

# 125th Anniversary

Special Edition of  
The Healing Hands  
Summer 2008

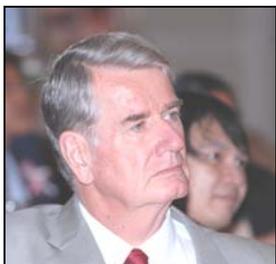
## BROOKLYN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH HOME AND ADULT DAY HEALTHCARE CENTER: 1883–2008



Bishop Jeremiah J. Park



Rev. Richard S. Parker



George Cau

### BUMCH 125th Anniversary Luncheon Held on April 5, 2008

To prevail in a significant mission for 125 years is a grand thing, and a cause for celebration.

The Resident Bishop of the New York Annual Conference (NYAC), Jeremiah Park, joined the employees and friends of BUMCH on a sunny April day at Antun's restaurant in Queens Village to mark this historical event. Although BUMCH no longer belongs to the Methodist church, its mission remains thoroughly Methodist in spirit:

*"The fundamental mission of the Home is to perpetuate the healing ministry of Christ by promoting those values which reinforce reverence for life, dignity of the individual, compassion, and service to others."*

The Bishop claimed the Home as a parish of the NYAC that is providing spiritual and practical care to the children of God who are very close to God's heart in their exceptional dependence and faith-filled vulnerability. He affirmed that the Home's mission is in accord with the mission of Jesus as He described it with Isaiah's words in Luke 4:18-19:

*"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,  
because He has anointed Me  
to preach the good news to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;  
to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

The Rev. Richard Parker, a long-time supporter of BUMCH as District Superintendent and as Board member, related the exciting (harrowing, even) story of BUMCH's transition in 1976 from a Methodist retirement home at 920 Park Place to a non-sectarian skilled nursing facility at 1485 Dumont Avenue in East New York. Present to hear his own distinguished role in this transition acknowledged was George Cau, without whose help at critical moments BUMCH might never have been restored. This story was a vivid reminder that the existence of even the longest-lasting human institutions can hang on a thread without the grace of God and the good-will of God's people.



The event was closed by singing "Lift Every Voice and Sing" in honor of the 40th anniversary on April 4 of the death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The spirited singing was led by Brenda Brown (right), who often lends her beautiful voice and piano at the Home's chapel services. Visible here are some of the organizers and participants in the program (from left): Rev. Gunshik Shim, Don Kirby, Bishop and Mrs. Park, Rev. John H. Cole, Rev. Adrienne Brewington, Ruby L'Heureux, and Rev. N.J. 'Skip' L'Heureux.

**The Healing Hands**

Published periodically by the Brooklyn United Methodist Church Home  
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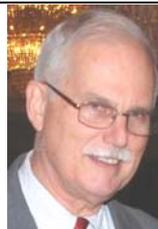
**Administrator's Message**

As we approach summer, it is the perfect time to reflect. In January of this year BUMCH applied for and received a grant administered by Local 1199. The grant provides for caregivers to receive training in Person Centered Care, an initiative gaining interest in the nursing home community. Person Centered Care is primarily concerned with changing from traditional nursing home care to an environment where the emphasis is more consistent with the way the elderly lived their lives in the community. BUMCH staff has already attended the first training session and the results are encouraging. I am optimistic about future training in this initiative and I look forward to future implementation here at BUMCH.

This year in April BUMCH also celebrated its 125th anniversary, and what a joyful celebration it was. For me the anniversary served as an excellent reminder of the essential services we provide at BUMCH for the elderly in our community and of our dedication and commitment to our mission and vision.

Here is to the next 125 years!  
 Thank you for your support, and have a wonderful summer.

Victor Orriola



**From the President**

In May 1883 the Brooklyn Bridge opened, changing forever the nature of what was largely open land and farms as people streamed into the growing independent city which became a borough of NYC in 1898. A year prior, the Rev. Thomas Stephenson, Pastor of what was then the Pacific St. Methodist Church, was called upon to find a Home or Institution for an elderly lady in his church who was in great need. He knew there was no such place. Taking the matter up with some of his parishioners, they asked themselves, "Why can't we have a Home of our own?" Responding with a unanimous "We can!" the Home became a reality. Throughout its 125 years of service the Home has often changed — we no longer serve just Methodists for example — but the original promise of its founders remains true. As stated in the amended Constitution at that first Annual meeting in January 1884, "The object of the Society shall be to provide for *aged and infirm men and women*, a comfortable residence, with board, clothing, religious privileges, medical and other necessary attendance." Thanks to supporters of the Home — Methodist and non-Methodist — and to loyal & caring staff we continue to provide that level of care 125 years after the founding. Happy Birthday BUMCH & thanks...

Rev. John H. Cole



Ms. Utile Alexander was honored for her 30 years of service. "It has been a pleasure to have worked at BUMCH such a long time," she said. "I can review the past years with a proud sense of accomplishment. Co-workers: You inspire me. Keep up the good work!"



**Employee Recognition & Nurses Appreciation Day**

*The experienced employees of BUMCH are among our greatest assets. Sincere congratulations to:*  
 30 years — Utile Alexander — Nursing  
 25 years — Denise Euell — Nursing  
                   Suzie Rosamond — Nursing  
 20 years — Arlene Alessi — Nursing  
                   Cordetta Dyke — Nursing  
                   Judith Pinckney — Dietary  
 15 years — Dawn Green — Nursing  
 10 years — Bose Adeshigbin — Nursing  
                   Annie Caddle — Nursing  
                   Heather Daire — Nursing  
                   Lucy Arnasalam — Nursing  
                   Paul Harriott — Housekeeping  
                   Liznette Polidura — ADHC

Also see our website:  
[www.bumch.org](http://www.bumch.org)

# Adult Day Health Care Celebrates Life



Mr. and Mrs. Reid



In early June, the reaffirmation of wedding vows by registrants Mr. and Mrs. Reid gave their family and the registrants the chance to throw a beautiful party and to participate in everyone's favorite activities: dressing up, dancing, eating, singing, laughing, and praising God and each other.

Several singing tributes were made to the couple, but when Mr. Reid began singing (in his fine baritone voice) "I Bless the Day When I Found You," all of us caught our breath and then began cheering wildly.



Youth & Age meet in play.



Dancing & cooking class: good combo!



Physical & Occupational Therapy prolong the enjoyment of life.



There comes a time when we need each other in new ways, in new communities. That is why Adult Day Health Care at BUMCH is here — to nurture a new phase of life that allows us to keep growing and learning, to find new purpose and enjoyment of life, and discover new ways of sharing.



Voting for the new ADHC Idol — after stiff talent competition.



Weekly Bible Study class, here led by Rev. Perez, affords reflection on the goodness of life and the depth of understanding required to truly appreciate each other. Singing together confirms God's spirit of truth and beauty.



### RESIDENT LIFE . . . & MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Dear Reader,

In the next three pages you will see frames containing small photos of the current BUMCH nursing home residents on all three floors. You may be able to discern the unique individuality of each person and imagine something of each personality, each life.

And here are some stories about some of the things that make a difference: Staff, families, visitors, the residents themselves. Likewise animals, and the trees, plants and sunlight in the patio.

#### RESIDENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Hercules, who is blind, asked his fellow resident, Dinah, to read scriptures for him after dinner. He wanted to change his angry and rough ways. When the pastor encouraged Dinah to invite others into the circle, Hercules at first did not want to share her attention, but soon accepted the change as a good thing. They call it the Quiet Hour, a time for reflection on scripture and on their lives. One of the residents, Joyce, says this time of fellowship gives her a warm and restful feeling before going to bed. Others savor the chance to tell their stories (especially Ray) and engage in stimulating thought.



Dinah, Joyce, Hercules & Ray.

Morris has a quick eye to notice when someone needs assistance in getting around the nursing home in their wheelchairs. Here he's with Salvador, for whom he also provides safekeeping for valuables like dimes for playing Pokeno and his Assist-A-Ride card.



Petra Rosario and her daughter Lucia, with the fabulous 99th-birthday cake Lucia made for her mother, a treat enjoyed by many residents & staff.

#### FAMILIES MAKING A DIFFERENCE

It may not be possible to estimate the effect of a family's loving presence. But witness two of our oldest residents who are attended every day, or almost, by their daughters. Luna reached 102 years this spring, and Petra celebrated her 99th birthday.

The other residents on the floor also benefit from the presence of others' families. The frequent visits of Edelle's and Helen's relatives have created a homey fellowship for any number of residents in the 4th floor day room.

Children and youth are highly prized by everyone when they make a visit, as when 8-year-old Alexis visited her great-grandma Rosalee. And when the youth choir from First United Methodist Church of Anniston, Alabama visited and sang for the residents.





### STAFF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Ms. Alexander, who now works as a physical therapy assistant on the floors (that is, keeping residents walking after they finish their formal physical therapy), celebrated 30 years of service at BUMCH this spring. She said that what she liked best were her years of hands-on work as a CNA (certified nursing assistant). She had opportunities to study for a higher-paid nursing job, but preferred the close contact of giving daily care of washing, clothing, feeding, soothing and encouraging residents.

The CNA's job is not an easy one; it is truly a labor of love, and it's no use trying to do it without love.

If you visit often enough, you will see staff members from every department showing friendship and love for the residents. Maybe not at every moment. Maybe some have favorites. Some pay special attention to those without any family (or without any available family), giving gifts of necessities such as clothing, or small luxuries — wrist-watches, television remotes.

For nearly every staff member, work in the nursing home is more than a job, it's closer to a family relationship.



### ANIMALS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The reputation for the effectiveness of pet therapy is quite warranted. "She's my friend!" exclaims 94-year-old Esadia when Daisy the dog is brought around for a visit and kisses her.



When petting Daisy, gruff Mr. Casey shares stories of dogs he's known. Dorothy, herself without family, cares for the homeless cat in the patio. Catherine, newly adjusting to her limitations, loves to watch the exotic fish swimming as if free in the large tank in the lobby. However, even more important for Catherine has been her capacity for friendship. Now that she has finished her own physical therapy sessions, which she loved, she spends a lot of time encouraging other residents in their therapy.

### YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The staff can never do it all. There is always the bed-ridden resident who needs to be talked to. Residents who need to be hand-fed would benefit from someone who has plenty of time to assist them. Sylvia Valentine from Brooks Memorial UMC sometimes takes Beryl to her church. Mildred Frederick from John Wesley UMC will be accompanying Sylvia on Access-A-Ride to a Catholic church. You might like to take a resident for a walk or to a movie. Or just talk, and listen.





**SPACES MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

In the good weather **THE PATIO**, with its sunshine and plants, is enjoyed by many. It is a place for conversation with friends, visits with family, a moment of solitude, a summer barbeque.



**THE CHAPEL** on the fourth floor is a place for diverse religious services. With the good sound equipment, it's a place to find your voice, express your feelings, hear encouragement from each other, sing and pray to your heart's content.

Thursday chapel services are often dedicated to a resident who has passed away, with memories, songs and prayers offered.

After services you may get a piano lesson from Naoko, or join in a sing-along.



These comfortable couches in the Chapel were brought up from the downstairs lobby when new lobby furniture was acquired.

**THE LOBBY** on the 1st floor is a pleasant lounge for hanging out, watching TV or watching the fish in the huge aquarium.

**THE DAY ROOMS** are for meals, activities, socializing and watching a big-screen TV.

Whereas the chapel on the 4th floor and the smoking room on the 3rd floor take up some space in those day rooms, the 2nd floor day room is the most spacious, so that is where the parties and concerts are held.

The new yoga class is held in the 3rd floor day room, but of course residents from all floor may come.



The Pain Management group meets with psychologist Keith on Mondays in **THE CONFERENCE ROOM**.



**THE RECREATION ROOM**, of course, has many activities — from bible study to Happy Hour, from crafts classes to Breakfast Club, Men's Club and Women's Group. There's also the Wireless Café for use of computers.

Mention should also be made of **THE MAIN DINING ROOM** on the 1st floor, where meals are served more in a restaurant style, with camaraderie from the kitchen staff.



**AUTUMN Brunch@BUMCH Promotes Community Cooperation**

The Commissioner liked what he had heard about the Brunches held at BUMCH, which bring together community organizations around fellowship, good food, and issues of care for seniors. He accepted the invitation of his former colleague, Awilda Rosario, the Director of Adult Day Health Care at BUMCH, to speak at our Brunch last fall. For BUMCH was already doing what he is advocating at the NYC Department for the Aging -- namely, breaking down walls between agencies working for the welfare of the elderly and disabled, in order to ensure better communication and cooperation.

This comprehensive approach is all the more necessary because of a new condition in the world: the numbers of the elderly are increasing and they are living longer. They are a resource society cannot afford to neglect. Their wisdom, skills and experience are needed. Employers are calling back retirees, who in turn are seeking more purpose and meaning in life through paid or volunteer work. The potential for new learning and growth among the elderly is evident when the environment is encouraging.

An essential element for growth is the freedom to make choices. A big ambition of the Department is to provide more living space options for the elderly. An example of a small innovation is to offer frozen Meals on Wheels, so that clients can receive and eat the meals at their own convenience, freeing up their day for other activities.

Nursing home residents especially need programs "that bring them into contact with the community and that address their need to feel useful and valued ... and for social, mental and creative stimulation."



Commissioner Edwin Méndez-Santiago



# The Beloved Community



At the Spring Brunch @ BUMCH another step was taken to create a "livable community," as described by the Commissioner, "where partnerships exist between all the organizational stakeholders in a community, working together to assess the community's needs, plan how to meet them and then integrate and coordinate their efforts," when local community organizers described their work and goals. Represented were: Senior Health Partners, Independence Care System, 75th Precinct, Safe Horizon, Alpha School, Madison York Assisted Living, Institute For Community Living, Warburg Lutheran Home, Partnership for the Homeless, and Pink Senior Center.

**Spring Brunch** with our Assemblyman, Darryl C. Towns (above), held at BUMCH on February 21, was organized by Awilda Rosario (standing, below right), Director of the Adult Day Healthcare Center.



**THE CHURCHES**

of Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island which support BUMCH through donations and volunteers are an essential part of the social and spiritual network needed by the elderly. BUMCH extends its gratitude to:

Miracle Temple Senior Outreach Ministries, La-El Life Changing Ministries, Agape Tabernacle International Fellowship, Ish Machiah Women's Pavilion, Bethel Tabernacle A.M.E. Church, The Church of God of East New York, The Pentecostal Gospel Tabernacle of Christ, Nowaupian Northern Lodge, America Come Back to God Church, True Light Universal Bible Church of God, St. Fortunata RC Church, Euclid Baptist Church, Faith and Love Christian Center, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Brooks Memorial UMC, Everlasting Life Ministries,

and the following United Methodist Churches:  
*in Brooklyn:* Bay Ridge, Bethany, Bushwick Parish, Fenimore Street, Hanson Place, John Wesley, Park Slope, St. Mark's, Union, Vanderveer Park;  
*in Queens:* Brooks Memorial, St. Paul's, Grace, St. Alban's, Jackson Heights, First Jamaica, Ridgewood, Richmond Hill, Trinity;  
*in Staten Island:* Faith;  
*in Long Island:* Elmont, Valley Stream, Amityville, Baldwin, East Hampton, East Northport, Farmingdale, Floral Park, Hempstead, Hicksville, Lynbrook, Merrick, Masepequa, New Hyde Park, Port Jefferson, Sea Cliff, Southold, Westbury, Westhampton.

# Dancing with the Saints

The Annual Awards Dinner Dances are the sole fundraisers at BUMCH and thus are always very special events. They honor persons who support the Home directly, or indirectly through the larger community. They are enjoyable, with fine food, fellowship, music and dancing. Most of all, they are inspiring, bringing together so many good people.

You are warmly invited !



Join the Brooklyn United Methodist Church Home in celebrating 125 years of service to God & the Community at the

## 21st Annual Awards Dinner Dance

Wednesday, November 5, 2008  
Russo's On the Bay, Howard Beach, New York



### EDITOR/ PASTOR'S NOTE

This April at BUMCH one special person left my life, and a few days later another one entered it.

The first was a resident of the nursing home, Haywood. He was one of the first to welcome me when I arrived as pastor eight years ago. He served voluntarily as a deacon for the chapel -- making sure it was ready for services, and afterwards putting it back in order and closing up. He kept after me to update our songbooks -- a job still undone. He greeted the outside church groups who came to lead services, as well as other visitors. He encouraged me to start the evening Pastoral Hour, where residents meet with the pastor and pastoral care volunteers to tell stories and have serious conversations.

When Haywood fell ill a few months ago and felt he had lost his ability to be useful, he seemed to lose the will to live. Several residents and I went to his funeral; one of them, Salvador, still lifts up his name in chapel prayers and has taken over his role of greeting visitors and reminding me of things undone.



Haywood with Bushwick UMC worship leaders.

Haywood showed that, given opportunities, nursing home residents can indeed grow in grace and lead useful lives.

Later in April, as if to fill a void, God sent a volunteer from the other side of the world, Naoko Masui, from Japan.

In this publication and other outreach materials I have taken many opportunities to praise the wonderful volunteers that help improve the quality of life for our residents. Naoko raises my hopes another notch. Leaving her supportive husband for a whole year, she has come to New York purposely to work as a volunteer with the elderly. As a musician and founder of a senior chorus in Japan, she wants especially to bring music to nursing home residents. Taking the A train from upper Manhattan to the Home four times a week, she daily gives us five hours, or more, of full energy, attention, cooperation and initiative, as if working at the highest paying job. The interesting thing is that she is not unique in this. She has told me of others who also go out into the world to do volunteer work -- "giving back," but also receiving so much in new learning.

Naoko and our other valued pastoral care volunteers will help make the transition to a new pastor as I retire at the end of June. This will be the last issue of *The Healing Hands* that I produce. My dual role as the Director of Pastoral Care and Outreach has enabled me to bring closer together the residents I love and the larger communities around us. Through my work at BUMCH I understand better than ever how we are all connected in the web of life, and how this enriches us in ways that only God could have conceived.

Now I look forward to being a volunteer.

Rev. Ieva Zadina



Naoko with resident Ms. Santucci.