

'A Peace-Maker Walks Among Us!' Macedonian Leader Is Our Example

By REVEREND ED CARLL

September 18th will long be remembered as the date Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski received the 2002 World Methodist Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway. It will also be a "memory of a lifetime" of attendees from the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church!

World Methodist Council Executive Committee member, Reverend Henry Leono, and Pastor of our South Plainfield church (the Wesley United Methodist Church), was present; former New Jersey Area Bishop Neal Irons was present; Bishop Ernest Light, former resident of Westfield, elected to office out of New Jersey, was present and, by special invitation of Dr. George Freeman, General Secretary of the World Methodist Council, the Reverend Tom Trainor and myself were present, with our spouses, Joyce and Gabriele.

The air was filled with excitement and a sense that something extraordinary was to happen in the life of the people called Methodist, as they had gathered from the four corners of the globe to celebrate the presentation of the World Methodist Peace Prize. We had also gathered to celebrate the life and work of a brother in Christ, lay preacher and member of an Administrative Council in his small congregation in Macedonia: President Boris Trajkovski.

As the prelude and procession began, Presidential bodyguards kept a watchful eye and maintained radio contact inside the beautiful Trefoldighet Lutheran Church in Oslo. Though the President has had six or more attempts on his life in the past year, when he entered the crowded sanctuary in procession with members of the World Methodist Council, and visiting dignitaries from Norway, the air was filled with elation and celebration.

The evening's celebration was jubilant and festive, full of spiritually-charged music by the Norwegian Youth Choir, and a congregation that was ecstatic. A peace-maker walked among us!

With a humility and shyness that betrayed his imposing stature, he entered and we sang a hymn of praise: "This is my song, O God of all the nations; a song of peace for lands afar and mine. This is my home, the country where my heart is; here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine; but other hearts in other lands are beating with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine."

He spoke of the tremendous spiritual struggle that he has been through while making difficult political and military decisions. He witnessed to the all-embracing love of Jesus in his life and the gratitude in his heart for those of us around the world who have held him in our prayers. He held hands with his wife as they entered, with a heart full of gratitude, which radiated as beaming joy on his face.

As he addressed the people called Methodist, he assured us that he and his wife would stay to address the plenary the next day. With deep gratitude, he introduced his pastor and

spouse from Macedonia, thanking them personally for their spiritual partnership and support.

Following the presentation, a local Methodist Scout Band led a procession through the streets of Oslo back to the Methodist Central Kirke for a reception...and it was there that the President met and spoke with Reverend Trainor and myself. With all the glee of a 12-year-old who had just won the Little League pennant, he basked in the afterglow of one of the most important presentations in his life.

In his address the next morning, Trajkovski spoke simply and powerfully of the peace that he had first received from Jesus Christ, and of his country, where, in the midst of wars and the political strife of generations, he carries his peace-making convictions into the political arena.

He spoke with intensity about his role in bringing warring factions together to make for the ways that lead to peace among his people. Despite sharing a faith in Jesus Christ with fellow United Methodists, misunderstood by the majority, the President remains convinced that it is his personal saving knowledge of Christ that has kept him strong and balanced. He beamed at the thoughts that his fellow United Methodists would honor him in such a way.

Having been surprised with the invitation from the World Methodist Council only 10 weeks before the meeting, Reverend Trainor and I made hasty plans to attend the Peace Prize presentation only weeks before...But the payoff was better than anticipated. For my wife and I, in the midst of packing and moving to a new appointment to serve the First United Methodist Church of Westfield, not only did we have the blessing of the folks in our former parish in Tuckerton, but we also sought and received a "commissioning" from the Westfield congregation, who were proud to have their new Senior Pastor participate in a global gathering of Methodists...

As our own President leads our nation into another war, it was a refreshing break to celebrate the peace which faith and action can produce. A peace-maker walked among us - Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski.

Reverend Carll is the Senior Pastor of the First United Methodist Church, located at One East Broad Street in Westfield.

Interfaith Service Set At Temple Emanu-El

WESTFIELD — On Sunday, November 24, members of Westfield's churches and temple will gather for an evening of interfaith worship and Thanksgiving beginning at 4 p.m.

The interfaith service will be held at Temple Emanu-El, located at 756 East Broad Street in Westfield, and will be followed by refreshments.

Clergy from all denominations will lead attendees in prayer and song highlighting the Thanksgiving season.



THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMIN'...The Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield will sponsor a decorated holiday house tour on Saturday, December 7, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a boutique at the Community Players Theater. In preparation for the event, the chairwomen look over the selection of crafts to be sold. They are, pictured left to right: Elaine Welsh, Patty Kreider, Nancy Smith, Janet Gardner and Karen Jolley-Gates. Tickets, for \$25, are available at Baron's Drug Store and Lancaster Ltd, or may be obtained for \$30 at the door.

Annual Book Festival Slated At JCC From Nov. 17-20

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Central New Jersey will hold its Annual Book Festival at the Wilf Jewish Community Campus, located at 1391 Martine Avenue in Scotch Plains.

Ketubah Unit Plans Brunch at Scotty's

COUNTY — The B'nai B'rith Ketubah Married Couples Unit will meet for brunch on Sunday, November 17, at noon at Scotty's, located at 595 Morris Avenue in Springfield.

The cost is \$14.95 per person, plus tax and gratuity per person. Non-members are welcome to attend. Ketubah Unit is open to married, Jewish couples who are 40 and older.

Interested individuals are asked to respond by calling Phyllis at (973) 992-5791, no later than Friday, November 15.

Baptist Church Plans 'Family-Friends Day'

SCOTCH PLAINS — On Sunday, November 17, St. John's Baptist Church, located at 2387 Morse Avenue in Scotch Plains, will hold its annual "Family and Friends Day" as part of the 10 a.m. service.

The person who brings the most family members and friends will be awarded a special plaque. The public is invited to attend. For more information, please call (908) 232-6972.

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Month, the festival is designed to promote reading, writing and publishing of quality Jewish content. It will feature Jewish and *The New York Times* bestseller selections, as well as Jewish-themed gifts.

The festival hours will be Sunday, November 17, from noon to 5 p.m., and Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, November 18, 19 and 20, from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. each day.

On November 17, Dr. Michael Oren will speak at 10:30 a.m. at the JCC about his book, "Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East." The fee is \$5 for members and \$8 for non-members; \$3 for students and senior citizens.

Wrapping up the festival will be a talk by sportswriter Ira Berkow on November 20 at 7:30 p.m. The *New York Times* columnist will discuss "The Minority Quarterback and Other Lives in Sports." The fee is \$5 for members, \$8 for non-members and \$3 for students and seniors.

For more specific information, please call Susan Lemerman at (908) 889-8800, extension no. 205.

All Saints' to Present Annual Yuletide Fair

SCOTCH PLAINS — The All Saints' Episcopal Church, located at 559 Park Avenue in Scotch Plains, will hold its annual Yuletide Fair on Saturday, November 16.

Open to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., the event will feature local dealers of antiques, holiday crafts and decorations.

"We have over 30 vendors showing a broad line of crafts, gifts and holiday decorations for both Thanksgiving and Christmas," said Joe Britt, Chairperson of the fair.

The All Saints' Crafters will show their line of handmade crafts and holiday decorations. A country kitchen will offer lunches and refreshments.

Presbyterian Church USA Names Rev. Forbes as a VP

WESTFIELD — The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church USA has selected William Ross Forbes, Senior Pastor at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield since 1989, to serve as Vice President of Church Relations.

He will succeed the Reverend Paul Stavros, who will retire from the board in December.

Reverend Forbes previously served as Senior Pastor at St. Philip Presbyterian Church in Houston, Tex. and as Associate Pastor at the First Presbyterian Church in Atlanta.

He also served as a staff associate with the General Assembly Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in Atlanta.

He had been a staff associate with the General Assembly Offices of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in New York. Reverend Forbes additionally served as a delegate on the Caribbean and North American Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches from 1990 to 1997.

He started his career as assistant pastor for youth and education in the First Presbyterian Church in Princeton.

He earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina, Kan. and his Master of Divinity Degree from Princeton

Theological Seminary in Princeton.

Reverend Forbes also holds a Doctor of Ministry Degree from the Graduate Theological Foundation in Donaldson, Ind.

He is currently vice moderator in the Presbytery of Elizabeth and has also served as moderator of the Presbytery of New Covenant.

He was moderator for the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and moderator of the special task force of the General Assembly to study PHEWA (Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association) and the Liturgical Year Resource VII.

Reverend Forbes is a member of the Board of Directors of the Westfield Y and has served on the board of trustees of Bloomfield College.

A celebration of his 13-plus years as Head of Staff at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield was held on November 3 in Westminster Hall. During the festivities, Dr. Forbes was presented with gifts from the staff and the congregation for his years of dedicated service to the church.

He and his wife, Patty, are the parents of Kristy Forbes, a pastor in Ballwin, Mo.; Ross Forbes, an attorney in Dallas, and Philip Forbes, a student at Caldwell College. They also have two grandchildren, Will and Lily.



Rev. William R. Forbes

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