



# United Methodist Arkansas

August 1, 2008

## SCJ elects 3 new bishops

■ *Crutchfield reassigned to Arkansas Area for second 4-year term*

By **JANE DENNIS**  
*Arkansas United Methodist Editor*

DALLAS — United Methodists in the South Central Jurisdiction — including 30 delegates from Arkansas — cast votes in 23 ballots in order to elect three new bishops. The Arkansas Conference's endorsed candidate, Rodney Steele of Conway, superintendent of the North Central District, was not among them.

After getting as close as 27 votes from the number needed for election, Steele's numbers began to decrease, and minutes before the 14th ballot was cast he asked that his name be withdrawn from consideration.

"What a joy and what a blessing and what a ride," Steele said. To his supporters, he said, "thank you for all your love. ... Thank you, I love you and God bless you."

He later said he was "at peace" with his decision to withdraw and was



Rodney Steele asks that his name be withdrawn from consideration for bishop.



Bishop-elect Ed Bledsoe — the first of three bishops elected at the South Central Jurisdictional Conference — is escorted to the stage by Bishops Alfred Norris and Janice Riggle Huie.

open to whatever God has in store for his life and ministry upon his return to Conway and in the future.

The three new bishops were elected during the July 16-19 jurisdictional conference. The announcement of their assignments, and that of the eight other active bishops, was made during the predawn hours July 19. The new bishops were consecrated later in the morning at First United Methodist Church, Dallas.

The new bishops are:

■ Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe, 57, formerly superintendent of the Bryan/West District in the Texas Conference. He succeeds Bishop Alfred L. Norris in the

See *JURISDICTION*, page 8

## Ingathering plans in place

■ *Once again, bulk is better*

Looking ahead to the fall, United Methodists are urged to reserve Saturday, Nov. 15, for the 2008 Arkansas Area Ingathering, the annual "gathering in" of relief supplies. The Ingathering will be held at the Arkansas Rice Depot, 3801 W. 65<sup>th</sup> St., Little Rock.

Relief items in bulk quantities are at the top of the needs list, according to Maxine Allen, Arkansas Conference minister of mission and ethnic ministries. "We will again focus on 'bulk is better,'" she said.

See *INGATHERING*, page 7

## Young, diverse disciples a priority at annual conferences

*United Methodist News Service*

The need to reach out to a broader demographic was a central theme for the shrinking United Methodist Church in the United States as 63 U.S. annual conferences met this May and June.

In the words of Lovett Weems, a denominational researcher and speaker who addressed the Mississippi Annual Conference, "Can the church change to reach more people, younger people and more diverse people?"

The church answered affirmatively as conferences celebrated new churches, planned future church plants and worked to improve existing faith com-

munities.

The vast majority of conferences reported membership losses for another year. Out of 50 conferences submitting reports to United Methodist News Service as of July 14, only seven reported an increase in membership. Six are in the Southeastern Jurisdiction and one in the South Central Jurisdiction. They are Central Texas, Alabama-West Florida, Holston, Kentucky, North Carolina, North Georgia, Redbird and Central Texas.

Total U.S. membership is 7.9 million, down eight-tenths of a percent from the previous year, according to

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# Realignment of episcopal areas to be studied

By JANE DENNIS

Arkansas United Methodist Editor

DALLAS — Following the mandate of the 2008 General Conference, the South Central Jurisdiction is exploring how the region's 11 episcopal areas can be realigned and served by one less bishop.

"We want your input and your conversation," Bishop Charles Crutchfield, president of the South Central Jurisdiction's College of Bishops, told delegates to the jurisdictional gathering here July 18.

A measure approved during the April 23-May 2 General Conference will result in one less bishop in four of the five U.S. jurisdictions, beginning in 2012. The savings will be used to fund new episcopal areas elsewhere.

The recommendation for reconfiguring the eight-state South Central Jurisdictional Conference will come from the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy. The conferences are currently arranged into the following episcopal areas: Arkansas, Central Texas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Northwest Texas/New Mexico, North Texas, Oklahoma/Oklahoma Indiana Missionary Conference, Southwest Texas/Rio

Grande and Texas.

"We recognize that there are a number of complicated issues," Crutchfield said, listing among them pensions, apportionments, relationships with other groups, shared institutional support, camps, conference centers, Wesley Foundations, episcopal residences and the impact on conferences that have recently restructured. "And of course the question of the underserved is a part of this whole mix," he added.

"No decisions have been made about how to proceed with the reduction of episcopal areas in our jurisdiction," he emphasized. "We want to hear what you have to say and share about this."

Crutchfield asked delegates to complete a survey about possible realignment. He also explained that the issue will be guided by an exploration of "the foundational principles" of mission, witness, listening to God and listening to those affected by any change.

The College of Bishops plans to schedule a visit by one of its members to each Area, "to talk with leadership of the area and others, to listen, to hear what you have to say with regard to this reduction of an episcopal area," Crutchfield said.



By Jane Dennis

## Editor's Corner

### Not a good idea

We are the Church, and you'd think we'd know better.

The gentleman making the report got some bad advice, or maybe he just hadn't thought it through. But right there on the stage, with a dozen or so bishops at his back and some 250 clergy and laity in front of him, he began his serious church-related presentation with a joke. Cringe.

It was a bad joke, a put-down joke. Yes, it was a dumb blonde joke. It brought a bit of nervous laughter, as most in the audience looked around to see how the women with light-colored hair were reacting.

One Arkansas clergyperson said it was "actually even more inappropriate" than most — "it was an over-weight dumb blonde joke!"

It wasn't the worst or most offensive joke ever told. But to go for a laugh at the expense of another person, to make someone — anyone — feel uncomfortable and inferior — well, there's nothing right or OK



Jane Dennis

about that. And at that moment, I think everyone in the room, including the speaker, knew it.

Later, the inappropriateness of the joke was pointed out and the voting body expressed a desire to engage in more Christ-like behavior.

It's not an easy thing to stand up when a wrong's been done, no matter how innocuous. But we should. We must. If unchecked, one bad turn could easily result in another, and another, and ... If we don't, who will?

I wonder ... the next time I hear a dumb blonde joke (or something like it), will I suppress a laugh and look away? Will I remain silent and look for someone else to object? Will I speak up and speak out in love and kindness? (That can be difficult.)

Will I?  
Will you?  
Will we?

[Jane Dennis has served as editor of the Arkansas United Methodist since 1988. She can be reached at [jdennis@arumc.org](mailto:jdennis@arumc.org)]



## Letters to the Editor

### Book with a point

Anyone who knows Dr. Joel Cooper will want to read his "fact/fiction" story-with-a-point, "No Price I Bring" (iUniverse, 2008, Lincoln, Neb., 135 pages).

While Rev. Cooper was pastor at First Church, Conway, during the mid-50s, I was lucky enough, as a Hendrix student, to serve as organist. Fifty years later, reading the announcement for his book, I ordered it. Since then, I've bought two more as gifts.

Dr. Cooper mentions many people I knew — professors/friends/former pastors: the late Ivan "Coach" Grove, Sue Ozment Jones, Wayne Jarvis, Lynn McSpadden, Ann and the late Lamar Davis and the late George Martin.

His childhood stories during the Great Depression amplified research for my novel-in-progress set during the 1930s in the Ozarks. Especially

appealing was information about a boardinghouse that included a switchboard.

"Hoover Hounds," rabbits named after the president (which did not show up when I Googled the phrase), WPA projects often called "we piddle along" because many "didn't seem to work very hard," the directive from the newspaper editor to "Cry your papers" are just a few of the interesting anecdotes in his book.

I was glad to discover that someone as keen as Dr. Cooper also had an unhappy experience with one career move — his to a North Arkansas conference office, mine to Arkadelphia.

Fascinating titles of Dr. Cooper's chapters include "Poison Pen," "Dam ... Dam," "Take this Job and ..." and "A Mighty Fortress." The book's title is reiterated throughout the volume, but you will have to read it to find out the point he is making.

Pat Laster  
Benton



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# Viewpoint

Dear Friends:

I was asked the other day, “Why is your church so opposed to the lottery?”

The United Methodist Church opposes gambling in all its forms because we believe that it violates the spirit and the imperative contained in Jesus’ words: “... you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength” (Mark 12:29-30). Gambling violates this commandment.

Because gambling is based on human greed, it replaces God with an avaricious desire to get rich quick. Wealth becomes more important than God. In that sense, it violates the first of the Ten Commandments as well. It also violates the gift of the mind which God has given. If you do the math, most of the money spent on so-called “educational” lotteries goes



## An Occasional Word from the Bishop

not to education but to prizes and administration and profits for some company. It makes no financial sense.

Gambling also preys on the neighbor, even if you don’t place a bet or buy a ticket yourself. When I lived in El Paso, Texas, the Texas Lottery was begun. In the first week of the lottery, the poorest precinct in El Paso was the highest per capita participant in the state of Texas. There is no impulse to “love your neighbor as yourself” when you encourage or allow systems of regressive taxation and practices that are demeaning and destructive to the fabric of life and to the fabric of the community. The lottery is a cruel joke that masquerades as a civic

necessity and a public service, all the while preying on those least able to tolerate the loss of money that must inevitably come from gambling. Gambling is morally and ethically bankrupt.

I will not be buying a lottery ticket. A very small percentage of the money goes to scholarships after the prizes are given and the administration of the lottery is funded and the profit of those running the lottery assured. Because I do believe in the importance of education, I will continue to make a yearly donation to Hendrix College and my other alma maters. I will be giving to Hendrix or one of “my” schools where *all* my



Charles Crutchfield

money will support the student, and *not* support greed.

Frankly, in a day when in the political sphere we talk much of family values, I cannot understand how government can even begin to sponsor or tolerate practices or programs that feed on human weakness. I cannot understand how government and responsible civic leaders would want to encourage a “something for nothing” philosophy — particularly in a country where we affirm and value work.

My prayer is that each one of you will act to defeat the allowance of a practice that is demeaning, regressive, antithetical to our faith, irresponsible in good government, and damaging to the human spirit and the human community.

Faithfully,

Charles Crutchfield



## Letters to the Editor

### On Holy Conferencing

I attended the meeting on “Holy Conferencing” in the Southwest District and received the materials designed to help us process issues causing conflict in our United Methodist Church. It calls for us to do and embrace many positive things, like loving each other, caring for each other’s needs, listening to, and respecting each other. Yet the document also contained a judgmental and self-contradicting tone as well.

The document encourages *all* within our denomination to be aware of our “closed mindedness” and be willing to be “self-critical” of our *own* personal beliefs. Yet, it also tells us to ask God to deliver us from “defending certain thinking and systems (of belief) that have seen their day.” In contradiction of being truly open minded and self critical of one’s own beliefs, this language reveals a latent closed mindedness toward other’s Christian “thinking and systems.” It represents such closed mindedness that it even makes the claim that such “thinking and systems” are not worthy of being “defended,” which means they are not worthy of being brought up for discussion in the process of what this document defines as Holy

Conferencing.

Whatever these ways of Christian “thinking and systems (of belief)” are, they are labeled throughout this document as being “outdated, close-minded, divisive, hindering of relationships, disrespectful, mistaken zeal, refusal to listen, worshiping of false images of God,” and described as arrogantly believing such a “thinking or system” represents definitively God’s truth on an issue or belief.

The conflicting and judgmental tone of this document reveals, in my opinion, one of the reasons our American United Methodist Church has experienced decline for the past 40 (and counting) years, experiences divisive and destructive internal conflict, and struggles to find an identity in today’s increasingly troubled world. Instead of being humbled by 40 years of decline in America, our denominational “thinking and systems” are too often viewed with an air of superiority over other “outdated” Christian “thinking and systems.” We too often seem to buy into a “thinking and system” that affirms the concept “newer is better” when it comes to philosophy, theology and morality. Too often we seem to buy into a “thinking and system” that sees religious truth in the

same light as scientific truth, which is, that religious truth is inevitably discovered through the process of time, human endeavor and discovery. As a result, too often we view older “thinking and systems” that don’t share our confidence in human progress, endeavor and discovery as inferior in light of our self-perception of being more religiously enlightened.

After 40 years of decline, the question could (and should) be raised whether the “thinking and systems” most valued and utilized by we American United Methodists are themselves “outdated, closed minded, divisive, hindering of relationships, disrespectful, mistaken zeal, refusal to listen, worshiping of false images of God, and arrogantly presumptive.”

True Holy Conferencing will happen when we become open minded enough to examine and be self critical of the very philosophies, theologies, structures and practices we value the most as United Methodists. Then God will be able to work in our Holy Conferencing to reveal God’s will to us and begin transforming us into who God wants us to be. If we can’t do that, I fear our attempts at Holy Conferencing risk becoming institutional endeavors that are self-serving and self-validating. Such endeavors may help us feel good about ourselves even as we decline but will have no positive impact on the future of the United Methodist Church in America.

David Kassos  
Prescott



### FOR HEAVEN’S SAKE By Mike Morgan



# Viewpoint

## Quietly listening for God in serenity of nature

In an article in *The Christian Century*, author and theologian Diana Butler Bass writes, “In January 2001, when I was teaching a course at Wesley Seminary in Washington, D.C., a student asked me what I thought the 21st century would be like. Without a moment’s hesitation I replied, ‘Noisy. It will be noisy.’”



Andrew Thompson

She’s right, by and large. It is striking how little of our lives is spent in silence.

I know people who turn on the TVs in their living rooms just so their houses won’t seem quiet. At my university, probably half of the students I see walking to class in the mornings have iPods blaring in their ears. Apparently, even the short walk between their dorm room and their classroom is too long to be alone with their thoughts.

The loss of silence is a poverty of postmodern life. To be quiet is to come to terms with one’s own thoughts and emotions. It occasionally means wrestling with inner demons.



### Gen-X Rising

By Andrew Thompson

But it also means clearing out a mental and spiritual place within so that the Holy Spirit has a place to dwell.

Yet for many, experiencing quietude in a world of constant noise is so anxiety-provoking that it must be avoided at all costs.

Reflecting on camping and retreat ministries within the connection, my own thoughts turn to past experiences at a United Methodist retreat center that focused on communion with nature, spiritual reflection and solitude. And silence — yes, wonderful silence.

There is a spot in the mountains of north central Arkansas, between Shirley and Botkinburg, just down Sally Flat Road, where you can find the most exquisite silence in the world. The name of the place is Mount Eagle, and it is a Christian retreat center of the Arkansas Conference.

When you go to Mount Eagle, you’ll be met by the Rev. Lu Harding, a deacon who has found her home offering ministries of hospitality and holy listening in one of the prettiest

spots in creation.

Mount Eagle overlooks the middle fork of the Little Red River. The scenic overlooks, meditation trails and woody surroundings provide the perfect location to unplug from the world and tune in your ears to more subtle sounds.

Lu will invite you to look and listen for sights that are hard to come by in the middle of the city: whitetail deer, wild turkeys, squirrels, songbirds and even the occasional bald eagle.

She will also invite you to look and listen for something even more wonderful: the presence of the Living God, which is available to those who are willing to quiet themselves long enough to receive it.

Silence is ultimately a form of solitude. To experience it is to engage in a discipline akin to that which Jesus experienced when he retreated to lonely and desolate places to pray. It is preparing oneself to hear the “still, small voice” that confronted Elijah on Mount Horeb.

As Henri Nouwen writes in his book “Out of Solitude”: “In solitude

we can listen to the voice of him who spoke to us before we could make any gesture to help, who set us free long before we could free others, and who loved us long before we could give love to anyone. It is in this solitude that we discover that being is more important than having, and that we are worth more than the result of our efforts.”

For me, silence becomes possible when I am able to retreat, particularly to places like Mount Eagle. In a world of increasing busyness and noise, where so many of us live out our days in jungles of concrete and asphalt, finding such places of quiet and solitude is vital to our spiritual health.

They give us the opportunity to be still long enough to listen, remembering that God might have something to say to us at the level of a whisper.

Our Lord calls out to us. He says, “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10a). That is an invitation to which we all should respond. Quietly.

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## Rolling the dice for vice: Arkansans should expect better

By MICHAEL P. DANIEL

Arkansas voters will go to the polls in November and decide whether a state-run lottery should be allowed. We’ve been down this road before more than once. Still, those who would suggest that gambling is somehow going to be the saving grace of education in Arkansas are going to give it another shot.

This time the duly elected lieutenant governor of Arkansas is behind the push. This may be a new twist that could complicate things for voters because a state constitutional officer is working tirelessly to influence the vote. As a resident of the state, he is perfectly within his right to do so. Yet, it seems an unfair advantage when an official of the state throws his weight behind something like this.

I would like to believe that voters are not that easily swayed, but it is difficult to think otherwise when so many officials run unopposed in state and even national contests, secure in

the knowledge that voters tend to lean toward familiar names and faces rather than to go into the depths of any particular issue or pay attention to voting records. It has often been said that if one can get elected on the first go-round, re-election is virtually assured unless a felony charge enters the picture. It is a sad state of affairs when well qualified individuals choose not to run, being aware of the futility of such an endeavor.

Politics and public officials aside, gambling in any form as a means of state revenue puts a great deal of faith in the weaknesses and fears of man. This is especially true in light of the current state of our economy. It is often in desperation that those who are afraid of tomorrow — and the potential for loss of job and home — are willing to risk what should be devoted to a savings account choose instead a “pie in the sky” empty promise of a big, fat “maybe.” There may well be some available college scholarship money in the future as a

result should this measure pass, but it is the “here and now” that is being put at risk. This is no investment for the future; it is a waste of resources.

Arkansans need a stable job market and opportunities to earn their own way; they don’t need games of chance which do nothing more than to take from an already challenged pocketbook. Arkansas’ elected officials should be devoting their time and the state’s currently plentiful resources to such endeavors as those which led to Conway landing a huge opportunity with Hewlett-Packard and its 1,200 future jobs. These are the kinds of public policies that give Arkansans real opportunities for education and advancement. These are the kinds of public policies that promote honest labor, hard work and a real shot at the so-called “American Dream.” These are the kinds of public policies citizens have every right to expect from elected officials. Instead, we have apparently surrendered to elected officials who make promises

that cannot possibly be fulfilled. Other opportunities may be lost because the lieutenant governor of the state wants a lottery instead of a manufacturer or other major employers.

I pray that Arkansans are not fooled by what may or may not come as a result of a lottery. But isn’t this the rub: what may or may not come?

Lest there be any confusion, this is not a purely religious objection (though I would submit that the Lord has more in mind for what He has entrusted to us than risking money purely for selfish gain). Those who can least afford to gamble will, according to statistics, be the major players in this game of chance. The money spent can be put to better use in interest-bearing savings or checking accounts and held for the sure thing instead of a one-in-a-billion chance of winning.

The risk is, indeed, far greater than the reward, which, according to reasonable odds, will never be seen.

[Michael P. Daniel is pastor of Asbury UMC, Magnolia.]





## News Digest

### United Methodists in Africa elect first female bishop

MUTARE, Zimbabwe — Joaquina Filipe Nhanala was elected July 23 as the first female United Methodist bishop in Africa. Nhanala, 51, the pastor of Matola United Methodist Church in Mozambique, was elected during the July 22-24 meeting of the denomination's Africa Central Conference at Africa University in Mutare. Effective Sept. 1, she will succeed Bishop João Somane Machado, who is retiring as the leader of the Mozambique area.



Joaquina Nhanala of Mozambique is the first woman elected as a United Methodist bishop in Africa. UMNS file photograph by Bill Kreamer

### Delegation decries human rights violations in Philippines

SAN FRANCISCO — Killings and abductions in the Philippines "continue without let-up," according to a United Methodist delegation from the U.S. that recently visited the country. The visit was the second time a delegation from The United Methodist Church's California-Nevada Annual Conference has traveled to the Philippines to hear about human rights violations, which have been ongoing since 2001.

Eighteen delegates, including seven young adults, traveled to three regions of the country June 24-July 7. The California-Nevada Conference has sent more than \$12,000 to the Philippines to support families of victims of human rights violations. Karapatan, a human rights group in the Philippines that tracks the violations, reports that from Jan. 21, 2001, to March 31, 2008, 903 people have been victims of extrajudicial killings. The government of President Gloria Arroyo has been criticized for its inaction and for possible ties to groups carrying out the extrajudicial killings. In that same time period, 193 people have "disappeared."

### Crisis communications workshop planned

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — United Methodist Communications will hold an Oct. 29-30 workshop focusing on developing essential skills for communicating under pressure during a crisis — both internal and external. During this one-and-a-half day workshop, participants will practice planning crisis response in simulated situations, followed by individual and group critiques. Participants will receive resources, including a reference guide on crisis communications, a notebook containing key information, tips, coaching materials, practice crisis scenarios and information need to prepare a crisis plan, and a video of their on-

camera interviews taped at the workshop. Cost for the workshop is \$349. Registration is limited to 10 participants. To register or for more information, contact Diane Maloney, at (615) 742-5419 or e-mail dmaloney@umcom.org.

### North Texas donates \$500,000 to Africa University

DALLAS — The United Methodist North Texas Annual Conference has donated \$500,000 to build a new student health center at Africa University, with plans to contribute another \$500,000 to the Zimbabwe school. During the conference's 2008 annual session, Bishop Alfred L. Norris led the "Africa Night" celebration at Hamilton Park United Methodist Church. The June 9 event celebrated ties with Africa University in Old Mutare.

"You have made history," said James Salley, accepting the check as vice president and director of institutional advancement for the United Methodist school. "This is the first time that an annual conference has done a major campaign and raised such a large amount in less than a year."

Of the \$1 million campaign goal, the conference reported some \$800,000 in gifts and pledges. A \$5,000 offering was collected during the celebration. The additional funds are being collected to fund health science scholarships as part of the conference's 2007-08 Bishop's Initiative for Africa University.

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## U.S. gets 8 new bishops

Delegates to five United Methodist jurisdictions in the United States met last month and focused much of their time on electing bishops. The newly elected bishops and their episcopal assignments are:

### South Central Jurisdiction

■ Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe, North Texas Annual Conference

■ Bishop James E. "Jim" Dorff, San Antonio Area (Rio Grande and Southwest Texas conferences)

■ Bishop John Michael Lowry, Fort Worth Area (Central Texas Conference)

### Southeastern Jurisdiction

■ Bishop Paul L. Leeland, Alabama-West Florida Area (Alabama-West Florida Conference)

### North Central Jurisdiction

■ Bishop Julius Calvin Trimble, Iowa Area

### Northeastern Jurisdiction

■ Bishop Peggy Johnson, Philadelphia Area (Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware conferences)

### Western Jurisdiction

■ Bishop Elaine J.W. Stanovsky, Denver Area (Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone annual conferences)

■ Bishop Grant Hagiya, Seattle Area (Pacific Northwest Conference and Alaska Missionary Conference)

Delegates worked to fill leadership vacancies created by seven retirements, one resignation and a death. Bishops are the top clergy leaders of the denomination, and the 50 U.S. bishops oversee some 7.9 million of the church's 11.5 million members worldwide.

The jurisdictional gatherings are held every four years. Bishops for the church in Africa, Europe and Asia are elected at other times in central conference gatherings.

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**ANNUAL CONFERENCES**, *continued from page 1*

the latest statistics released by the denomination in March. While The United Methodist Church is growing in Africa and the Philippines, U.S. membership has dwindled for decades.

“We have only two choices before us. We can continue to do things the way we’ve always done them, or we can seek better ways to address the complicated mission of making disciples in our changing world. We must choose the latter,” said Bishop Robert E. Hayes in his Episcopal Address to the Oklahoma gathering.

Once a year, lay and clergy delegates from each conference meet to worship together, approve a regional budget, take up special offerings, celebrate successes and identify areas of need as they consider ways to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

This year, they took up the additional task of endorsing candidates for bishop, in advance of jurisdictional conferences meeting this week to elect bishops and assign them for the next four years.

Church growth remained a major focus.

Northwest Texas pledged \$3 million to build new churches and renovate existing ones. Virginia approved its “All Things New” plan, planting seeds for 250 new faith communities in the next 30 years and revitalizing existing churches. West Ohio outlined procedures for healthy churches to remove the costs of launching new churches from its apportionments contribution.

The Foundation for Evangelism presented 94 Harry Denman evangelism awards in 46 annual conferences representing all five U.S. jurisdictions. Celebrated for outstanding leadership in evangelism, the recipients included five youth, one youth team, 45 laity and 43 clergy.

**Youth and minorities**

Research indicates that, based on the U.S. population, young people and people of color are underrepresented in the United Methodist United Church.

The Florida Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry set a goal to reach more than a quarter of a million college students in South Florida, envisioning a regional campus ministry there. The conference currently sponsors a campus ministry at the University of Miami and six others in the area.

Members heard about the Children’s Advocacy and Ministry

Coalition’s work to end hunger in Florida. The coalition provides children with a healthy breakfast, along with after-school and summer meal programs.

Wisconsin created a United Methodist Youth Sunday and a task force for young adult ministries.

Florida heard that \$750,000 will be used to launch Hispanic, Haitian, Korean and Chinese congregations. Seventeen new non-Anglo churches and missions have been active in Florida since 2005. The conference approved funding to support African-American churches and also donated to Justice for Our Neighbors, which helps local congregations respond to the needs of immigrants.

North Texas recognized an anti-racism team and a Hispanic/Latino ministry task force. The conference also approved a resolution designed to raise awareness of the U.S. environment for Hispanic/Latino Americans and other immigrant groups and recommended that 20 percent of clergy leadership be literate in conversational Spanish by 2020.

**Social issues**

Homosexuality, a perennial hot-button issue for decades at the church’s top legislative meeting, also was a frequent subject of debate on the annual



*In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Florida United Methodist Children’s Home, children sing and dance for the denomination’s 2008 Florida Annual Conference. Reaching out to more young people was among topics discussed by United Methodists at numerous U.S. conferences.* UMNS photo by Caryl Kelley

conference level.

In California, where the state Supreme Court legalized same-gender marriage in May, two conferences passed legislation in support of the court ruling. California-Pacific approved three measures, including one that “encourages both congregations and pastors to welcome, embrace and provide spiritual nurture and pastoral care for these families.” California-Nevada approved a measure commending 67 retired United Methodist clergy who have offered to



*More than 200 persons took part in the first 5K Fun Run/Walk, part of the Arkansas Conference’s Holy Healthy Initiative.* photo by Jane Dennis

conduct same-gender marriage ceremonies.

The United Methodist Church, while affirming all people as persons “of sacred worth,” considers the practice of homosexuality “incompatible with Christian teaching.” Its policy book, called the Book of Discipline, prohibits its pastors and churches from conducting ceremonies celebrating homosexual unions.

Wyoming established a bishop’s task force to study the issue of homosexuality. Baltimore-Washington continued to support dialogue teams exploring the possibility of full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people within the life of the church. Holston voted down a resolution calling for the study and discussion of homosexuality.

West Ohio discouraged its pastors from judging homosexual people and practices, encouraging them to study materials provided by Cokesbury on heterosexism and homophobia.

Troy urged the U.S. Congress to cease funding the Iraq war. North Indiana approved a resolution creating a task force on steps to end the war. East Ohio and Central Texas went on the record opposing the Council of Bishops’ resolution calling for the war’s end.

Arkansas and Southern Pennsylvania called for moratoriums on the use of the death penalty in their states.

**Giving and missions**

Detroit donated \$2 million to the Central Conference Pension Initiative to support retired United Methodist pastors and their families in conferences outside of the United States. Western Pennsylvania contributed

\$500,000, and West Ohio donated \$400,000 and pledged to do the same for the next four years.

North Texas donated \$500,000 to build a new student health center at Africa University, and pledged to give another \$500,000 to the United Methodist university in Zimbabwe.

Iowa donated \$210,000 to the Nothing but Nets anti-malaria campaign. Greater New Jersey gave \$118,250, and Arkansas contributed \$90,000.

Rocky Mountain donated \$50,000 to the Global AIDS Fund, while West Virginia donated \$24,000 and Central Pennsylvania, \$21,803.

Western Pennsylvania donated more than \$20,000 to aid survivors of recent flooding in Iowa.

Louisiana recognized conference work to rebuild devastated communities, providing financial help and lifting up in prayer those affected by the disasters. Six Louisiana churches stricken by hurricanes Katrina and Rita have closed, and six have merged with other area churches.

**Healthy bodies, healthy earth**

At the Oklahoma conference, Bishop Robert Hayes led 300 participants in a “walk for wellness.” The conference also prohibited the use of tobacco in parsonages.

Arkansas emphasized “holy healthy” living habits, drawing more than 200 participants in its first 5K run/walk event through the hills of Hot Springs. Methodist LeBonheur Healthcare hosted a health fair, offering to screen members for cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure.

Troy approved a resolution to educate congregations about energy production, encourage energy audits and improve churches and congregants’ homes. The measure promotes the use of renewable energy by purchasing “green power” and supports “green” public policies.



# Community pulls together for Harvest of Hope

■ *DeWitt: 1 million servings of rice provided for the hungry of Arkansas*

by **JANE DENNIS**  
Arkansas United Methodist Editor

DeWITT — Thanks to the 10-year-old Harvest of Hope benefit barbecue event, residents of this small Arkansas County community can say with pride that they have provided more than 1 million servings of rice to hungry people in Arkansas.

All proceeds from the annual sale of expertly barbecued chicken and pork butts go to buy truckloads of rice grown by farmers in the DeWitt area. That rice is then donated to the Arkansas Rice Depot, which distributes it to hungry persons through a statewide network of church- and community-based food pantries, soup kitchens and hunger agencies.

This year's event raised more than \$14,000. In its 10 years, the Harvest of Hope has raised \$120,000 and purchased more than 480,000 pounds of rice.

## Low on rice

In 1998, LaVon Post, then pastor of First United Methodist Church in DeWitt, learned that the Rice Depot was dangerously low on rice, a staple in its program of feeding the hungry.

"Some of the area farmers and business people got together," recalls Julie Simpson, a member of First Methodist and longtime Harvest of Hope chairman, "and LaVon spearheaded the whole thing. We all said, 'We live in the largest rice producing county in the state — we ought to be able to do something.'"

And they did.

Here's how Harvest of Hope, held the Friday before the fourth of July each year, works. First, there is a pre-sale of tickets for the barbecued pork butt and whole chicken. Then mem-



Larry Martineau (center), pastor of First UMC, DeWitt, helps colleagues fill an order during the DeWitt Harvest of Hope's annual benefit barbecue June 27. Photo by DeWitt Era-Enterprise

bers of the community, representing numerous businesses, farms and churches of all denominations, work through most of a Wednesday and Thursday to barbecue 500 pounds of pork and 500 pounds of chicken. The next morning, a drive-through is set up at the local fairgrounds and ticket-holders pick up their orders and are set for the July 4th holiday.

When Post was appointed pastor of First United Methodist Church in Batesville, he took the Harvest of Hope concept with him. Batesville has hosted its own barbecue fund-raiser for the last several years and has teamed up with DeWitt to provide several truckloads of rice to Arkansas Rice Depot.

"My life dream would be to get 10 more Harvest of Hope groups started in Arkansas," Simpson said, "so we could supply Rice Depot with rice every month. When there are tornadoes and floods and people are losing their jobs and are in need, the Rice Depot goes through a truckload of rice a month."

## A no-brainer

With the number of rice producers in the state, Simpson said her dream could easily come true. The fund-raising idea is "such an easy thing to do. ... You do a whole lot of work for about three days, and then you're through. It's a no-brainer."

Throughout the years, donors have been secured for most aspects of Harvest of Hope. An anonymous donor pays for the meat. Everything else is covered.

"We've never gotten a bill for anything," said Simpson. "Somebody pays for the charcoal, the sacks, the advertising ... it's just all donated."

As an added benefit for DeWitt, Simpson and her brother, J.T. Ferguson, are owners Cormier Rice Mill. "We have a special place in our hearts for Arkansas Rice Depot, so we really give Harvest of Hope the lowest price we can so we make sure we get our money's worth. Folks in other areas could have ties to Riceland or Producers rice mill, and they could make it work for them."

Even when the economy is faltering and farmers are struggling, Simpson said the community pulls together for Harvest of Hope. "The people support Harvest of Hope because they knew how much it matters."

In honor of the Harvest of Hope's 10-year anniversary, Arkansas Rice Depot present a plaque at this year's event recognizing the dedication and hard of the people of DeWitt.

"It is God led because every year I get nervous," Simpson said, "but I always know it's going to work out. God works it out every year. You can see it in the group of men who are cooking, in the kids who come that day to hand out food ... that's what makes it so special."

## Caring and sharing

"The price of food and fuel has risen so dramatically this year that the number of families depending on food pantries and soup kitchens has skyrocketed," said Laura Rhea, president and CEO of Arkansas Rice Depot. "We were holding our breath to see what the response would be to this year's Harvest of Hope. We were out of rice; and a Rice Depot without rice is unthinkable."

Rhea was delighted when "a tractor trailer load of rice was on the way within a week of the event."

"I pray for the day when no one in Arkansas has to ask for help to feed their family," Rhea said. "However, until that day comes, we depend on people like Rev. LaVon Post and all the Harvest of Hope volunteers."

Simpson said she is thankful for the blessings of living in a close-knit community that cares about others. "I'm so thankful for everybody here, the guys who help us, the farmers ... They all do it because they can't stand the thought of someone not having food."

Simpson invites churches or groups that would like to learn more about how to host their own Harvest of Hope to contact her at (870) 946-3561.

## INGATHERING, continued from page 1

"The reason we ask people to collect the bulk items that go into the kits — including making the cloth bags but not stuffing them — is that when they reach UMCOR's Sager Brown Depot, each kit must be inspected to ensure that it contains the correct components," Allen said. "This is redundant work because the kits will only be taken apart at Sager Brown and re-packed."

The kits are "global supplies," she explained, "meaning that they must pass customs in countries which may

or may not be Christian. If the customs inspectors find items not listed, such as a tract from Well Meaning UMC, then the whole shipment is rejected."

The items requested for Ingathering can be found listed under "Kit Instruction Sheets" at <http://new.gbmg-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies>. Donations will be used to create Bedding Kits, Health Kits, Layette Kits, School Kits, Sewing Kits and Flood Buckets.

The relief supplies are divided between the United Methodist

Committee on Relief's Sager Brown Depot in Baldwin, La., for distribution around the world, and Arkansas Rice Depot, for distribution in state.

District Secretaries of Global Ministries are available to assist local churches and answer questions about the Ingathering. They are:

**Central District:** Loma Speck, 19 Johnny Lane, Sherwood 72120.

**North District:** Linda Bundy, P.O. Box 268, Tuckerman 72473.

**North Central District:** Michael Topham, P.O. Box 498, Des Arc 72040.

**North East District:** Sherry Hensley,

373 Greene 437 Road, Marmaduke 72443.

**North West District:** Donna Huie, 1910 N. Old Wire Road, Fayetteville 72703.

**South Central District:** Steve Wingo, 127 E. Page Ave., Malvern 72104.

**South East District:** Ellen McNulty, 7809 Cross Road, Pine Bluff 71603.

**South West District:** Wanda Sullivan, 1893 N. Ninth St., DeQueen 71832.

**West District:** Becky Neighbors, P.O. Box 3634, Fort Smith 72913.

Allen may be contacted at (501) 324-8045, (501) 539-0280 or [mallen@arumc.org](mailto:mallen@arumc.org).



# Delegates affirm leasing land for Bush center

*United Methodist News Service*

DALLAS — The owners of Southern Methodist University say a regional mission council was authorized to give the university permission to lease land to the President George W. Bush Presidential Center.

On July 17, the delegates to the South Central Jurisdictional Conference affirmed their Mission Council's action but also approved a petition protecting the integrity of both SMU and the jurisdiction itself by indicating that a proposed institute "does not speak" for either.

The South Central Jurisdictional Conference, which owns the university, says that it is "essential that the President George W. Bush Institute function in a manner that maintains the integrity of Southern Methodist University and the South Central Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church."

The public policy institute is to be one of three parts of a presidential center that will also include a library and museum. The institute has been opposed by United Methodists across the country who fear it will be a partisan think-tank. Supporters have said it

## *Arkansan appreciates dialogue Bush Center will generate*

Arkansas clergy member Rebekah Miles has kept an eye on the debate over the plan to construct the President George W. Bush Presidential Center on land leased to the Bush Foundation by Southern Methodist University. The Arkansas native lives in Fort Worth and is professor of ethics at SMU's Perkins School of Theology.

"I say have it on the SMU campus. There'll be great dialogue and debate ... it'll be a boon for the school, and the political science

*See MILES, page 9*

would be an independent research facility.

The delegates note that the South Central Jurisdiction and The United Methodist Church are dedicated to academic freedom. The conference instructed the university to give a status report to its 2012 meeting about its relationship with the both the Bush Foundation and the institute.

The 297 jurisdictional conference delegates from eight states have differing views on locating the Bush Institute at United Methodist-related SMU. Opponents argued that the Mission Council did not follow church procedure and that the South Central Jurisdictional Conference is the entity to approve land use.

In February, SMU officials approved giving the George W. Bush Foundation a 99-year lease to build a presidential library, museum and policy institute on school property. The lease is renewable up to 249 years.

That action came 11 months after a closed executive session in March 2007 when the Mission Council voted 10-4, with one abstention, to allow SMU to lease up to 36 acres on the southeast side of campus to the foundation. The policy institute — over which the school would have no control — would be run by an independent board. The library and museum will be operated by the National Archives and Records Administration. The entire project is to be financed with a private fund drive conducted by the George W. Bush Presidential Library Foundation. Cost estimates hover around \$500

million.

President Bush and his wife, Laura, are United Methodists, and the first lady is a 1968 graduate of SMU.

Kansas Bishop Scott Jones, an SMU trustee, applauded the conference's affirmation for the Mission Council. He also acknowledged the concerns United Methodists in the jurisdiction and across the church have about the relationship between the Bush Institute and the university.

"I believe the leaders of SMU, both the trustees and university administration, carry the same concerns and, from my point of view as a trustee, this petition is very welcome."

But Tex Sample, professor emeritus of church and society at Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Mo., said the South Central Jurisdiction made both a "big mistake" and "a serious transgression" in subsidizing "the political goals of George W. Bush."

During a press conference after the hand vote, Sample said the South Central Jurisdiction "will live to rue the day this happened." He expressed disappointment in the conference's position, saying President Bush's policies conflict with church teaching.

## **JURISDICTION**, *continued from page 1*

Dallas Area (North Texas Annual Conference). Norris, who retired in 2004, re-entered active service following the 2006 death of North Texas Conference Bishop Rhymes Moncure Jr.

The son of a United Methodist pastor, Bledsoe said his "hope and faith is in Christ" and as bishop his plan is to "just be faithful." He said he finds great hope in the United Methodist connectional system. "I celebrate the global church, and the diversity of theology and thought. ... Differences of opinion are good and healthy for the church," he said.

■ **Bishop James E. "Jim" Dorff**, 61, area provost of the North Texas Annual Conference. He is assigned to the San Antonio Area (Rio Grande and Southwest Texas conferences). He succeeds Bishop Joel Martinez, 68, who is retiring after serving the area since 2000.

Dorff, of McKinney, Texas, comes from a family filled with clergy. He said a bishop needs to be thoughtful, strategic and mindful of the past and present, as well as the future. He said he believes the church has "got to get back in the business of youth ministry, campus ministry and ministering to young adults." He plans to also focus on clergy excellence and starting new churches.



*Arkansas clergy delegate Rebekah Miles (center) makes a point as members of the Arkansas delegation to Jurisdictional Conference huddle together between ballots. Listening in are (from left) Rodney Steele, Asa Whiakier and J.J. Whitney.*

■ **Bishop John Michael "Mike" Lowry**, 58, executive director of new church development and transformation of the Southwest Texas Annual Conference. He succeeds retiring Bishop Ben R. Chamness, 68, in the Fort Worth Area (Central Texas Conference). Chamness has served the area since 2000.

Lowry, of San Antonio, Texas, admitted that he "fell away" from the church as a teen-ager and "experienced life without Christ, without faith." After a "dramatic conversion" experience in college, he answered the call to ministry and entered seminary. Those experiences "help me understand people" in a unique way, he said.

"God has richly blessed me."

The new bishops will begin their four-year episcopal assignments Sept. 1. The eight remaining active bishops were all returned to their areas for a second term. Bishop Charles N. Crutchfield, 64, returns as episcopal leader of the Arkansas Area (Arkansas Conference).

Bishops may serve one episcopal area for up to 12 years. The traditional tenure is two four-year terms. However, the third term is allowable for "missional reasons." Bishops in The United Methodist Church are elected for life but must retire from active administration at the jurisdictional conference following their 68th birthday. The 2008 General Conference raised the retirement age for bishops from 66 to 68.

Bishops are charged by the church's Book of Discipline to "guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine and discipline of the church" and "lead all persons entrusted to their oversight in worship, in the celebration of the sacraments, and in their mission of witness and service in the world." They are also charged "to be prophetic voices and courageous leaders in the cause of justice for all people."

*[United Methodist News Service news writer Linda Green contributed to this story.]*





Bishop-elect Mike Lowry (center) is escorted to the stage by bishops Joel Martinez (left) and William Hutchinson.



Bishop-elect Ed Bledsoe and his wife, Leslie, are introduced to the conference immediately following election.



Bishop-elect Jim Dorff and his wife, Barbara, celebrate his election to the episcopacy.



Rodney Steele, head of the Arkansas clergy delegation and episcopal candidate, has the unwavering support of his 17-year-old daughter, Sarah, a lay delegate.



Arkansas Conference lay delegates J. Harris Moore and Karen Millar talk during a break in the conference session.

photos by Jane Dennis

## SOUTH CENTRAL JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE

Dallas, Texas • July 16-19, 2008



The jurisdictional conference was a family affair for retired clergy and long-time former conference clergy delegate John P. Miles (left), who is joined by daughter Rebekah Miles, clergy delegate; son-in-law Len Delony; wife JoAnn and son John Miles II, also a clergy delegate.



Casting ballots in the election of bishops are Arkansas delegates (from right) David Bush, Stark Ligon, John Miles II and Brenda Norwood.

### MILES, continued from page 8

folks will love it," she said during a break at the 2008 South Central Jurisdictional Conference in Dallas.

"I've been supportive of the library, the museum and the institute," she said. "Well, I'm a little less excited about the institute..."

But she sees the development as stimulus for beneficial discussion and debate.

"But anybody who thinks SMU can't handle the debate hasn't been

paying attention. We like to argue! We'll take 'em on," she said. "We've been talking about this and debating it for two years!"

Miles said she was "excited" about the impact that the presidential center will have on SMU.

"I'm OK with it. It will be interesting to be in dialogue," she said. "Frankly, I'll be happy to see Bush out of the White House, but I'm glad for him to come to Dallas."



As president of the jurisdiction's College of Bishops, Bishop Charles Crutchfield speaks to members of the media and others on the proposal regarding the Bush Center at SMU.



# It Happened

Greenwood United Methodist Men hosted its Third Annual Golf Tournament July 12 at Vache-Grasse Country Club in Greenwood. Twenty-two teams participated in the four-person scramble event, raising about \$3,000 to fund church projects.

Thirteen youth and adults from Cabot UMC recently participated in an Ozark Mission Project camp in north-east Arkansas. The group is one of three groups Cabot UMC has sponsored to OMP camps this summer.

The work included projects from clearing brush and painting, to building porches and wheelchair ramps. The group also focused on getting to know the “neighbor” they are doing the work for by sharing a sack lunch and a midday devotion.

“The youth usually come back having received more than they have given. This is the highlight of the summer for many of our kids,” said Denise Wilson, Cabot UMC director of youth ministries.

Affiliated with the Arkansas Area United Methodist Church, OMP was founded in 1986 and offers 12 camps across the state each summer. Participants are organized for ministry and serve persons who cannot maintain their homes due to financial or physical reasons.

Two youth — Nathan Smith and Daniel Strang — were recently confirmed as full members of Wesley UMC, Fort Smith. The 2008 Confirmation Class, held from January into June, was taught by Jim



An unconventional Leonard McCandless arrives at the ice cream social at Sequoyah UMC, Fayetteville,



Anthony Falkowski, director of mission and outreach at First UMC, Little Rock, and part of a mission work team, helps with tornado cleanup in Earle.



(From left) J. Rex Enoch, manager of adult education programs for Heifer International welcomes Henderson UMC members Joanne Chambers, Pam Wildschuetz and pastor Kevin Lyon.

Stitsworth, minister to children and their Families.

Leonard McCandless dropped in — literally — on the ice cream social hosted by Sequoyah UMC, Fayetteville, July 20. McCandless parachuted from an airplane and landed in an open field near the church, with church members cheering him on.

Church members provided ice cream, desserts and entertainment. Among those performing were the Chancel Choir, Sweet Harmony and Sequoyah Bell Choir.

Proceeds go to missions supported by the church, including Cooperative Emergency Outreach, Free Health Clinic, Wesley Foundation campus ministry and Volunteers in Mission. A special mission to Sequoyah UMC is One Book Foundation, which supports United Methodist missionaries Charles and Karen Wiggins. The Wigginses called Sequoyah UMC their church home before departing for Bunda, Tanzania. A slide presentation of two members’ recent trip to Tanzania was on display during the ice cream social.

Henderson UMC, Little Rock, members caravanned to the Heifer Ranch facilities in July. Each member



Children enrolled in the Kids for Christ weekday ministry at Caraway UMC help prepare care packages for soldiers.

engaged in a journey of personal growth as they learned about Heifer’s mission to alleviate poverty and hunger and care for the earth. The group learned about the work, mission and history of Heifer International and gained an appreciation of the value of livestock for improving sources of nutrition and income.

The congregation has been raising funds for Heifer by filling quarter tubes and a “Fill the Ark” bank project. The children’s ministry held a Pet Parade and hosted a Peanut Butter and Jelly meal. As a result, \$669 was raised, which allowed the church to purchase two water buffalo, a goat and two flocks of chicks. The children learned how they were able to help families in need.

Joanne Chambers served as Henderson’s coordinator for the Heifer mission project.



Children and members of all ages at Lisbon UMC celebrate the kick off of a new kids campaign.

Members and guests of First UMC, Little Rock, enjoyed dinner, homemade ice cream and healthy alternative frozen treats at the church’s annual Ice Cream Social June 22. Karaoke time was a highlight of the evening for many. Brian Carpenter, Barbara Latta, “Carol and the Four Bottoms” (Carol Roddy, Michael Mattox, Cal Biggers, Tom Small, Bunny Brown), “Joy and the Chapettes” (Joy Rockenbach, Judy Mattox, Carol Roddy, Elizabeth Small) and many First Church children had the room clapping, dancing and singing along. A collection of \$333 supported those in the congregation participating in Ozark Mission Project this summer.

A group of mission volunteers from First UMC, Little Rock, traveled to Earle June 28 to assist with a cleanup effort following the tornadoes that ravaged the area several weeks ago. The United Methodists joined forces with a Baptist relief group and worked on two properties, moving the debris to the roadside for pickup by the FEMA group. Hats off to the small but mighty workforce that represented First Church: Joe Roddy, Scott Ryan, Kat Marsh, Patty Barker, Kathleen McMurray, Stella Phillips, Denny Gainer and Anthony Falkowski.

Lisbon UMC recently held a kick-off for its new kids campaign, and the fun included a water slide and other fun activities in and around the new Family Life Center. Forty-five children registered, and the following week marked the start of VIBE (Victory In being Bold (for Christ) Everyday). The children invited 20 additional participants to the first session, and six of them accepted Christ as Savior. Lisbon pastor Gary Riley leads the program.



**IT HAPPENED,** *continued from page 10*

Caraway UMC Kids for Christ recently collected and shipped care packages to troops in Iraq. Members of the congregation helped with the contents of the care packages, while the children contributed handmade crafts, letters and cards.

Kids for Christ is a Wednesday night service for children ranging from toddlers to teen-agers. Each week members of the congregation lead the children in praise music, worship, Bible study and prayer. The purpose is to spread the news about Jesus and teach God's Word, as well as teach the children to share God's Word and to serve others.

"These kids are amazing," said church member Paula Hensley. "What a blessing it is to hear kids from 4 years old to teen-agers praying out loud and openly to God. They continuously pray for our soldiers and have participated in care packages, sending thank you cards and making crafts for these soldiers."

Allen Rainey and his wife, Kay, were honored at a recent potluck luncheon hosted by First UMC, Osceola. The occasion was his retirement after nine years of loyal service. Ralph Wilson Jr., chair of the Administrative Council, presided at an awards ceremony. Administrator Lisa Hook presented the Raineys with a plaque and a monetary gift. Arkansas state Rep. Tommy Baker presented Rainey with a citation from the House of Representatives 86th General Assembly. Sandra Kennedy-Mitchell presented the retiring pastor with a clock plaque for his service as co-chair of the Osceola Shalom Community.

Rainey is a past president of the Osceola Ministerial Alliance,



At First UMC, Osceola, state Rep. Tommy Baker (left) presents a citation to pastor Allen Rainey and his wife, Kay.



Paul Strang (left) pastor of Wesley UMC, Fort Smith, congratulates new confirmands Nathan Smith and Daniel Strang.



Cabot UMC members participating in a recent Ozark Mission Project camp are (front, from left) Jetta Roberg, Kelsey Vaughn, Casey Singleton, Ashley Baldwin, Amanda Wells; and (back) Morgan Vaughn, John Mann, Grace Coggins, Spencer Roberg, Kim Reynolds, Erica Roberg, Travis Marcus and Joshua Lieblong.



Teams are assigned starting order to begin the Greenwood UMM Third Annual Golf Tournament at Vache-Grasse Country Club in Greenwood.

United Way Board member, president of the UW Chaplains, honorary member of the Kiwanis and Rotary clubs, and overseer of the Community Gardens.

Wesley Chapel UMC, Little Rock, hosted a Service of Thanksgiving recently for visitors to Arkansas who are natives of Sierra Leone. Sydney Macfoy was guest preacher.

Macfoy said he was impressed with the progress he saw for himself while recently visiting his homeland and he has every confidence that "we shall once again rise up from the ashes of 10 years of unnecessary fighting, when we should have been consolidating our economic, social, health and educational development."

The visitors, who were members of the Former Barclays Bank of Sierra Leone Ex-Employees Association, were treated to the state's Southern hospitality. Highlights included meeting with Gov. Mike Beebe and receiving Arkansas Traveler certificates,

attending Riverfest, visiting the Clinton Presidential Center and Library and a boat ride on the Arkansas River.

First UMC, Rogers, was selected as the General Board of Discipleship Church of the Week on the GBOD Worship web site. Photos of the church's sanctuary and "Resurrection" window were featured the week of July 28 at [www.gbod.org/worship](http://www.gbod.org/worship). Celebrating its centennial this year, the sanctuary of Rogers First UMC was constructed in 1908.

The Disaster Response Team from Salem UMC, Benton, helped clear a 200-year-old tree that was toppled in west Little Rock following a recent storm. For four hours the team assisted the homeowner in cutting and stacking the timber for firewood. Before the storm, the tree stood 80 feet tall and was 4 feet in diameter.

## VIM training coming up Aug. 16 in West District

Each year United Methodist churches send mission and disaster response teams throughout Arkansas and around the world. They are called Volunteers in Mission.

Well-trained, dedicated team leaders who have gifts for mission service lead these missions. Without them, the work of VIM would not be possible.

Persons interested in learning more about being a VIM or Disaster Response team leader or hosting a mission team are invited to take part in a VIM/disaster training event to be hosted by the West District Aug. 16. The

training will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 200 N. 15th St., Fort Smith. Cost is \$20 and includes lunch and the training guide.

Jeremy Basset, executive director of Oklahoma Conference Volunteers in Mission, will lead the training. Basset describes himself as being "passionate about God's mission in the world through the church of Jesus Christ, and absolutely committed to the belief that each congregation is called to be, and can effectively be, the expression of God's love to the world."

Basset served as a pastor in the

Methodist Church of Southern Africa for more than 20 years before moving to the United States to further his studies. Now a clergy member of the Oklahoma Conference, he maintains a vital link with his home denomination through short-term Volunteers in Mission teams and leadership training events. He is especially committed to helping his native land respond to the devastation caused by HIV/AIDS.

Online registration is available online at [www.westdistrict.org](http://www.westdistrict.org), or by calling (479) 783-0385 or emailing [westdistrictbecky@yahoo.com](mailto:westdistrictbecky@yahoo.com).

### United Methodist ARCHIVES



Bailey Library  
Hendrix College  
Conway, Ark.  
(501) 450-1370

[arkmethodist@hendrix.edu](mailto:arkmethodist@hendrix.edu)

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or [beehill@tcworks.net](mailto:beehill@tcworks.net) or  
Marcia Crossman at (501) 327-3512  
or [mcrossman@conwaycorp.net](mailto:mcrossman@conwaycorp.net)





## Coming Up

The Second Annual Back-to-School Bonanza at Farmington UMC will be held from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Aug. 9 at the church, 355 Southwinds Road. The event will offer free haircuts, tennis shoes, dental screenings and school supplies for students in kindergarten through fourth grade. Free Kindergarten physicals will also be given. Students must be present to receive supplies and will be served in order of arrival. For more information, call (479) 267-3180.

John Roberts, executive director of the Pulaski County Regional Recycling and Waste Reduction District, and Shelley Green, founder and executive director of Arkansas Earth Institute, will join representatives from churches and faith organizations at the second Going Green Conference hosted by Pulaski Heights UMC. The event begins at 5:30 p.m. Aug. 4 at the church, Woodlawn and Monroe streets. All are invited to attend to explore ways that faith organizations may participate in addressing environmental challenges. Admission is free. To make a reservation, call (501) 664-3600.

Leo Hauser is chair of the church's Green Team.

Dealing with the death of a special person is one of life's most difficult and stressful experiences. Many people find it helps to meet with others who understand their feelings of grief, loneliness, pain or depression. That includes others who are grieving and those experienced in helping people work through their grief.

First UMC, Little Rock, is partnering with the American Cancer Society to offer "Life After Loss," a five-week seminar and support group for anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one, regardless of the cause of the person's death. In a safe and supportive atmosphere, persons can talk about experiences and hear from others in similar circumstances. Participants can begin to understand the grief process, emotions and how to deal with them.

Sessions will be held from 6-8 p.m. on Tuesdays, Aug. 5 through Sept. 2 at the church, 723 Center St. For more information, contact Mary Jane Cole at (501) 372-2256 or mcole@fumclr.org. To register for the group, contact the American Cancer Society at (501) 603-5202.

West District Council on Youth Ministries will hold a district planning retreat Aug. 15-16 at Shoal Creek Camp. Conference youth leaders will guide participants in fun activities and in planning a full year of youth ministry.

Youth groups of all sizes are encouraged to attend. Bring the entire youth group or just the Leadership Team. Each group *must* bring at least one adult and one teen.

Register as a group by sending \$75 to Lori Harrison 1409 S. Eve, Mena Ark. 71953. Make checks payable to Shoal Creek Camp. The \$75 registration fee covers all food and lodging for the entire group, up to 20 people. For more information, contact Harrison at mslori61@yahoo.com.

Registration is from 7-8 p.m. Friday. The retreat will conclude following with lunch and communion on Saturday.

High School teens from across Arkansas are invited to apply to attend Ourtown for Teens (formerly Anytown), a residential Leadership Institute sponsored by Just Communities of Central Arkansas, which will be held Aug. 3-9 at Ferncliff Retreat Center, west of Little Rock. Recognized as a premier youth leadership institute across America, Ourtown prepares students to be successful in diverse communities.

At Ourtown, delegates will interact with a diverse group of high school students to explore issues of bias and discrimination. Teens have the opportunity to share their own life experiences and hear different world perspectives. They learn more about themselves and how to build an inclusive community.

Any teen, entering 10th, 11th or 12th grade, who has an open mind and is emotionally capable of participating in activities designed to challenge one's stereotypes, prejudices and perspectives, is invited to attend.

The cost of the retreat is \$250, which covers all programs, materials, lodging, meals, transportation to and from the state Capitol grounds to Ferncliff, and an Ourtown T-shirt. (Limited financial aid is available for those who qualify.) A registration fee of \$25 is required along with an application to be considered for the program.

For more information and an application, visit [www.arkansasjustcommunities.org](http://www.arkansasjustcommunities.org), or phone the JCCA office at (501) 372-5129.



## Milestones

Arkansas Area Bishop Charles Crutchfield presided June 1 during Consecration Services for a new mission, worship and outreach center at First United Methodist Church in Conway.

The 36,000-square-foot building includes a worship and activity center, youth wing and an Early Childhood Center and School-Aged Care wing. A building committee formed in 2003 was charged with overseeing plans for the multipurpose building. Construction began in June 2006 for the new \$5.5 million facility.

North Central District Superintendent Rodney Steele, senior pastor Charles Murry, associate pastor Dede Roberts and a number of laypersons also participated in the service. More than 660 people attended the celebration and Service of Holy Communion.

Items used in worship were carried into the worship area, including the altar cross, banners, a basin and towel,



First UMC, Conway.

the Bible, bread and chalice for the Lord's Table, water for the baptismal font and items representing different parts of the church's mission and purpose, such as the children's ministry, youth ministry and fellowship.

Members of all the church's choirs, handbell choirs and bands presented consecration service music, and liturgical dancers participated as well. The service also included the commissioning of the 50 youth and adult volunteers who are attending Ozark Mission Project camps this summer.

## Deaths

### Bethlehem

FRANCES JEANEANE DAVIS NIPPER, 70, went home to be with the Lord on July 10, 2008, at her home in the Bethlehem Community, near Cabot, following a yearlong battle with pancreatic cancer. She was the spouse of Jerry Nipper, pastor of the Bethlehem and Providence United Methodist churches in the North Central District.

She was born Sept. 19, 1937, in North Little Rock, the daughter of Christine and Earl Davis. She graduated from North Little Rock High School in 1955 and married Jerry Nipper on Nov. 4, 1955. She was devoted to God and her family as a wife, mother and homemaker. As an activist for children and adults with disabilities, she was involved in the founding of the Lonoke County Exceptional School and served on the board of directors for at least 10 years. She also wrote a column, "News From Bethlehem," for the *Cabot Star Herald*.

Because of her love for children, she worked as a substitute teacher in the Cabot School District. She was an

accomplished pianist and played at Bethlehem Church and various community events. She was the founder and director of "The Christmas Road to Bethlehem," a communitywide display of life-sized Nativity scene images, for the past 23 years and prayed that people would come to know Christ through the ministry on the Road to Bethlehem.

She was preceded in death by her parents and one sister, Betty Juanita Davis. She is survived by her husband of 52 years Jerry Nipper; children Brenda and Rickey Phillips, Pamela Nipper, and Lisa and Kelly Brooks; two grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; two brothers, Billy Davis and Michael Davis and wife Mary; one sister, Marilyn Carpenter and husband Buford; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Services were held July 13 at Bethlehem United Methodist Church, Lonoke. Memorials may be made to the Bethlehem UMC Building Fund or The Christmas Road to Bethlehem, 1281 Bethlehem Road, Austin, Ark. 72007.



# Vacation Bible Schools help churches reach caboodles of kids

McCrorry UMC held a Vacation Bible School July 15-18 with 45 children and 18 adults attending. Supper was served each night, followed by crafts, story time and music, ending with a slide down the "waterslide" on the front steps of the church. Their mission project was sending three flood buckets to United Methodist Committee on Relief. A pool party culminated the week's events.

Brookland UMC hosted a DinoDetectives Vacation Bible School July 14-18 with more than 50 children attending throughout the week. Approximately 30 volunteers provided snacks, music, crafts, Bible story time, games and puppet shows during the VBS.

Elm Springs UMC hosted a Power Lab Vacation Bible School that merged pastor Carl Palmer's two worlds as mad scientist and pastor, and the congregation and staff came along for the wacky ride. The mission focus was Nothing But Nets, a collaborative effort between the United Methodist Church, NBA Cares, WNBA Cares, Sports Illustrated, and other organizations to save



Power Lab scientists Denni and pastor Carl Palmer led VBS at Elm Springs UMC.

lives by providing families on the African continent with \$10 anti-malaria bed nets.

Several challenges were issued. If more than \$500 was raised (or enough for 50 bed nets), then the pastor would get a green mohawk. If more than \$600 was raised, Gregory Varner, director of youth ministries, would be slimed. Denni Palmer, director of Christian education was challenged to turn her hair pink if more than 100 kids attended.

As of Wednesday night, registration reported 103 kids, so Denni's hair was dyed pink by Thursday night. Thursday night's offering total was \$547, so pastor Carl arrived Friday with green Mohawk and a vat of blue slime. The final total was \$714 and well worth the new hairstyles and sticky slime.

But the week was not just about crazy challenges. It was about changing kids' lives in the community and on the other side of the world, and that is something powerful.

First UMC, Paris, along with First Christian Church of Paris and Ronnie and Charlotte Garner, hosted a "Surf Up"

Vacation Bible School last month. The event was held at Shoal Creek Camp. Many activities were planned for the children, including an overnight stay in the cabins.

More than 330 children, age 3 through sixth grade, plus more than 100 adult and youth volunteers,



Brookland UMC children became "Dino Detectives" during Vacation Bible School.

attended the Beach Party Vacation Bible School at Pulaski Heights UMC, Little Rock, last month. Fifth- and sixth-graders participated in local hands-on mission projects every day, while younger children broke into small groups for Bible stories, music, crafts and activities for riding the wave of God's love and learning "Beach Be-Attitudes" of obedience, kindness, forgiveness, boldness and belief.



A super Beach Party at Pulaski Heights UMC, Little Rock, drew 330 participants.

Mount Olive UMC, Fordyce, held a successful Vacation Bible School, with about 70 children ranging in age from 3 to 18 participating. The theme was "Walk It Out in Jesus' Way." VBS director Liz McNair said this was the best year yet.



Mount Olive UMC, Fordyce, hosted a well-attended Vacation Bible School.

Sulphur Springs UMC, Pine Bluff, hosted a successful Vacation Bible School last month that surfed through the scriptures with a Beach Party theme. Ages ranged from toddlers to youth. A contest for collecting the most mission

offering was held between the girls and boys. The girls won and saw that pastor Roger Armstrong received a cream pie in the face.

At Sulphur Springs UMC, pastor Roger Armstrong gets a pie in the face, much to the delight of VBS participants.



Outdoor fun and games were part of VBS at Paris UMC.



Beach Party fun drew a crowd for VBS at North Little Rock's First UMC.



McCrorry UMC welcomed a full house for its VBS.





## People of Faith

Ellen R. Alston, an Arkansas native who began her ministry in the Arkansas Conference but has spent the last 20 years serving as a pastor in the Louisiana Conference, has been appointed a district superintendent and member of Bishop William Hutchinson's Cabinet. Alston's new appointment is as superintendent of the Alexandria District in the Louisiana Conference.



Ellen Alston

Alston was ordained deacon in the Arkansas Conference in 1988 and elder in the Louisiana Conference in 1992. She was a clergy delegate to the 2004 and 2008 General and Jurisdictional conferences.

Alston was serving as pastor of Covenant UMC in Chalmette, the parish seat of St. Bernard Parish near New Orleans, in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast. The church was inundated by seven feet of water for several days and the entire community was destroyed. Alston "found refuge," she said, further north in Shreveport and started her life and ministry anew. She served as associate pastor of Christ Community United Methodist in Shreveport prior to being named to the Cabinet.

With new ministry challenges ahead, Alston said she is "excited about the opportunity to see all the different ways God's spirit moves and touches people's lives." The 63 churches in the Alexandria District include both urban

and rural churches, through the middle section of Louisiana, from Texas to Mississippi.

"I'm looking forward to the ways that my journey can connect with the many different places I've gotten to be part of the pastoral family — and that includes Arkansas," she said. "My Arkansas roots will be very present with me as I do this job."

Alston — who will be joined in Alexandria by her 13-year-old son, Nathaniel Dauphin — is the daughter of Millie and John Alston, a retired clergy member of the Arkansas Conference who serves as associate pastor of Gardner Memorial UMC, North Little Rock.

Tom Abney, retired clergy member from Star City, is the 2008 recipient of the Jim Beal Barnabas Award. Presented annually by the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, the award recognizes an individual who has encouraged persons in ministry. The recognition was announced during Annual Conference in June, but Abney

was unable to attend due to a death in his family. Bishop Charles Crutchfield presented Abney with the award plaque during a recent visit at his office in Little Rock.

More than 200 persons filled Grady United Methodist Church for the June 29 Celebration of Service and Ministry honoring 11 members who have each served the church for more than 70 years. Those honored were Bill and Jane Blankenship, Donald and Betty Gean Eifling, E.C. "Buck" Hardin, Bo and Betty Harvey, Katherine Keahey, Clyde and Donna Ruth Venable and Biddley Wood.

Displays with photographs and memorabilia highlighted the lives and years of church and community service of each honoree. Special offerings to God were presented for each honoree during the service, including vocal and instrumental music and poetry.

"It was a wonderful ... celebration



Tom Abney (left) is presented the Jim Beal Barnabas Award by Bishop Charles Crutchfield.

in worship of God's blessings upon these 11 people, the congregation and community of Grady," said pastor Lee Zuehlke. The Celebration of Service and Ministry Committee members presented a silk banner to the church in honor of the honorees. It was dedicated and consecrated by South East District Superintendent Dennis Spence.

After the service, Debbie and Randy Hardin served lunch at Hardin Farms. An afternoon reception at the church featured cake and punch and a slide show on the history of the Grady church and the honorees. Linda Smith chaired the celebration committee.



Billie Isaac, Betty Harvey and Tenie Bullard look at the church history display at Grady UMC's Celebration of Service and Ministry honoring 11 long-time members of the church.

## Respite Weekend volunteers sought

Camp Aldersgate is seeking volunteers to assist with weekend Respite Camps.

Respite Camps are for children with varying disabilities including cerebral palsy, mental retardation, epilepsy and autism. Respite Camps begin on a Friday at 5:15 p.m. and end at 11 a.m. Sunday. All volunteers receive a two-hour break during the weekend.

"Currently we are trying to find some young adult volunteers for this program," said volunteer coordinator Tess Hardin. For details, contact Hardin at thardin@campaldersgate.net or (501) 225-1444 ext. 239.

Hardin is also available to speak to church groups about the ministry programs and volunteer opportunities at Camp Aldersgate.

## UM Foundation makes DVD available to churches

"Faith Funds," a 10-minute video about the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas that had its debut in June at the Arkansas Annual Conference, is now being made available to United Methodist congregations across the state.

Available in DVD format, the video gives an overview of the Foundation and how it helps individuals and congregations strengthen church ministries, bring glory to God, and support the United Methodist connection by preserving and growing United Methodist ministries.

"Our mission is to create and administer permanent charitable endowment funds to strengthen and

expand United Methodist ministry in Arkansas," said Jim Argue Jr., Foundation president. "We are pleased to offer this informative and inspiring presentation to churches throughout the state. It makes a great program for UMW, UMM or Sunday School classes."

To order a copy, contact Brenda Pagan at (501) 664-8632 or (866) 281-8914 toll free or bpagan@umfa.org.

The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas is ranked fifth in assets among the 52 United Methodist Foundations in the country. Founded in 1963, the Foundation is responsible for more than 500 trust accounts that have combined assets in excess of \$110 million.

## Calendar

### AUGUST

- Aug. 1-2: Big Dam Bridge Walk for Children/Methodist Family Health and Youth Service Fund Lock-in, Wild River Country, North Little Rock.
- Aug. 5: Day Camp, Shoal Creek.
- Aug. 8-9: Worship Fair, "Linking Word and Worship," First UMC, North Little Rock.
- Aug. 9: Volunteer in Mission Leader and Disaster Training, Cornerstone UMC, Jonesboro.
- Aug. 14-17: Mount Sequoyah Unplugged, South Central Jurisdiction Singer/songwriter Retreat, Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.
- Aug. 15-16: UMYF Planning Retreat, Shoal Creek.
- Aug. 16: Volunteer in Mission Leader and Disaster Training, First UMC, Fort Smith.

### SEPTEMBER

- Sept. 1-3: South Central Jurisdictional Senior/Middle Adult Leadership Training, Mount

Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.

- Sept. 2-9: United Methodist Course of Study/Formation Event, Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.
- Sept. 13: Children's Ministry Conference, First UMC, Springdale.
- Sept. 26-27: Hiking/Backpacking Camp, Wayland Spring.
- Sept. 27: Camp Aldersgate 25th Annual Fish Fry, Camp Aldersgate, Little Rock.

### OCTOBER

- Oct. 20-23: Leaves of Gold senior adult event, Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.
- Oct. 27-30: Autumn Time senior adult event, Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.



# Campers learn valuable lessons from 100-mile radius meal

## ■ Shelling peas a first for some Ozark Mission Project campers

JONESBORO — If you had visited Cornerstone United Methodist Church here on Tuesday evening, July 15, you would have seen Ozark Mission Project campers from Little Rock, Maumelle, Conway and Cabot doing something many had never done before — shelling purple hull peas.

The cooks for the Cornerstone camp decided to extend the OMP “Rooted” theme by providing one meal during the week that consisted of food produced within a 100-mile radius of Jonesboro. Cooks visited the regional farmer’s market on Tuesday and purchased peas, corn, tomatoes and watermelons. They had brought with them hormone-free hamburger meat processed in Batesville and 10

## ■ Walton Family Foundation makes \$5,000 grant to OMP

A \$5,000 grant from the Walton Family Foundation was recently awarded to Ozark Mission Project.

OMP is “made up of volunteers who give part of their summer break to help financially and physically limited families in Arkansas,” said Steve Fulmer, business development officer for Arvest Bank Conway and a representative of the foundation. “Youth who participate in Ozark Mission Project do things such as paint houses, build wheelchair ramps and mow lawns. Arvest Bank and the Walton Family Foundation is proud to donate this \$5,000 to help these campers continue helping those in need in Arkansas.”

Founded by United Methodists in 1986, OMP holds 12 camps each summer, with campers helping persons who cannot maintain their homes due to financial or physical reasons.

The Walton Family Foundation supports initiatives that honor the values and principles of Sam and Helen Walton. The Foundation seeks to provide funding to grantees who are actively working to create positive change for others. Major areas of focus include: K-12 education reform, economic development in the Delta region of Arkansas and Mississippi, conservation of sensitive marine and freshwater environments, and enhancing the quality of life in Arkansas.

pounds of gourmet rice donated by Della Rice in Brinkley.

A map showing the origin of each item on the menu was posted for all campers to see. The map also showed the distances to California, Florida and Mexico, the sources of much of the produce marketed in Arkansas. By buying locally grown produce, the cooks demonstrated the savings created in reduced shipping costs, elimination of the middle-man distributor, and reducing the carbon footprint resulting from fuel expended during shipping.

The 100-Mile Meal was the brainchild of second-year cook Joy Rockenbach, a health educator at the Arkansas Department of Health and the State School Health Coordinator for Arkansas. She learned about the idea from a fellow Sunday School class member who works for Heifer International, headquartered in Little Rock.

Although the cooks knew they had rice and ground beef to serve, the rest of the menu was really a leap of faith, dependent totally on what produce was available that Tuesday at the farmer’s market. They descended on the market when it opened at 2 p.m. They had learned that the market was participating in a survey and everyone who took time out to complete the survey got \$3 in coupons to spend at the market. With five people from OMP completing the survey, they started their search with \$15 in hand.

Corn was located in the back of a truck, an entire bag of approximately 80 ears for \$20, raised in Harrisburg. Next, the cooks visited with the “watermelon” man. After discussing

the purpose of their purchase, the price on melons was reduced by half. The farmer later stopped one of the cooks and again said how much he appreciated what the group was doing for the community of Northeast Arkansas. He was from Lake City, 12 miles away.

A lug of tomatoes was made available at a very reasonable price, having originated from vines in Prim, Ark. Although Prim proper is beyond the 100-mile limit, the cooks were assured that the field was east of Prim, bringing it within range. The two bags of purple hull peas came from Augusta.

With their bounty of produce all loaded, the cooks headed back to Cornerstone. When the OMP campers sat down for the Tuesday night meal, Camp Director Ben Crismon announced that campers were encouraged to assist the cooks by shelling peas and shucking corn during their free time after the meal. This was another leap of faith on the part of the cooks, because only with the help of the campers would enough peas get shelled to feed the camp of more than 70 campers.

One camper commented that she had never “peeled beans” before. Even some of the adult campers admitted that they had never shelled peas. The



Ozark Mission Project campers at Jonesboro shell purple-hull peas for one of their meals.

pea shelling became a party atmosphere with everyone sitting around sharing stories while they worked.

The next night, campers chowed down on meat loaf over a bed of rice, peas, corn-on-the-cob, sliced tomatoes and peaches ‘n cream. They ate watermelon for dessert. Due to the fact that they felt some ownership through the pea shelling, many campers ate peas for the first time in their lives.

## Classifieds

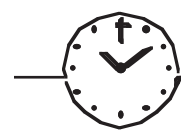
**PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED** in the *Arkansas United Methodist* for 50 cents per word, no limit. Call (501) 324-8031, or mail to: *Arkansas United Methodist*, 2 Trudie Kibbe Reed Dr., Little Rock, AR 72202; or e-mail: [kwilson@arumc.org](mailto:kwilson@arumc.org).

**COLLEGE DEGREE/Home Study.** Save \$\$\$ Christian Bible College, P.O. Box 8968, Rocky Mt., N.C. 27804; phone (252) 451-1031; [www.christianbiblecollege.org](http://www.christianbiblecollege.org)

**FULL-TIME DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES** at Asbury United Methodist Church in West Little Rock. Responsible for implementation of a full program that provides the youth and their families the opportunities for spiritual growth in worship, fellowship and service. Prefer bachelor degree with background in Christian Education or equivalent work experience. Direct all inquiries to Dr. Bryan Fink, Senior Pastor, 1700 Napa Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR 72212 or email to [bryan@asbury-lr.org](mailto:bryan@asbury-lr.org). Closes Aug. 31.

**ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, El Dorado,** has a full-time position open for a secretary. Church secretarial experience preferred but will train the right person. Must be proficient in computer operations and be capable of operating all office equipment. Knowledge of financial accounting is a plus. Efficiency is important but accuracy is essential. Must be bondable. Send resumé to 700 W. Eighth St., El Dorado, AR 71730.

**DIRECTOR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRIES.** Full-time position in ministry to middle school youth and their families, including securing and training volunteers, developing programming in mission outreach, fellowship, recreation and discipleship growth. Working with the Coordinator of Youth Ministries, help plan and execute youth events involving 6th-12th graders. Resumes and references can be sent to the Rev. Fred Haustein, 321 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR 72212 or [fredh@stjames-umc.org](mailto:fredh@stjames-umc.org).



## Remember When

### 100 Years Ago

**Aug. 6, 1908:** McCrory, Ark. — We have just closed a fine revival here which ran thirteen days. Rev. E.L. Gregory, a member of the Tennessee Conference, did most of the preaching and did it real well. The preaching was attended by the Holy Spirit, so that sinners were convicted and the church edified. ... — J.W. Patterson, P.C.

### 50 Years Ago

**Aug. 7, 1958:** Rev. W. Glenn Bruner, pastor of the West Helena Methodist Church, will be the guest evangelist in a series of revival services to be held at the Stanford Methodist Church, where Rev. Elbert W. Bruner

is pastor.

### 20 Years Ago

**Aug. 5, 1988:** Three new bishops were elected in the South Central Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church ... Though he did not finish with enough votes to capture a spot as bishop, the Rev. Jim Beal, superintendent of the Batesville District in the denomination’s North Arkansas Conference, garnered significant support in the election process. Beal remained a contender until the 13th and final ballot, when Rev. Dan Solomon of Corpus Christi, Texas, captured enough votes to cinch the third and final position.



# 'Sojourners' event at Hendrix to explore immigration issues

Bishop Minerva Carcaño of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference will be a featured speaker at "Welcoming the Sojourner — Finding the Church's Voice on Immigration," a Sept. 11-13 event at Hendrix College in Conway. The event is jointly sponsored by the Arkansas Conference and its Board of Church and Society, the General Board of Church and Society and Arkansas Justice for Our Neighbors.

Carcaño chairs the United Methodist Council of Bishops' Committee on Immigration and heads a United Methodist interagency task force that targets reform of U.S. immigration laws.

Other featured speakers include Bishop Charles Crutchfield of the Arkansas Conference; Mark Sills, executive director of FaithAction International House, Greensboro,

N.C., an interfaith, interracial non-profit organization working to form a united community of many cultures; and Bill Mefford, director of the Board of Church and Society's civil and human rights program.

Workshops at "Welcoming the Sojourner" will include:

- "The Bible and Immigration";
- "Root Causes of Immigration";
- "Organizing United Methodists

for Immigration Reform";

● "The Local Church as a Place of Outreach and Ministry," and

● "Immigration and Racism."

A Continuing Education Credit will be awarded for the event. Registration fee is \$50. To register online, go to [www.umc-gbcs.org/scjimmigration](http://www.umc-gbcs.org/scjimmigration).

For more information, contact Steve Copley, Arkansas Justice for Our Neighbors, at (501) 374-3811.

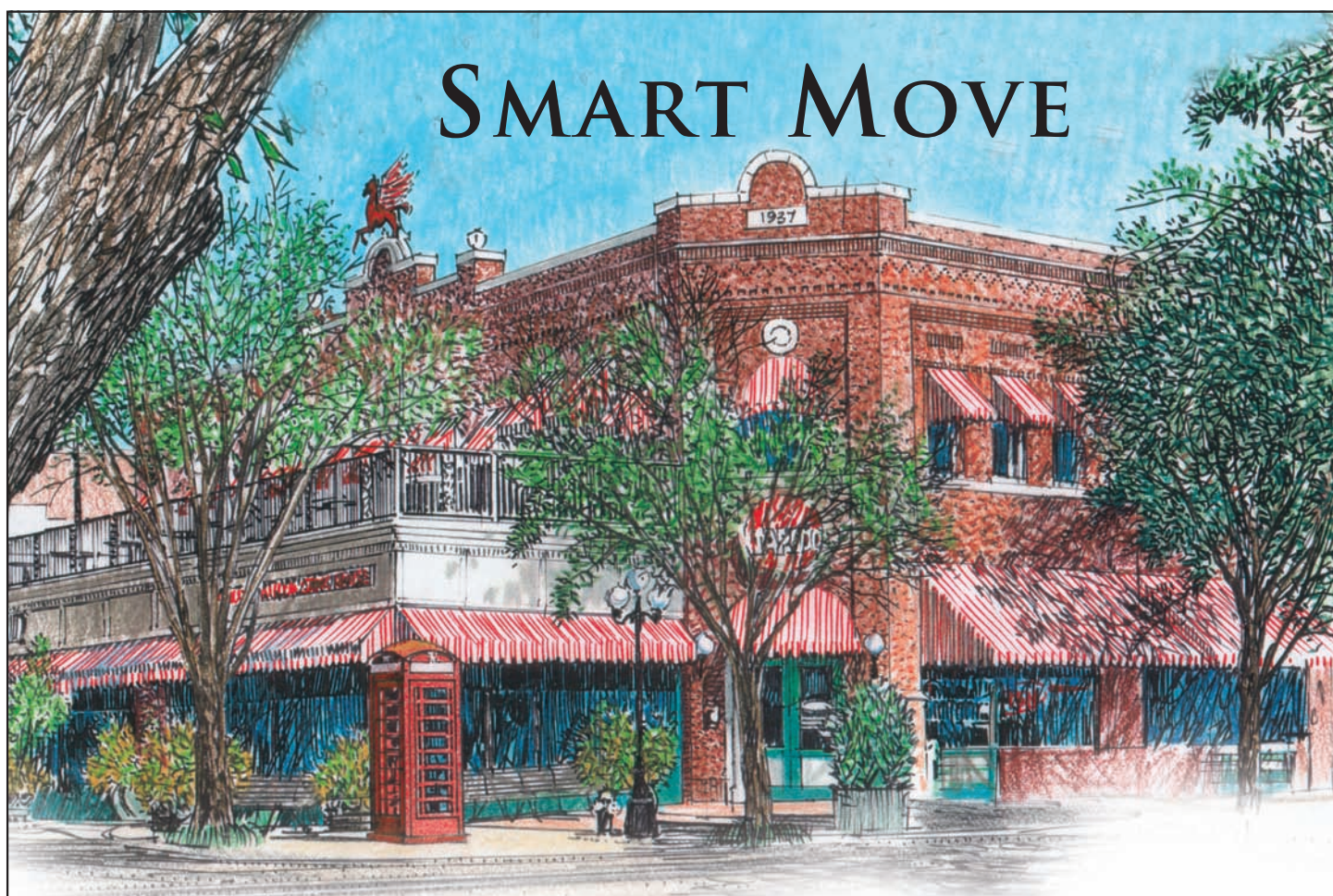
## Higher Education Foundation raises dollars for scholars

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The United Methodist Higher Education Foundation has funded 463 United Methodist Dollars for Scholars scholarships for the 2008-2009 academic year.

The United Methodist Dollars for Scholars initiative encourages local congregations to raise \$1,000 for a member enrolled in or planning to enroll in a United Methodist-related college, university or seminary. The foundation matches these funds, through collaborative partnerships with participating United Methodist-related schools.

An additional opportunity for a match of \$1,000 is available to students from conferences with local United Methodist foundations that are part of the Quadruple Your Dollars for Scholars portion of the program. Students qualifying for this initiative can become United Methodist Quadruple Your Dollars for Scholars recipients and receive an award totaling \$4,000.

The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas is one of the foundations that has partnered with the Higher Education Foundation to be a quadruple partner in the United Methodist Dollars for Scholars program. For more information, visit [www.umhef.org](http://www.umhef.org).



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