

## news briefs:

**Zimbabwe**, continued from page 6

Machinga has also developed a plan to begin a Shalom Zone in Chitoro, a community where he was successful in establishing a clinic with the help of the European Union, the Board of Global Ministries and domestic governmental agencies.

Zimbabwe's economic hard times make expanding church ministries difficult, Machinga says. People have very little to share.

"The message we are giving our people is 'Remember your neighbor,'" he says. "Whatever you have, share with others." ■

► *Snyder is the director of communications for the Baltimore-Washington Conference. Malone, a United Methodist laywoman and Snyder's spouse, is an advocate for affordable housing.*

**who said that?**

"We fought slavery. We fought the diseases of alcoholism and addiction. We fought for the rights of working people and the poor. We build hospitals and colleges and orphanages in every community in America. I call the attitude that motivated us then holy boldness. We need holy boldness today in the fight against global AIDS. I pray that we will be holy enough to care and bold enough to act."

► **Bishop Felton E. May**, *United Methodist bishop for the Baltimore-Washington area, testifying to the House International Task Force on HIV/AIDS.*

**Short docket offers Council wide range of topics**

INDIANAPOLIS (UMNS) – The United Methodist Church's highest judicial body will consider issues related to such diverse topics as annual conference structure and homosexuality when it meets April 24-27. The Judicial Council has approved a request for reconsidering Decision 920, which the court rendered in October on a case involving self-avowed gay ministers in the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference. Bishop Elias Galvan is asking the court to reconsider the part of the decision that orders a bishop to suspend a clergy person who is undergoing an investigation or review through due process. (See full story for other cases, or go to the Judicial Council's official Web site at [www.umc.org/churchlibrary/judicial/](http://www.umc.org/churchlibrary/judicial/).)

**Church observers work for democracy in Zimbabwe**

HARARE, Zimbabwe (UMNS) – Church leaders from other African nations joined members of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches to form a 100-member politically independent, nonpartisan team of ecumenical observers for Zimbabwe's presidential election. After visiting a dozen polling places from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on March 9 and 10, each of some 20 observers assigned to Harare, Zimbabwe's capital, met nightly in a downtown hotel to report findings and to strategize about how to strengthen democracy in Zimbabwe. The weary church leaders, who had been granted observer status only days before the vote, reported that the election was peaceful but stressful.

**Older adults want to eliminate mandatory retirement**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) – The United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries is requesting that the denomination eliminate mandatory retirement requirements for all lay people and clergy members serving in the church. Meeting March 8-9, the committee noted a contradiction between the 2000 *Book of Discipline* and 2000 *Book of Resolutions*. The *Book of Discipline* sets mandatory retirement at age 70 for lay people elected to staff positions at churchwide agencies and clergy members in full connection. However, Resolution 144 calls for the elimination of mandatory retirement based solely on age at all levels of the church. The committee wants the 2004 General Conference to implement the resolution.

**Lay leaders celebrate church's global nature**

HONOLULU (UMNS) – The United Methodist Church's lay leaders took a step closer to becoming a more global organization by holding their annual meeting in Hawaii, in hopes of drawing more people from outside the United States. The Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders also provided financial help to enable lay leaders from the central conferences to attend its March 1-3 meeting in Honolulu. Newly elected President Gloria Holt challenged the group to think and act globally. "We must be willing to give up some of our power and positions and must truly be willing to join hands with one another to fulfill the mission of the church."

**Palestinians' plight becomes personal for bishop**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (UMNS) – Late Sunday night, March 10, Bishop Beverly Shamana felt compelled to call the Rev. Mitri Raheb, halfway around the world in Bethlehem. "I just felt I needed to talk to him and find out what was happening," said the bishop, who leads the United Methodist Church's San Francisco Area. She wanted to be sure that the pastor, his family and congregation were safe following the latest violence in the Middle East. Shamana met Raheb while visiting the Middle East with a fact-finding delegation in February. She preached to his congregation at the Christmas Lutheran Church on Feb. 24. "There's just a real commitment to stay involved as a result of my visit," Shamana said.

**Presbyterians train counselors for crematory scandal**

(RNS) A Presbyterian church located just seven miles from the Georgia crematory where 339 corpses were discovered will receive \$10,000 to train counselors to assist families whose loved ones were never cremated.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, a relief arm of the Presbyterian Church (USA), gave the grant to Chickamauga Presbyterian Church, which has sponsored a grief ministry program for five years and helped train volunteers to work in New York after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The crematory scandal has rocked the tiny rural community, said the church's pastor, the Rev. Edward C. Langham.

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# Duke survey finds clergy 'deeply satisfied' with their ministry

by **United Methodist News Service**

**D**espite reports of low morale, most members of the clergy are deeply satisfied with their jobs, according to a new survey from Duke University Divinity School.

Preliminary findings from the National Clergy Survey, which included nearly 900 respondents from more than 80 faith groups, indicate a high level of job satisfaction, with six in 10 clergy reporting that they have "never doubted" their call to the ministry and seven in 10 reporting they have never considered leaving pastoral ministry.

The findings were made available in March to denominational officials. The survey was conducted for Pulpit & Pew: Research on Pastoral Leadership, a project at the divinity school.

United Methodist Bishop Kenneth Carder, a member of the core group behind the Duke study, said he believes the overall findings are representative of United Methodist clergy as well as those of other denominations, and he expressed surprise "at the level of satisfaction" that clergy experience.

"We were encouraged that the overall impression is

that the ministry can be and is a very satisfying vocation for people," noted Carder, who leads the church's Mississippi Area. "By and large, clergy are feeling a sense of support."

The Rev. L. Gregory Jones, a United Methodist pastor who serves as dean of the divinity school, pointed out that there has been a "widespread perception" of problems among the clergy. "What I think is confirmed in this study is despite the stresses and struggles, it is a deeply satisfying calling," he said.

One of the less encouraging survey findings, according to Carder, was that 70 percent of Christian clergy think the "difficulty of reaching people with the Gospel" is a primary problem for pastors.

"That is a challenge to the church," he said. "How do we better equip clergy to share the Gospel in this kind of world?"

The United Methodist Council of Bishops, together with the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools and the Board of Higher Education and Ministry, has initiated a task force to look at the development of a Wesleyan vision for theological education and leadership formation. Carder is chairman of that

task force and Jones is a member. "We are looking at some of the same issues (as the study) in the United Methodist context," Carder explained.

The Duke survey raises the question of why the ordained ministry is drawing more second- and third-career entrants than young people, creating a "graying" of the profession. Clergy in the ministry less than 10 years were, on average, in their late 30s when ordained, while those in the ministry for 30 years or more were mostly ordained in their mid-20s, the survey found.

**Other findings showed that:**

► Two-thirds of clergy reported their congregations had experienced some form of conflict during the past two years, and more than 20 percent said the conflict was significant, sometimes even leading members to leave the congregation.

► Most clergy were positive about their physical and emotional health, but 76 percent were either overweight or obese.

Findings from the survey are expected to be posted at [www.pulpitandpew.duke.edu](http://www.pulpitandpew.duke.edu), the project's Web site.

**Pulpit Research**