroots community organizing in Phoenix around immigration issues. **Christian Ciobanu**

encouraged and strengthened shalom work in Zimbabwe and Ghana.

To apply for a summer intern for your Shalom site contact shalom@drew.edu.

“One of my proudest accomplishments was opening a deaf Shalom Zone in Baltimore.”
Bishop Peggy Johnson

Bishop From Shalom Zone Elected

Rev. Peggy Johnson, formerly pastor of Baltimore’s Christ UMC of the Deaf and author of *Deaf Ministry: Make a Joyful Silence*, was elected this summer to the episcopacy and assigned as Bishop of the Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware conferences. <http://bwcumc.org/content/peggy-johnson-elected-bishop>

In a recent interview, she cited the “Deaf Shalom Zone” in Baltimore as her proudest accomplishment. “In 2000 we opened the Deaf Shalom Zone to all the deaf community in Baltimore. For that I credit Bishop Felton May, who led the conference at that time. We started case management for deaf people dealing with AIDS and HIV, drug addictions and offered parenting classes for people at risk of losing their kids.

We just saw a huge growth of people at the church because they were getting their needs met. That touched my heart. That’s what the gospel is all about: people experiencing Christ through the unconditional love of God.”
Read the full interview with Bill Fentum in the UM Reporter: <http://www.umportal.org/article.asp?id=3978>



Bishop John Schol announcing, using sign language, the election of Peggy Johnson as Bishop.

Shalom On the Loose @ General Conference in Fort Worth

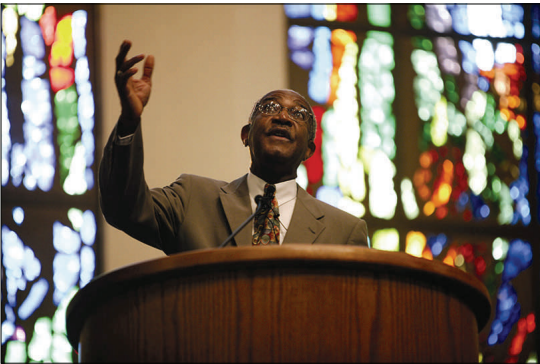


Shalom intern Brian Schlemmer calls attention to the need for social justice outside the convention center in Fort Worth.

The Shalom Initiative enjoyed high visibility at the General Conference of The United Methodist Church in Fort Worth in April 2008—at an anniversary reception for Shalom, in the “Progress Toward Inclusiveness” display, at an exhibit booth, and on the floor of the convention where several thousand delegates gathered.

Mark Miller and the Drew choir led in worship, and a class of 18 students led by Professor Heather Elkins lobbied for social justice outside the Conference doors. Organic, fair trade, “Delicious Peace Coffee” from a multi-faith collective in Uganda was served and sample packs given to Conference delegates as a way to promote the Shalom Initiative.

Prophetic Leaders Featured at Drew@Ocean Grove Event



Dr. James Forbes' prophetic witness for Shalom.

"Prophetic Leadership in Congregation and Community" was this year's theme at the Drew@Ocean Grove event, and served to complement the Shalom initiative.

The 5-day Doctor of Ministry course and continuing education offering featured presentations by

Dr. James Forbes (Riverside), Dean Maxine Beach (Drew), Bishop John Schol (Washington DC), Dr. Karen Oliveto (Glide Church, San Francisco) and musician Ken Medema.

A total of 75 registrants, including National Shalom Committee members, participated in the event on the Jersey Shore. Shalom workshops by Dean Maxine Beach, Dr. Michael Christensen and Rev. Paul Moore were on community organizing, community development and *Intentional Resource*

Multiplication (how to fund your community vision).

Rev. Dr. Gary Simpson (professor of preaching at Drew), led a daily Bible Study series on the Old Testament prophets of shalom; and Bishop John Schol offered a seminar on "*Seeking Shalom in the Center of Your Universe.*" All sessions were taped and are available on CD's from the Shalom Resource Center at Drew.

Not all reviews of the prophetic leadership training event were positive. The conservative advocacy group known as the Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD) criticized Drew and Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association for sponsoring the Shalom conference on social justice ministries. For a different slant on the story, view IRD's news article at [http://www.theird.org/NET COMMUNITY/Page.aspx pid=745&srcid=745](http://www.theird.org/NET_COMMUNITY/Page.aspx pid=745&srcid=745)

Songs of Shalom



Over 200 people enjoyed the music, dance and storytelling of Ken Medema's benefit concert for Shalom as he led the audience in a profound and prophetic understanding of shalom and umbutu (community wholeness) for the people of God.

"Shalom teams engage the people to build community, weave unity and transform the world one community at a time."

Shalom Presentation at Bacone College

"Social Conflict and Communities of Shalom" was the title of Dr. Michael Christensen's featured presentation at the Presidential Leadership Summit on Conflict Resolution at Bacone College on October 1, 2008.

Dr. Christensen's lecture was preceded by a multicultural worship service featuring Black gospel, Christian rap, contemporary gospel, and traditional music and dance from members of the "five civilized tribes" in Oklahoma.

According to Bacone President Dr. Robert Duncan, Jr., the presenta-

tion received enthusiastic response from students, faculty and friends in attendance, and sparked some interest in starting a new shalom zone.

Bacone College, located in Muskogee, Oklahoma, is a predominantly Native American liberal arts college of the American Baptist Church.



Traditional native American dance at Presidential Leadership Summit, Bacone College

Benefit Concert for Gallatin Shalom Zone



PHIL WICKHAM AND FEE UNIVERSITY TOUR came to First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, TN on October 16 to benefit the Gallatin Shalom Zone—one of the largest Shalom sites in the US.

Gallatin Shalom Zone provides services to help disadvantaged residents of Gallatin's Clearview community grow beyond their current circumstances. A densely populated inner-city neighborhood, Clearview residents face challenges of poverty, crime, and inadequate education.

Gallatin Shalom Zone has set a goal of \$3.5 million to establish the Union High Resource Center, which will provide opportunities to build the physical, educational, and economic health of the community. Learn more by visiting the Gallatin Shalom Zone at www.gallatinshalomzone.org

National Shalom Committee Meets In Ocean Grove, NJ

Drew faculty members—Tanya Bennett, Chris Boesel and Morris Davis—joined the National Shalom Committee which met in July in Ocean Grove, NJ.

The National Shalom Committee, chaired by Bishop John Schol with Dean Maxine Beach, is comprised of representatives from the General Board of Global Ministries, Drew University, and other national partners, annual conferences and shalom sites. It is tasked with developing a five-year Plan for the communication and expansion of the Shalom initiative. The Committee adopted three general priorities for the coming years:

1. **Greening** shalom, as we become more proactive around ecological implications of community development work;

2. **Interfaithing** of shalom beyond Methodism;

3. **Internationalizing** of shalom, as we strengthen what shalom zones are doing in Ghana and Zimbabwe, and expand into Malawi, Northern Ireland, South Korea, and other places in the world that have requested shalom training.



The National Shalom Committee's next meeting is scheduled for January 2009, in Madison, NJ.

The word
Shalom has
many threads
of meaning,
including: health,
healing, harmony,
welfare,
wholeness and
well being.

Spreading Shalom in Your Community

Here are some ideas for spreading shalom where you live:

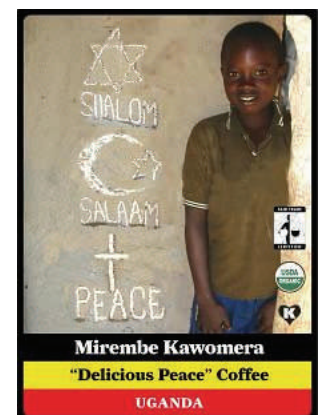
Consider **promoting Shalom** in your area through **Shalom Coffee** which sells for \$11 and goes to support an interfaith, fair-trade coffee collective in Uganda. Order directly through the Shalom Resource Center at Drew: shalom@drew.edu.

We also have a limited supply of Shalom **newsletters, brochures, pens and buttons**. Just email us how many to send to you and

where @ shalom@drew.edu

Our new Communities of **Shalom Logo and Shalom Dove** are available for use in registered shalom sites. For high resolution downloadable versions, go to www.shalomnexus.org

We'd love to hear stories of how you're spreading shalom in your community. **Send us ideas or share your stories** by writing us at shalom@drew.edu.



Shalom coffee: "Not Just a Cup, but a Just Cup"

Shalom Training Updates

Twenty-two shalom team members representing three new sites in **Western North Carolina**, completed 30 hours of Shalom Training in Asset-based Community Development. They were commissioned for shalom work on **October 4, 2008**, by Mr. Will Dent, National Trainer and Senior Program Associate, and Annie Allen, National Coordinator of shalom sites representing the national shalom office.

Thirty-eight shalom team members representing five new sites in **Baltimore** will

“Equipping for Shalom” training for Conference Shalom Coordinators is fully subscribed. Twenty-five representatives from 25 Annual Conferences where Shalom is active will convene in Memphis Nov 13-15, 2008 for a two-day training and networking event to equip leaders who have the responsibility of starting and supporting shalom sites in their conference or region. Hosted by Dr. Gary Gunderson, Senior Vice President of Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare, and Michael Christensen, National Director of Communities of Shalom, the training event is co-sponsored by Methodist Healthcare and Drew University.

complete their six month training program and be commissioned on **October 25, 2008** by Bishop John Schol, Dr. Michael Christensen, and Rev. J-P Duncan, National Trainer and Program Associate.

Simultaneous sessions of Shalom training began on the **Rosebud and Spirit Nation** reservations in **Sioux Falls, North Dakota**, and Fargo, South Dakota, in **September 2008**. National Shalom trainers, J-P Duncan and Pinckney Love report what a tremendous learning

“Engaging in Shalom” was the title of Bishop Felton May’s keynote presentation at the Tipple-Vosburgh Lecture series on Civic Engagement at Drew on October 14-16, 2008. Bishop May was the organizing Bishop of the Shalom Initiative in 1992. While discussing the historic roots of Shalom, he spoke prophetically about the radical spirit of Shalom work in overcoming systemic racism, poverty, addiction and other social ills. Dr. Michael Christensen, National Director, and J-P Duncan, National Program Associate and Trainer, offered two workshops on “Organizing a Community of Shalom” at the annual event.

opportunity is ours as we adapt traditional shalom training to a new social and cultural context. The four sites in the Dakota Conference represent the first Native American Communities of Shalom in the movement.

Richmond Shalom sites will begin a new training program on **October 18**, led by Will Dent, National Trainer, and Dave Cooper, Regional Trainer for Communities of Shalom in Virginia.



Bishop Felton May speaks at Drew University

To order a DVD of Bishop May’s presentation email us at shalom@drew.edu.

For other upcoming Shalom training opportunities, [click here](#).

To date, over 380 Shalom sites have received training in the United States, West Africa, and Zimbabwe.



Congregations and Communities working together to create economically and ecologically sustainable communities of good will in which all God's people experience shalom in all its fullness.



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www.communitiesofshalom.org



Support Shalom by giving to [The ADVANCE](http://www.theadvance.org)
#742566 through The General Board of
Global Ministries, United Methodist Church
at www.advancinghope.org

Communities of Shalom is a grass-roots, faith-inspired, community development network in the USA and Africa.

- Initiated by the General Conference of the United Methodist Church in Los Angeles in 1992, which quickly spread to other shalom zones.
- Supporting local congregations and community groups as they work together with all faith traditions and community organizations to create economically and ecologically sustainable communities in which all God's people experience shalom.
- Coordinated and equipped by Drew University Theological School in partnership with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church.

A “**shalom zone**” can be geographically defined four square city blocks or a rural community of many households where shalom work is active.

Save the Date for “Stepping Up to Shalom” National Summit

The next National Shalom Summit will be held **October 29-31, 2009**. “**Stepping up to Shalom**” will be the theme of the 2009 National Summit in **Columbia, South Carolina**.

Historically offered every two years, Columbia was chosen by the planning committee because of its unique rural shalom sites and their prophetic witness to racial reconciliation and community development.

The South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church sponsors and supports over 30 individual shalom sites in the State, and was the first Annual Conference to adopt and adapt the shalom concept to the rural context—expanding the urban *ShalomZone* initiative to an urban and rural movement of *Communities of Shalom*.

“**What’s ahead for Shalom@Drew?**” See feature article in Drew *TheoSpirit* (Summer 2008) http://communitiesofshalom.org/Theo_Spirit_11-13.pdf

Transform a community, transform the world