

## Acts of Justice: The Mary Randall Center in Elkton, Maryland

By Rev. Amy Yarnall



One of the clauses for our covenant reads “We will speak out to others, especially against racism and prejudice and communicate regularly with our elected representatives on issues of moral concern.” On National Homeless Person’s Memorial Day, God gave me the opportunity to live this out.

December 21, 2007 was one of those special days where God feels powerfully present. There was a rally and march in Elkton, MD focusing upon:

1) homelessness and 2) the Mary Randall Center, a day shelter that the communities of faith are trying to open. We are receiving stiff opposition from the local government.

The Mary Randall Center was purchased by Meeting Ground, a church based non-profit. This happened by the grace of God. It is commercially zoned, centrally located, and was made possible by a large donation in memory of its namesake. The mission is to provide space during the day for people experiencing homelessness or on the brink of becoming homeless, offering Bible study, prayer, life-skills workshops, and many other resources. It would get people off of the streets during the day and open doors to greater wholeness.

About 100 people turned out. I was especially proud to be pastor of this church family, because at least 15 members were there. This included three children, two teenagers, and two people who dedicate their vocational life to this mission by working full time for Meeting Ground. People shared testimony. We walked through Elkton. We broke bread together at the Community Kitchen.

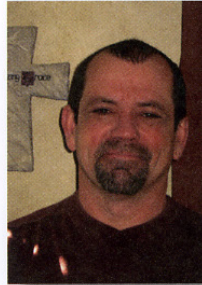
I don’t know what this road ahead will look like, but I am confident of the outcome. God will not let this injustice stand.

As I looked around the circle of closing prayer today, I saw God’s people, from all walks of life and of varying beliefs, gathered in sacred community. Praise God.

*[Amy is pastor at the Chesapeake City UMC in Chesapeake City, MD. She is a clergy member of the Peninsula-Delaware Annual Conference.]*

## The Continuing Journey of a Covenant Disciple

By Marcel Doyon



A couple of years ago I wrote an article for the “Covenant Discipleship Quarterly” describing the enormous impact that my Covenant Discipleship group had on my life. Two years later I feel a need to update its effect on me in hopes of inspiring others to consider joining a group.

It’s now been four years since I accepted an invitation to join a Covenant Discipleship group. What I originally thought was going to be an interesting class became much more. It not only changed my way of thinking about various aspects of Christianity but also my daily routines. Upon reflection I’m quite certain that without it I would have continued to be a member at Grace United Methodist Church. My love for my Christian family here would have assured that. I would still be doing what’s asked of me, and enjoying the Sunday services.

I’m also quite certain of what I would not be doing. I would not be on my second reading of the New Testament and first of the Old Testament. I would not be reading daily devotionals. I would not have read Dietrich Bonhoeffer, C. S. Lewis, Joseph Girzone, J. Oswald Sanders, Rob Weber, Greg Ogden, and William Barclay just to name a few. I would not be enjoying the various perspectives of my fellow disciples; those very insights that expanded my understanding. I would not have developed the strong personal ties to them that accountability brings. And I certainly would not have such a great desire to try and understand so many of the mysteries of the Trinity. Being accountable to them has made me more accountable to myself.

For me my Covenant Discipleship group is at least as important as attending Sunday worship. It drives me to want to better understand Jesus and his teachings and inspires me daily. I can’t begin to stress enough how positive that commitment has been in my daily life.

I pray that more people will turn to what John Wesley considered the most important aspect of Methodism. I know from my own experience that your personal gain will be substantial. “Therefore go and make Disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

*[Marcel is a member of Grace United Methodist Church in Denver, Colorado.]*

## We Need To Hear from You!

We are making some changes to the Covenant Discipleship Quarterly. The costs of producing and mailing the CDQ keep increasing every year. The income we receive from our loyal readers does not come close to covering the production costs. Therefore, we are shifting the CDQ from print to a web-based periodical. But before we make a final decision, we need to hear from our readers.

We invite you to participate in an online survey we have prepared. To participate in the survey go to <http://www.gbod.org/smallgroup/survey>.

Taking the survey will only take a couple of minutes. We thank you for reading the CDQ and for helping us with this important decision.