



United Methodist Arkansas

September 5, 2008

Village in Peru impacted by Arkansans

■ *Region still reeling from devastating earthquake*

By LAURA THOMPSON

CHINCHA, Peru — A small wooden chapel stands on what was a bare dirt lot. A dining hall and kitchen are now open to serve food to hungry children. A simple wooden cross hangs over the worship center for a church healing from division. These visible signs served as small reminders that our mission trip was making a difference ... for the people we minister with in Chinchá, Peru, but even more so in our own hearts.

Ten members of Searcy First United Methodist Church, two from Augusta First United Methodist and a native Peruvian now living in north-west Arkansas traveled to Chinchá in late July to work at the Methodist retreat center at Tambo de Mora and other area congregations hard hit by last year's earthquake.

"To witness to people who live in such a hopeless culture, (no clean water, little or no government servic-



Children pause during games at Pueblo Nuevo, near Chinchá, Peru, and are joined by visitor Laura Thompson (back left) of Searcy First UMC.

es, poor economy, and devastation from the earthquake) with such strong faith was a monumental lesson to me," said Karen Millar of Searcy. "They have hope among the obvious hopeless conditions that they endure because their roots go deep in their trust in Christ and also because they are counting on me and others who have visited to tell their stories so that they will receive the help that they so

desperately need."

Led by Searcy associate pastor Dee Harper, the team ranged in age from 12 to 77 years. We were graciously housed in the home of District Superintendent Pedro Uchuya and his family and were fed each day at a nearby restaurant owned by friends of the Methodist church.

When Pastor Pedro, Harper and

See PERU, page 8

New Orleans pastor rebuilds 'inner spirit' of people

United Methodist News Service

Three years and three churches later, United Methodist pastor Connie Thomas is still recovering from Hurricane Katrina — as is her flock.

Katrina slammed New Orleans on

Aug. 29, 2005, devastating the two small churches she served in the city's hard-hit Ninth Ward. In the storm's wake, Napoleon Avenue United Methodist Church was decommissioned by the denomination's

Louisiana Annual Conference, and Peck United Methodist Church was merged with two other churches to become First Street PW.

These days, Thomas is shepherding

See REBUILD, page 14

School spotlights mission

■ *Record numbers participate in School of Christian Mission*

By DONI AND FRED MARTIN

CONWAY — The staff of the Arkansas Conference School of Christian Mission, always hope for a "house-full," got their wish this year as record numbers attended the annual event on the campus of Hendrix College July 31-Aug. 3. Registrar Carolyn Cessna reported nearly 350 were enrolled for the event sponsored by Arkansas Conference Board of Global Ministries and Arkansas Conference United Methodist Women.

"We had the opportunity to express our theology of mission through our prayers, study and songs," said Marleene Calvin, who served as dean and led the staff during the four-day event. "We studied 'I Believe in Jesus' and 'Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival.' The study of Israel/Palestine was a repeat of last year and we looked at history and complexities of relationships between Israel and Palestine."

For the third year in a row, the school included a special clergy session on the spiritual growth topic involving Arkansas Conference pastors. Roy Smith, Arkansas Conference director

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INSIDE HEADLINES

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Viewpoint

Psychological differences define views of worship

By JOE WHALEN

If you look below the surface of the average United Methodist attending worship services, there are significant differences.

These differences are an outgrowth of each individual's personal experiences and are not always immediately obvious.

This is a difference in frame of reference that stems from a person's background with respect to where they worship the Lord and in what kind of worship environment they have grown up.

These differences are not unique to any one church but affect how the individual views the worship center and what can or cannot be done within that setting.

People who have grown up in and/or have lived in a "traditional" worship service environment with a sanctuary as the center of worship appear to have a subconscious belief that the sanctuary is literally the house of God and is not to be used for anything else.

Those people who grew up in and/or have worshiped in a "contemporary" worship environment have experienced a worship service that has always been in some sort of multi-use, if not mobile, setting. This may have been in the church fellowship hall, the church gym, and/or a church classroom. In all cases, this setting has been subject to multiple uses from the



Joe Whalen

inception of the contemporary worship service concept. As a result, these people expect that wherever they meet, it will be used for more than one purpose. They have no reservations about using the same space for different purposes during the typical church week. Indeed, they would probably be surprised if this were not the case.

Among people who attend a traditional worship service, a sanctuary is just that. When not being used to worship the Lord, it is seen as a place of meditation. Among these worshipers, other church activities that might be held in the sanctuary are limited to such things as choral or other religious musical events, the church Christmas program and the like. Using the sanctuary for any other use would be strongly opposed.

People who attend a contemporary service have no problem with a worship center that can accommodate any other form of church activity when not set up for worship. For them, worship is truly a "movable feast."



When planning new or expanded worship centers, the individual congregation needs to keep these differences in mind so as not to unintentionally

offend one or both of the two groups of worshipers that so often comprise today's typical church.

[Joe Whalen is a study director with the Little Rock branch of Market Strategies International. A 40-year veteran of the business marketing research field, he is a member of Lakewood UMC, North Little Rock, and the Arkansas Conference Committee on Communications.]

Submission guidelines

The Arkansas United Methodist welcomes contributions of stories and photographs related to the denomination and submitted in a timely manner by local churches, groups and individuals. Information may be edited for brevity and clarity. Always include information on a contact person who may be reached in case of questions.

Photographs may be submitted in print or digital format. We cannot use instant developing (Poloroid) photos or digital photographs printed on plain or photographic paper. Digital photos must have a minimum resolution of 200 and must be submitted electronically. We cannot guarantee that all photos submitted will be used.

Send stories, ideas and photos to: Arkansas United Methodist, 2 Trudie Kibbe Reed Dr., Little Rock, AR 72202, or e-mail to jdennis@arumc.org. For information, call (501) 324-8005.



By Jane Dennis

Editor's Corner

Children and the church

In newspaper circles, there is one unwritten rule that is universally shared and agreed upon: you can never go wrong with a story or photograph of children.

The same is true for the church. Children are important — we need them and they need us! Jesus made that abundantly clear when he chastised the adults for keeping the children a distance away from him and told them, "Let the children come to me!" He wanted the children, grimy hands and all, to be around him, to sing and laugh and play.

I envision Jesus sitting cross-legged on the ground laughing and playing with the children while the disciples are standing back with serious looks on their faces, not understanding and thinking, "Hey, we're supposed to be having a serious meeting about building the Church ..." But Jesus ignores them and plays with the children. What is Jesus telling us?

Jesus loves children. While holding a child in his arms, he talked to his followers about how to be a faithful disciple and how to lead others to



Jane Dennis

God. "Whoever receives one of these little children in my name receives me," he said. "And whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me."

That's why I'm always thrilled to publish photos and stories about Arkansas United Methodists who are in ministry with children. In this

issue alone, we have church folks caring for children in Peru and Nicaragua, serving children at Camp Aldersgate, inviting children to Vacation Bible School, teaching them at School of Christian Mission, giving them special activities and special places to gather, and even showing them how to cook using the church kitchen!

So the next time someone grumbles that a child's cries are disrupting a worship service, or complains about tiny fingerprints on the walls of the fellowship hall, just smile and know that those are good signs that bring delight to the Heavenly Father.

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



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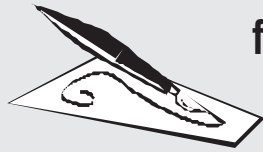
Viewpoint

Dear Friends:

I remember hiding under the covers and quietly tuning my little transistor radio to WKY, Oklahoma City just so I could listen to the drama of the political conventions. It is so much fun. The uncertainty of the roll call vote with its surprises and disappointments, the demonstrations with all the bands and balloons — what incredible fun. And the players that strode across the stage, love then or not, seemed like giants — Taft, and Kefauver and Kerr and Barkley and Thurman. Now everything is so cut and dried. The decisions are made long before the conventions are held. The only tension seems to be over the vice-presidential selection.

Across the years I remember seeing John Chancellor, an NBC reporter, being arrested on the floor of the convention. I remember the riots in the streets of Chicago in

An Occasional Word from the Bishop



1968. I remember those earnest young students who supported Harold Stassen (who?). I remember the words of Barry Goldwater that lost him an election, and the soaring eloquence of Ronald Reagan and John Kennedy. I remember the simplicity of Jimmy Carter. But of all the things I cherish in my memory of political party conventions (or should I say “political party parties”) was one closing moment. The convention was over, the decisions had been made, the delegates were hooting and hollering. The final gavel had come down. There was only the cleanup of the con-

vention hall to be done.

Except for one last word. The benediction was to be pronounced. There was nothing reverent about the moment. A large, imposing African-American pastor approached the podium. He was cheered, the party horns blew when his name was announced — Dr. Martin Luther King Sr., father of the martyred civil rights leader. He held up his hands and in the midst of the shouting and noise and cacophony, he told the crowd they had one more thing to do. He



Charles Crutchfield

told them to quiet down. He said we are now going to pray, and almost miraculously, you could have heard a pin drop in the convention center.

It simply reminded me that at the end of the day, after all our very human efforts have been expended, after all the drama kings and queens have played their parts, after the smoke is cleared from the back rooms, after all the polls have been taken and the votes processed, finally, God has the last word. The Bible reminds us to “...(Put) not your trust in princes....” No matter who gets elected, ultimately God in Jesus Christ is the one who saves us.

As the national election campaign progresses, I intend to hold all the candidates in my prayer, and invite you to do the same.

Faithfully,

Charles Crutchfield



Homosexuality: the issue that *will* go away

By THOMPSON MURRAY

I appreciate Bud Reeves' willingness to share his thoughts about “the issue that won't go away” (Shepherd's Staff, Viewpoint column, Aug. 15). The easy thing is for us not to be in conversation about the issue of homosexuality and to hope that we'll survive the fight every four years. It's particularly easy not to bring the subject up if you're satisfied with the current Disciplinary language, but Rev. Reeves opened the door for conversation about the issue, and for this I'm grateful.



Thompson Murray

Like my friend Bud, I am acquainted with people who would identify themselves as being both gay and United Methodist, but I have a far different perspective on their situation. My experience with people who know themselves to be homosexual and Christian has led me to believe that we don't have the right policy on this issue. I regret that the delegates to General Conference were unwilling to accept the language that came from

the majority report of the legislative committee that would have acknowledged the division that we have in our denomination in regard to homosexuality. I recognize that we have a long tradition within the church of not accepting open homosexuals as ordained ministers, and that we base this policy on a few verses of scripture, but I also know that maintaining tradition is not our highest calling and that we have found our way around other verses of scripture that violate our corporate reason.

If this weren't true we wouldn't have made room for the ordination of women. We certainly had a long tradition of only recognizing the call of men into ordained ministry and there was scripture to legitimize this position. There are those troubling passages in the 14th chapter of First Corinthians where Paul states very clearly that women are to remain silent in church, but we have allowed our reason to put these and other verses in perspective, and I think we should do the same when it comes to the issue of homosexuality. I don't think Paul's language about homosexuality was rooted in his experience of equal adults of the same sex maintaining faithful relationships with one another. I think he was offended by some sexual behavior that conscien-

tious people of all sexual orientations would find offensive.

I have no doubt that there would be a revolution within our denomination if our current policy of not ordaining open homosexuals was overturned, and I can accept this as a legitimate reason to keep things as they are for now, but I don't consider our current policy to be rooted in a faithful and consistent reading of Holy Scripture — which demands that we use our reason to put proper weight on all Biblical stories, parables and admonitions. I think our current policy of barring openly gay individuals from ordination is rooted more in our own cultural expectations than it is in radical trust in God, and I pray for the day to come when we are more focused on the gifts, graces and faithfulness of aspiring ministers than

we are on their choice of life partners.

Bud compared an openly gay man seeking to be elected a bishop to a socialist seeking to become the CEO of Exxon. I think this is a vast overstatement of the importance of human sexuality. I think the proper Exxon analogy would be to say that we want homosexuals to continue to buy our gas, but we don't want them to have a seat on the board of directors. There is a tremendous amount of injustice in our current policy. We welcome homosexuals to be in our pews, to sing in our choirs, and to make pledges to our stewardship campaigns, but we don't allow God to use them in our pulpits — at least not in an honest and open way.

The fact that we have this issue that won't go away means that there

See HOMOSEXUALITY, page 7

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE By Mike Morgan



Viewpoint

Soul searching: What does it mean to be a Methodist?

The Rev. Alex Jackson spoke with animation over the phone: "We had 45 on the first week, and 56 on the next!" he said excitedly. As in, 45 and 56 people. For a Sunday school class.

Want to know the topic? "United Methodist beliefs and practices."

Yep. And those numbers represent more than 25 percent of the worshipping population of Alex's church. For a single Sunday school class.

Alex is a Gen X pastor serving McKendree Memorial UMC in Portland, Tenn. Focused on energizing his church for ministry together, he seized on the idea of teaching a class on Methodist identity based on his positive experience in a previous church.

Alex's pleasant surprise should serve as a sign to pastors across our connection: Our people are hungry to know who they are.



Andrew Thompson



Gen-X Rising

By Andrew Thompson

There was a time when denominational loyalty ran in the family. That is no longer the case. And since we can't assume a generational familiarity with our tradition, it is becoming increasingly obvious that we need to be teaching it.

This is a question of core identity. All of the signs on our churches say, "United Methodist," but not a lot of our people know what that means.

Pastors often sell the laity short. We assume that people just want to hear folksy sermons and attend a church that doesn't push them too much. Methodist history and beliefs are best left in seminary, so this thinking goes.

But that may be exactly where we have gone wrong. When a pastor announces he will be teaching core Methodist beliefs and more than 25 percent of his church membership shows up to the class, that tells us something important.

What's more, the folks attending Alex's class represent a cross-section of the community as a whole. There are life-long Methodists, youth and young adults, visitors who have attended the church only a short time, and people who do not attend Sunday school but are curious about the subject. He has even received calls mid-week from people who heard about the class and wanted to know more.

It seems clear that our people want to know their own story. They want to know what their church stands for. And they want to claim a sense of real identity. That can occur only through embracing our tradition.

There are resources out there for any pastor who wants to offer a class on our Methodist heritage. The best one I have seen is Charles Yrigoyen's book, "John Wesley: Holiness of Heart and Life" (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).

The conventional wisdom these

days says that we need to downplay denominational identity in order to build up the church. I couldn't disagree more.

If we think the Methodist approach to the Christian faith still has anything positive to contribute to the universal Church, we should be emphasizing its distinctive witness.

And don't mistake what I mean: This has very little to do with committee structures, apportionments or rigid bureaucracy.

Instead, it has to do with a warm-hearted, evangelical faith with three priorities at the top of its agenda: saving souls, forming accountable disciples for Jesus Christ and spreading scriptural holiness across the land.

That's what reclaiming our identity can mean. And it starts with a serious study of our roots. The people are hungry to know who they are. If they are willing, Gen X pastors can lead the way in showing them.

[Andrew C. Thompson, an elder in the Arkansas Conference, is a doctoral student at Duke Divinity School. He can be reached at andrew@mandatum.org.]

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Spirit of giving, caring permeates Arkansas Ingathering

By JUDY HALL

The Arkansas Ingathering is dear to so many in our Conference. People work year round, or push at the last minute, to get

relief items together and made available to those in need. Many of us know someone who has dedicated themselves to this task of gathering and organizing and motivating others.

The first district Ingathering I attended at Paris looked like ants working to build an ant bed, all of the people running around each other with a task to get the job done. I can only imagine the work that went into planning those events and coordinating those efforts. There were other Ingatherings that included speakers and worship. You may have your own memories of those people and places.

One person who shines with many



Judy Hall

other Ingathering "queens" is the late Janet Canada of Goddard UMC. Janet joined the Church Triumphant and is missed by all who knew her, but many who never got the chance to know her will miss her, too — recipients of the many mission projects she undertook. She had a heart that was certainly designed for mission.

She called me one day after the district began picking up items instead of collecting them at one location. "Goddard has some items to pick up," she said.

"No problem," I replied and set up a day and time.

"You do have some help," she asked.

"Yes, I do." (After all, how much work could it be to load a few boxes, I thought?)

I was thankful when we got to Goddard that I not only had help, but two dollies as well because I am certain it was Janet's goal to kill us with the loading of boxes. The "some items" took up half of the basement of the Goddard church and three healthy women about three hours to

load! It felt that the boxes were never ending and that may have been in part because although Janet could not load, she was in the preparation room getting more kits together. Of course, in between, many words of encouragement and cold water were offered to the workers and we were thankful when she said those items were actually for the next Ingathering! The mission work for Janet never took time off — because she knew that the need for mission never takes a day off.

The next year when she called, I knew what to ask: where are the boxes, Janet (in other words how many steps do we have to go up?) and how many (as in how much of the Penske truck are we going to fill?) and do YOU have help there to load? It was a wonderful experience loading that year — from the ground floor location with many good backs assisting — and to see Janet's face, that satisfied look of a job well done.

She called after we had gathered from the whole district and asked if we filled up the truck. I had to say — almost. She sighed and remained posi-

tive nonetheless. "We did pretty well though didn't we?" she said. I could hear her hope and slight competitive nature saying, "Let's work even harder next year."

We had no idea that it would be Janet's last Ingathering, I am not sure if she knew either. But that is the whole point behind Ingathering — we never know. We do know this: disasters come, people suffer, and the church is called to rise and help, being the hands and feet and heart of Christ.

I think of those who receive the items we gather. A flood bucket that disinfects places that were once a home and now are covered with muck and filth. The washcloth and toothpaste to get you through the worst days of your life. Some witnessed this with the evacuees from Hurricane Katrina. How grateful were they just to wash their faces, brush their teeth and comb their hair. Some recipients remarked that the just the sight of those simple items on their bed looked like love to them and the results of

Viewpoint

Challenging query: Why should I be a Christian?

By BISHOP TIMOTHY W. WHITAKER

If someone were to ask you “Why should I be a Christian?” what would you say?

I cannot think of a more challenging question for a Christian. It makes us wonder if we have anything to say to a person who is not a Christian that would at least encourage him or her to consider becoming one. It also makes us think about why we ourselves are Christians.

Whenever we talk with a non-Christian, it is more important to witness than to convince. We should listen to his or her story and, when we hear some question that comes from that person’s experience, then we may share how the Gospel of Jesus Christ has enabled us to respond to that question in our own lives. We cannot argue anyone into faith in Jesus Christ.



Timothy Whitaker

Nevertheless, there is room in preaching, teaching and conversation for giving some reasons why one should be a Christian.

Jesus is alive

In my view, the first response is to declare that Jesus Christ is alive, and he is calling each of us to be his disciple. We who are Christians believe that the one Jesus called Abba, Father, sent him into history as “the exact imprint of God’s very being (Hebrews 1:3).” In his character, pattern of living and teaching we have “seen the Father (John 14:9).” This is a unique claim.

Since it is a claim that, if true, should cause one to change one’s whole life, then we owe it to ourselves to test it. The main way to put it to the test is to read the Gospels in the New Testament. They must be read with an open mind and heart. Reading the Gospels defensively is to fail to take seriously the Christian claim about Jesus Christ. If we are willing to read the Gospels with openness, then the person of Jesus Christ impresses himself upon our mind and

heart. While there are obvious differences in the Gospels, each portrays the same Christ. That is, the person of Jesus Christ communicates himself to us through the various witnesses to him. His gift of himself to us comes with a call to us personally as if to say, “Because I am who I am, why are you not following me?” This mysterious transaction between Jesus Christ and us occurs because Jesus Christ lives as the crucified and risen Lord and gives himself to us through the church and its book of original witnesses to him.

If someone dares to read the Gospels with openness and begins to sense the call of Christ, then he or she also should meet with Christians for conversation about their own experience of Christ. In the experience of others we begin to understand what is happening to us and how we can respond to this call. Worship with a congregation that celebrates rightly the sacraments of baptism and communion is also essential because these rites articulate in action the call of Christ to accept a new identity in the world and to live in communion with

Christ’ living presence.

There is no way to declare that Jesus Christ is alive and calling each of us to be his disciple without inviting someone to try a set of practices such as reading the Gospels, conversing with people of faith in small groups and participating in sacramental worship. The only reason someone would accept this invitation is because he or she senses something in our lives that he or she is seeking. Our witness matters more than our arguments, but our arguments offer a rationale for explaining why we are witnesses.

It’s the best way to live

Why be a Christian? The second response is that the life of being a disciple of Jesus Christ is the best way to live.

Someone is not likely to find this response compelling unless he or she is dissatisfied with his or her life. Still, nearly everyone feels this dissatisfaction in some way at different moments in life. One may feel anxiety as great as floating on a turbulent sea with no firm ground in sight. This anxiety

See *WHY*, page 10



Letters to the Editor

Museum questions

As a member of Asbury United Methodist Church in Batesville, home of the Arkansas United Methodist Museum, and as the former curator of said museum, I feel I must make a reply to the letter from Dr. Stan Reed of Batesville in the Aug. 15 edition of the *Arkansas United Methodist*.

First, let me assure the Arkansas Conference that all artifacts in the museum are safe and in no danger. The museum, thanks to current curator, Rev. Doyle Berckefeldt, is in better shape now than ever. Artifacts have been arranged in a more logical way, new artifacts have been added — there is much to be proud of and much for visitors to enjoy.

Asbury did not seek out to be the host for the museum — we were asked, almost begged. No other place could be found to house it in Central Arkansas — including Hendrix College where the archives are kept. With the historical significance of the city of Batesville for Arkansas United Methodists, it seemed like a good spot for the museum to be housed. The

Asbury congregation graciously gave full use of four rooms to the museum for a nominal rent. Several of our members are available to open the museum and to act as guides for anyone who would like to visit.

The roofs do need to be replaced. There have been *no* leaks and nothing has been damaged in the museum. Yes, there is a leak in the hall, but it is nowhere near the museum.

Second, I fully understand Dr. Reed’s feelings about being in a “catch-22” position. It is never fair of any group to elect someone to a position in their absence, unless that nomination has been accepted prior to the election. However, some of the statements Dr. Reed made require some clarification.

The building is “unsafe.” I am in the building many times during the week, and I do not feel in any danger. The sanctuary portion of the building is over 60 years old. The portion given over to the museum was built and dedicated in the early ’60s. Yes, like many older buildings, there are some things that could be updated or

refurbished, but the building itself is not unsafe.

About being “unable to determine where money should come from to make repairs,” as chairperson of the Asbury UMC Administrative Council, I have told Dr. Reed that the church has almost \$9,000 towards the roofs in a savings account. This represents money received through insurance due to some storm damage. The account did have \$14,000, but almost \$6,000 was spent to rid the church of bats — something many churches have had to do. The estimates to re-roof range from \$17,000 to \$25,000. We are a very small congregation, but we are still trying.

As to who needs to raise the money for repairs and is it “OK to ask for help for the museum” — that is not for me to determine. As the Museum Committee is a sub-committee of the Arkansas Historical Society, perhaps that is where the questions need to go.

I am glad that Dr. Reed has taken an interest in the museum. I would encourage anyone to come and tour

the museum. The people of Asbury UMC are proud to host the Methodist Museum of Arkansas — an important part of the Arkansas Methodist history.

LaDonna Busby
Batesville



Do not forget

Concerning decline of United Methodist membership;

1. Have we as a Church forgotten John Wesley’s admonition, “Offer them Christ”?

2. Have we forgotten Wesley’s Method of Learning — classes numbering 12 people and the bands (a gathering of these smaller groups)?

3. Have we forgotten that our church was born and grew under Wesley’s Methods: Bible study, prayer, fasting and compassionate care for one another, the community and the world?

God is the same yesterday, today and forever. His grace is the same today as it was in Wesley’s day. We may have forgotten.

H.L. Conway
McGehee





News Digest

Missouri Methodists surpass building goal in Mozambique

MAPUTO, Mozambique — United Methodists in Missouri built 16 houses in Africa during eight days in July to surpass their goal of building 75 houses in three years through Habitat for Humanity Mozambique. When all the dust had settled, the church's Missouri Annual Conference and its Volunteers in Mission program had completed 82 houses in the southeastern Africa nation since 2006.

An eight-member team from First United Methodist Church in Jefferson City and Kingsway United Methodist Church in Springfield dedicated the final houses July 24 in the community of Massaca, a former refugee camp near the capital city of Maputo.

"It was a lofty goal, but when we saw how quickly houses went up last year, we said, 'Of course we can do this,'" said Mark Dumas, pastor at the Jefferson City church. The houses were built on circular concrete slabs using thatch and reed and other building materials native to the area. Many occupying the new homes are some of the nation's most vulnerable people, including orphans of HIV/AIDS.

Grandmas, grandpas welcome kids at G.G.'s House

OCKLAWAHA, Fla. — For children who cannot enjoy the smell of freshly baked cookies at their own grandparents' home, Pat Frost and a band of silver-haired volunteers offer the next best thing. G.G.'s House is a place where children from underserved areas can learn to bake, play games and, most importantly, find comfort and attention. Its initials stand for "Grandma's and Grandpa's."

"This is a very depressed area, so a lot of the children that we deal with come from broken homes," says Frost, 60, director of the youth community center in the small, rural town of Ocklawaha. "They're not only starved for the necessities of life, but they're starved for love and attention."

Inspired by a sermon at her church, Ocklawaha United Methodist, Frost set out to create a special place where at-risk children can feel special. Frost and other volunteers renovated a run-down house owned by the church and opened the doors to neighborhood kids last October. They estimate that more than 1,000 children and family members have visited the center since.

Immigrant's case shows need for changes, supporters contend

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Jailed on minor traffic violations at nine months pregnant, Juana Villegas had to deliver her baby after being shackled to a hospital bed and without her husband present. On Aug. 15, as Villegas continued the ordeal that may end with her deportation, United Methodists in Middle Tennessee crowded into a small Nashville-area courtroom to protest her treatment by local authorities. The judge later dismissed one of two misdemeanor charges against her.

"I'm here to show my support for Juana specifically and immigrants overall," said Pat Smith, chairperson of the Committee on Church and Society of the United Methodist Tennessee Annual Conference. "Social justice is important as a Christian. How does our faith respond to this?"

Villegas, 33, is in the United States illegally, but her supporters said that violation does not justify the treatment she received following her July 3 arrest on misdemeanor traffic charges. "This is my city, these are my neighbors. I live here. I don't want to treat my neighbors this way," said Judi Hoffman of Edgemoor United Methodist Church.

Job's 'Three Simple Rules' continues making impact

English-language sales of "Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living," by United Methodist Bishop Rueben Job, have topped 100,000. The book also has been translated into French, Spanish, Korean and Portuguese and is available from Cokesbury.

The book on Methodism founder John Wesley's general rules has been used for study and reflection by bishops and their cabinets and in thousands of churches and small groups. Lenten studies are being developed for



Working with Habitat for Humanity Mozambique, United Methodists from Missouri build a house July 16 in Massaca near the capital city of Maputo.

UMNS photo by Mark Dumas

children, youth and adults, and will be available in December.

Young adult event to focus on discerning God's call

A young adult discernment event for U.S. United Methodist ages 20-30 will be held Oct. 31-Nov. 2 in New York City. The event is designed to help young adults discern a call to ministries of love, justice and service.

Sponsored by the Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner and the Youth and Young Adult Program Office of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, the deadline for application is Sept. 15. All reasonable costs, including U.S. travel, lodging and meals, will be covered by the event sponsors.

For more information, contact Becky Louter at blouter@gbgm-umc.org or (212) 870-3850 or Alycia Capone at youngadults@gbgm-umc.org.

Black Methodist caucus establishes fund

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Black Methodists for Church Renewal has established two financial endeavors to encourage, connect and train African-American youth and young adults in The United Methodist Church and to support the work of the church's black caucus. A permanent endowment honoring Bishop James S. Thomas and his wife, Ruth, will provide support for leadership of African-American youth and young adults.

A second financial endeavor is a planned giving program to support BMCR mission initiatives and the caucus' work as an advocacy, ministry and leadership development organization in behalf of more than 2,400 primarily black United Methodist congregations

across the United States. The caucus board of directors established the financial initiatives during its Aug. 15-16 meeting in Nashville, Tenn.

Rebuilt lives: legacy of Katrina Aid Today

NEW YORK —

Katrina Aid Today was successful because it was a collaboration among voluntary social service organizations that "had a more direct access to clients than the government does," according to Tom Hazelwood of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

UMCOR managed nine partners that made up the consortium including Catholic Charities USA, the Salvation Army and Episcopal Relief. Together,

they used a \$66 million grant to provide disaster-related case management services to large numbers of Katrina survivors after the deadly 2005 hurricane devastated the U.S. Gulf Coast. The consortium concluded its work at the end of March after two and a half years of operation.

The statistics tell the story: 73,346 households, representing 193,633 individuals and families, were assisted through the partners of Katrina Aid Today. Case managers were able to leverage more than \$136 million for the recovery effort. At one point, the partners had 138 offices in 34 states. Later, the focus shifted to 18 states in the most vulnerable areas.

"It's rebuilding whole lives, in whole new ways," said Tamera Fontenot, who coordinated the services for Catholic Charities.

Sock monkey ministry brings comfort to thousands

CHELSEA, Ala. — Beth VanSickle still remembers the comfort she felt as a child when her grandmother gave her a sock monkey. "It always brought me joy, no matter what I was going through in my life," she says of the stuffed, handcrafted doll.

Now, struggling with cancer, VanSickle is spreading that same comfort to thousands of others, including children with cancer and troops and children in Iraq. Volunteers for Sock Monkey Ministries, which VanSickle founded in 2005, find it difficult to keep up with the demand. They have made 8,500 sock monkeys in the last two years, and there is still a waiting list.

"When you look at them, you can't help but smile," she says of whimsical toys. To learn more, visit www.sock-monkeyministry.com.



Director Pat Frost holds 3-year-old Jaden Porter during an activity at G.G.'s House, a ministry of Ocklawaha (Fla.) United Methodist Church. UMNS photo by John Gordon

UM clergy couple gives benediction for Democratic convention

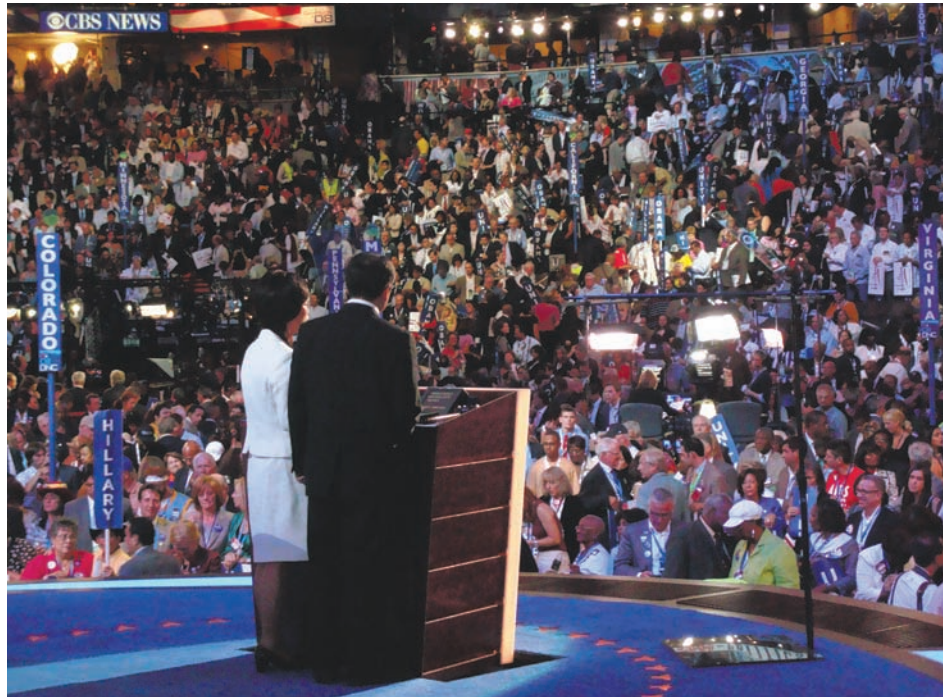
United Methodist News Service

DENVER — The Revs. Youngsook and JinHo Kang delivered a benediction before 20,000 people at the U.S. Democratic National Convention. The United Methodist clergy couple received the invitation from convention organizers two weeks before the event. Their Aug. 26 benediction followed the speech by U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton.

She is superintendent of the Metropolitan District in the church's Rocky Mountain Annual Conference, and he is senior pastor of Christ Central United Methodist Church in Aurora, Colo.

"It was a privilege for my husband and I to express our belief in justice and peace through our benediction," she said later.

Youngsook Kang, who was a candidate for bishop earlier this year, said



The Revs. Youngsook and JinHo Kang deliver the benediction at the Democratic National Convention in Denver on Aug. 26. UMNS photo courtesy of Youngsook Kang

the convention experience brought back memories of this year's denominational legislative assembly in Fort Worth, Texas. "The delegates on the plenary floor, caucuses and newsrooms reminded me of our own General Conference that was just held a few

months ago," she said. She served in a high-profile job as chairperson of the calendar and agenda committee at General Conference.

Bishop King picked to lead men's agency

United Methodist News Service

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Following a yearlong celebration of its centennial anniversary, the agency responsible for men's ministry elected Bishop James King as president of the 25-member board.

Meeting Aug. 21-24 in the agency's Nashville offices, the Commission on United Methodist Men asked King to lead the agency for the next four years. As he assumes office with United Methodist Men, King, 61, will be moving from Kentucky to South Georgia. He succeeds Gil Hanke, a layman from Nacogdoches, Texas.



James King

HOMOSEXUALITY, continued from page 3

are some wonderful people who won't go away, and I'm glad of it. Our church would be a poorer place if we didn't have these men and women who by no choice of their own happen to be attracted to people of their own gender. I may be wrong, but I'm inclined to think this is a fading issue for many people — young people in particular, and I'm

convinced the day will come when most United Methodists will believe that we need to change our policy. It hasn't happened soon enough for some of us, but there will come a day when this issue will go away.

[Thompson Murray, an elder in the Arkansas Conference, is director of the Wesley Foundation campus ministry at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.]

INGATHERING, continued from page 4

their use made them feel human again.

The items we gather may not seem like much to us. Some may say why bother? Others want to spend their time on mission that seems more relevant to them. Some argue that we need to support local mission instead of those in other countries or states.

The truth is, with Ingathering, we are doing ALL of those things. The truth is that because we have gathered and are prepared, we are better able to show the love of Christ quickly and efficiently and when it is needed most, almost before disaster comes.

Janet Canada and others before her understood this. Whether they witnessed it first hand, or God placed that yearning in their hearts, over and over they got the job done and God's people benefited from their love.

I hope our numbers are even higher this year than in the past. With Maxine Allen's genius of "Bulk is

Better" we have made Ingathering even easier to achieve. If we add just a few items to our shopping lists or give even a few dollars if shopping is not your thing, people will be loved. Disasters and hardship will not have the final word, God's love will.

I will really miss Janet this year and her enthusiasm and encouraging words. But her heart lives on in those who answer the call to mission. May we add to the long list of those who have answered that call, honoring their work while helping those still here and in need. And this year, may our truck drive into the Arkansas Rice Depot on Nov. 15 and may it take the huge volunteer corps there some serious work to unload, because this year may it be completely full!

[Judy Hall is pastor of the Prairie View and Pioneer Memorial churches in the West District and chairperson of the Arkansas Conference Small Membership Church Committee.]

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PERU, *continued from page 1*

translator Zora Sikic would go into the market to shop for supplies, remaining team members continued to work and play with the children who gathered every time our van arrived. While one group constructed a chapel at nearby Dos Puentes from supplies provided by a church in Lima, the others returned to Tambo de Mora to paint windows and classrooms.

Plans to purchase supplies on arrival day were thwarted when all the markets were closed in protest of what was seen as a poor police investigation into the kidnapping and brutal murder of a young girl a few blocks from the Dos Puentes church. As the ground was being prepared to erect the chapel, the chief of detectives for all of Peru and his investigators from Lima were searching that exact area for any physical evidence of the



Chase Green makes new friends at Pueblo Nuevo.

crime. After stopping to visit with the team, he read a description of the victim's clothing and asked that we pray for the investigation. What a strange and overwhelming privilege to gather in a circle where the chapel would soon stand and to pray with three investigators for their work and for the neighborhood and its people.

One afternoon five members went to Pueblo Nuevo, a church and school one block from Pastor Pedro's home, to bring Bible stories and crafts to the children there. With an unexpected crowd of 60 children, God answering our prayers to not disappoint the children that day, as we ended up having exactly 60 small toys to hand out.

When the children at Dos Puentes were told at the end of our story and craft time that we were from the church that sends money to the feeding ministry, we were mobbed with

hugs and kisses from tiny tots to adults. The church leaders told us they pray for us and our church every Sunday. The feeding ministry began following Searcy's first mission trip to Peru two years ago. The church has sent \$500 each month to feed about 140 children at four sites on Sundays since that time.

"The Peru Mission project was an opportunity for not just our missionaries, but our whole church to continue our relationship with the people in Peru," according to Harper. "Our mission trip was an eye-opening experience for many on the trip and I think we all come back with a new rededication to the feeding ministry that our church supports."

Visiting two of the feeding ministry sites in action was a highlight of the trip, especially seeing the new kitchen and dining room being used for the first time at Tambo de Mora. Children gathered with Pastor Pedro in the chapel for Sunday School, then went over to the newly painted and furnished dining hall for a hearty lunch. Ironwork windows and doors had been purchased by the team and workers paid to install them while the team painted the dining room, two classrooms, and the many windows and doors. Tables and chairs to seat children for the feeding ministry had been purchased and set up. A stove, sink, dish cabinet, plates, cups, utensils, cooking pots and towels purchased for the new kitchen were used for the first time the Sunday the team was there. Funds were also provided to purchase and install fixtures for two restrooms near the dining hall.

After visiting two more sites the next day, the group was driven to Satellite City. Refugees who lost their homes in the earthquake and others who've come from the mountains in search of jobs and education live there in reed huts with no running water and no electricity. About 120 children attend school from this poorest of the poor communities and about 40 of them and many parents gathered as the van rolled in.

We had only small toys to give them and a local pastor brought oranges, but we did not have enough for each child, emphasizing the overwhelming need and how helpless we felt to assist them. Pastor Pedro is working to secure a lot to build another donated chapel and has already recruited a feeding ministry leader who worked with the program where she lived before. When the land is secured, the hope is to assign a pastor and begin a church and feeding ministry there. But for that day, we left feeling that we had done nothing to help these people except to listen to

their stories and take their needs to heart.

"The effects of the earthquake were still very evident on the streets of Tambo De Mora and in Chinchá, but what I came away with was a continued respect for the hospitality and strength for the people of this region," Harper said.

"It was great being in the midst of these caring people who welcomed us with open arms," said Chase Green. "We were able to serve them whole-heartedly and offer anything we could and they were the ones who ended up blessing us the most."

Other team members included Ken Blanton, Kyle Brown, Eddie Follett, Earl Jackson and Jay Jordan. Bill Gregory Sr. and Bill Gregory Jr. are from Augusta First UMC.



Mission volunteers from Arkansas gather with friends in Christ at Chinchá, Peru.

Churches or individuals interested in finding out more about the feeding ministry or a new medical ministry in Chinchá are invited to call Searcy First UMC at (501) 268-5896.

[Laura Thompson, a member of Searcy First UMC, was among the Volunteers in Mission who traveled to Chinchá, Peru, this summer.]

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Rachel Fritsche of Greenwood plays with children while on a mission trip to Nicaragua.

Mission experience in Nicaragua influences teen's career choice

■ *'God showed me a plan' amid international mission, Greenwood teen says*

By JAN DUNN

GREENWOOD — University-bound Rachel Fritsche knows what God wants her to do with her life. The 2008 Greenwood High School graduate is headed for the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville with an Honors College Scholarship in hand and a mission trip to Nicaragua fresh in her heart.

"God showed me a plan for a clothing company that includes a mission," Fritsche said. In college she will focus on apparel studies, with an emphasis on marketing and global studies.

Active in Greenwood United Methodist Church, Fritsche, 17, accompanied 12 other college students, some from Greenwood First Baptist Church, to the Central American country for two weeks to share the love of Christ. The trip was arranged through Hearts to God Ministries. Part of the time was spent with locals who foraged for food at a dump site near Limonau.

The stay in Limonau included kitchen chores for some members of the mission group and construction

work for others. Fritsche was dismayed and discouraged by the lack of food available for the locals.

"We cut up vegetables for three meals for the people during that time. Three meals! That was all the food available," she said,

"We worked at the feeding stations where the people ate there times a week," said mission team member Amanda Shook, 18. "I don't know what they did for food the rest of the time."

Shook will be a freshman at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith in the fall and is interested in seminary and international children's ministries.

The travelers took along extra luggage packed with clothes, as well as rice and beans for cooking, and Vacation Bible School supplies. Fritsche noted that the food was the most important thing they packed.

And lack of suitable clothing for the locals left a lasting impression on Fritsche.

"I know God really wants me to do this (apparel studies) with my life," she said, adding that the mission trip won't be her last. "I feel called to go back."

[Jan Dunn is a member of Greenwood UMC and a former newspaper reporter.]



Light of Her Life

Former art teacher Lucile Barnett painted a light-filled impression of First United Methodist Church in Little Rock back in 1962. But her faith journey there began 95 years ago when she was enrolled in the Cradle Department on the day of her birth.

Cozy in her home at Parkway Village, Lucile's finances are as secure as her faith. The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas is trustee for the Revocable Trust and Charitable Remainder Unitrust created by Lucile and her husband Rollin after a visit from Foundation President Jim Argue to their Bethel Sunday School Class at First Church.

Lucile has no worries. She enjoys time with her friends, a weekly beauty shop visit and watching Rev. Vic Nixon on the Pulaski Heights UMC broadcasts every Sunday. When her earthly life is done, the Rollin and Lucile Barnett Memorial Endowment Fund will express their love for the Church forever.

"I have faith in Foundation. They've been so good to us, and they've done everything we asked."



The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas



Students in the classroom of leader Sue Barnes listen intently as they engage in the "I Believe In Jesus" study.

SCHOOL, continued from page 1

of ministries, led the session in a CEU-opportunity for clergy that concluded in two days.

Morning praise leader Pat Freemyer directed the 7:10 a.m. worship sessions as large groups gathered for singing, praise, devotion and prayer to begin the day's activities, with each service reflecting the theme of one of the studies.

Calvin stated many of the 85 youth and children attending received a close-up look of Toltec Native American burial grounds near Scott.

Worship and plenary sessions held in Staples Auditorium highlighted the Biblical basis for each of the three studies as well as giving examples of ways we can use the information from the studies in our daily lives.

Maxine Allen, Arkansas Conference minister for missions and ethnic ministries, reminded partici-

pants that the 2008 Arkansas Area Hunger Ingathering is coming up Nov. 15. She emphasized that when making donations, "bulk is better."

When participants arrived on campus Thursday morning, many brought bags and child's backpacks filled with school supplies from local UMW units around the state for distribution to the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. This mission project consisted of many backpacks, notebooks, packages of paper, crayons, pencils and much more.

As adults were involved in studies, the following classes were ongoing:

Nursery children were led by Teresa Cooper;

Children and youth leaders included Susanne Darter, grades K-2; Karyn Cramer and Nicole Cessna, grades 3-5; Millie Goins, grades 6-8; and Hilary Jo Stine, grades 9-12.

Melody Wyatt served as assistant dean children/youth.

Spiritual growth study leaders for "I Believe in Jesus" were Allen; Sue Barnes, retired public school and college level mathematics instructor; Pam Estes, pastor of Grand Avenue UMC, Hot Springs; Ronnie Miller-Yow, pastor of Wesley UMC, Little Rock, and chaplain at Philander Smith College; and Michael Roberts, executive director of Connected in Christ of the Arkansas Conference.

Leading "Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival" were Josephine Chalakee Allen-Deere, a full-blood Muscogee Creek, born and raised in the United Methodist Church and very active in UMW and also tribal hymn singing; David Wilson, Conference Superintendent, Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference (OIMC) and member of the Choctaw Nation; George E. Odell, pastor of Good Faith Carr UMC, Pine Bluff, and a descendant of Abnaki tribe of New Brunswick, Canada; Vickie Fleming, retired teacher and lay speaker who serves as spiritual growth coordinator of North District UMW.

The study of Israel/Palestine was led by Raouf J. Halaby of Arkadelphia, a naturalized U.S. citizen with a doctorate of education from the College of Teaching of English at Texas A&M, who is fluent in four languages.

Lynn Baker served as song leader. Melissa Hayes was pianist.

Carolyn and Nicole Cessna served as registrars.

Other learning opportunities and experiences were offered through focus groups that shared information on the following subjects:

Partnership in a Changing World-Mission, Pat Freemyer;

Child Care as Mission, Meredith O'Hara;

Native American Ministries, Tweedie Sombrero;

General/Jurisdictional Conference Report, Carole Teague;

Arkansas Death Penalty Moratorium, Freddie Nixon;

100th Anniversary of the Social Creed, Doni Martin.

Teenagers worked in Hulen Hall assisting at mealtime Friday night and collected tips totaling more than \$500 and later purchased school supplies for OIMC. The youth also participated in a hands-on mission project at Central Christian Academy assembling cribs and cots and cleaning up the yard.

The Saturday Night Social featured performances by participants of the children's program and a story-telling session with Reggathia Calentine.

Studies in 2009 will include a second year of "Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival"; "Food and Faith"; and Sudan. Study subjects are chosen three years in advance.

[Doni and Fred Martin are members of Corning First UMC and on the School of Mission leadership team.]



Youth participants in the School of Christian Mission followed the same studies as adults.

WHY, continued from page 5

comes from lacking the buoyancy of faith in a God who cares for us. One may be oppressed by loneliness, which is overcome by being baptized as a member of Christ's church. One may feel rootless in a mobile society, but acquire a home and a heritage in the Christian tradition. Or, one may know guilt over having wasted one's life so far or having done harm that cannot be undone and find freedom in the Good News of Christ's forgiveness.

The Christian life offers not only a way of meeting our spiritual needs, but also a direction for how to live our lives. We are shaped by such daily practices as honesty, hospitality, kindness, charity and courage to confront wrong. Without these kinds of practices, our lives have little meaning or substance except merely trying to enjoy our existence. As we mature in

the Christian life, we begin to realize that our daily practices have to be related to our responsibilities as citizens to advocate for social policies that are more just.

Our testimony that the Christian life is the best way to live is not likely to be compelling unless the person with whom we are talking sees in us a pattern of living that is attractive. Once again, we have to remember that convincing cannot be separated from witnessing.

The way things are

A third response begs time for much conversation but can be summarized by saying there is no vision of reality that is a more adequate interpretation of the way the world is arranged than the Christian view of life. Included within this view are

Christian understandings of creation, the interpretation of the drama of human history, the meaning of suffering, the ordering of sexuality, the role of possessions in our life, the hope of life beyond death, and so on.

I am convinced that there is no vision of reality that is as adequate as the Christian view. It has demonstrated its validity over and over for 2,000 years against alternative views, including Greco-Roman paganism and modern scientific materialism. It also will prevail over post-modern skepticism and relativism.

Many secular people assert that there is no need to posit a Creator since science offers explanations for the beginnings of things, but they fail to perceive where the "laws" of the universe, which explain beginnings, come from or why there is something

rather than nothing.

There comes a time when each of us must say "yes" to Jesus Christ in order to become his disciple. The British evangelist Bryan Green used to say that you cannot ooze into the kingdom of God; you must choose to enter the kingdom of God. While each of us must choose, every congregation ought to have a way of inviting and nurturing persons to come to faith. And, within every congregation that is effectively making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, there are members who are giving some kind of answer to the question, "Why should I be a Christian?"

[Whitaker is the bishop of the Florida Annual Conference. This commentary was adapted from e-Review, the online news service of the Florida Annual Conference.]



Coming Up

Central UMC, Fayetteville, will host a concert featuring Welsh tenor Huw Priddy at 3 p.m. Sept. 14 at the church, 6 W. Dickson St. Open to the community, the concert will include traditional and contemporary Christian music. Priddy's Fayetteville appearance follows on the heels of a series of concerts in Branson, Mo. A reception will follow the concert.

Pulaski Heights UMC, Little Rock, will welcome William "Bill" Lawrence, dean at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, as a guest speaker at 6 p.m. Oct. 6. Dinner is \$6.50. Call (501) 664-3600 for reservations.



Bill Lawrence

Monticello First UMC will consecrate its new Family Life Center during the 10:50 a.m. service Sept. 7. Bishop Charles Crutchfield and District Superintendent Dennis Spence will lead the service, along with pastor Bill Eason.

Refuge, a retreat event for youth in grades 7-9, is coming up Oct. 10-12 at Camp Paron. Sponsored by the Arkansas Conference Council on Youth Ministries, the event will feature Mark Norman, an Arkansas Conference pastor currently serving in the Kansas East Conference, as guest speaker and the Dave Hassell Band as worship leaders. The theme is how to live D.E.B.T. free.

Cost is \$80 if registration is received by Oct. 2, or \$90 after that date. For more information, contact Mike Meeks (uthmanmike@gmail.com), Terri Morgan (pastortjm@sbcglobal.net) or Georgeanne Carpenter (carpente@uark.edu).

Arkansas native Mike Cantley, a student at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., wishes to recommend to his Arkansas friends an upcoming conference that centers on the Apostle Paul and the emerging church. "Reclaiming Paul: The Apostle in the Emerging World" is set for Oct 22-24 in Kansas City, Mo.

The conference brings together emerging church leaders and Pauline scholars for a robust theological con-

versation on Paul and the Church. It includes four presentations by Pauline scholars, responses by emerging church leaders and a variety of related workshops. Details are available at <http://www.reclaimingpaul.org>.

"I think we United Methodists need to be in on this dialogue," Cantley commented to the *Arkansas United Methodist*. Cantley can be reached at cantley@american.edu

The conference is presented by Nazarene Theological Seminary, in partnership with Emergent Village, and hosted by Jacob's Well Church, 1617 W. 42nd St. Kansas City, Mo.

St. James UMC, Little Rock, is organizing a divorce recovery support group, Rebuilding When Your Relationship Ends, which will meet on Mondays from Sept. 8 through December, at 6 p.m. at the church, 321 Pleasant Valley Drive. Contact Jenni Duncan, (501) 217-6708, for details.

For those seeking to quiet the soul, Little Rock's First UMC offers a Taizé Service of Prayer and Worship at 5:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month. Worship includes meditation, reflection, readings and music. More information is available online at www.funclcr.org or by calling (501) 372-2256.

Holiday Hills UMC, Greers Ferry, will host its third annual Feed the Hungry benefit golf tournament Sept. 27 at Indian Hills Golf Course. Sponsored by United Methodist Men, the four-person scramble begins with a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. until noon.

Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams in each flight. Cost is \$50 per player. Corporate and individuals sponsors are sought. Proceeds will go to hunger-relief programs in the Greers Ferry area.

For more information, contact Bob Brittain at (501) 825-7289.

The Arkansas Choral Society will start rehearsals for its 78th annual "Messiah" concert at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 8 at Little Rock's First Baptist Church, 62 Pleasant Valley Dr. All singers are welcome. Rehearsals will be held on Mondays at 7 p.m. The concert is set for Nov. 30. The performance will feature the Central High School Chorus and Arkansas Symphony players. For details, call (501) 376-8484.



Thank You.

Methodist Family Health's Walk for Children was a huge success thanks to the dedicated participants, volunteers and generous sponsors. We offer our heartfelt appreciation to everyone for taking steps with us to provide compassionate care to children and families in need. Net proceeds from the event will benefit the United Methodist Children's Home playground in Little Rock and the many children who will enjoy it for the years to come.

Thank you to our sponsors!

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It Happened

Diamond City UMC held its annual Teacher Appreciation Luncheon Aug. 12, honoring 70 teachers, administrators and school workers. The guests enjoyed a brief break from preparing for the opening of school. United Methodist Women members served the meal, complete with homemade desserts.

Pastor Mace Straubel welcomed the group and introduced guest speaker Bill Hughes, a retired educator and coach from Mountain Home who shared amusing stories and real-life experiences from his long teaching career. He also reminded the school guests that the most important thing in helping students with learning life's lessons is to understand them and love them.

Twenty-five skateboarders registered for the first Skate Day at St. Paul UMC, Malvern. Fifteen more youth came to watch. Participants ranged in age from 5 to 21 and hailed from Glen Rose, Bryant, Little Rock and Malvern.

Lyssa Edwards and Meesha Fowler-Berken gave a devotion, "Is Competitiveness Christian?" Insanity Skate Shop of Bryant provided prizes. Refreshments included hot dogs grilled by men of the church. Skateboard lessons were given as participants tried their hand at lines, quarter pipes and high ollies.

"It was a blast to see people learning to skate" and to see youth not associated with the church participate and enjoy the day, said event coordinator Derek Smith.

Woods Chapel UMC honored pastor Dan Walker and his wife Peggy with a farewell potluck in June. The Walkers began a new appointment at Weiner following Annual Conference. The special event featuring an abundance of food and fellowship was held at the home of Ken and Arlene Gifford.

Des Arc First UMC hosted a salad luncheon for school personnel and teachers Aug. 12. More than 72 schoolteachers, administrators and other personnel and 25 church members were served roasted chicken salad and

dessert and a bounty of good fellowship. School supplies collected by members of the church were presented to the teachers and school superintendent Rick Green.

The following Sunday, on Aug. 17, the church's UM Youth group hosted a community wide back-to-school pizza party and praise service.



Greenwood UMC students battle for position in a tug-of-war at the Aug. 17 Back-to-School Olympics. Food and games were enjoyed, along with a dunking booth manned by associate pastor Zack Underwood and Scott Synoground.

First UMC, Wynne, sent 14 youth along with five adult leaders to Savannah, Ga., for a weeklong group work camp, joining youth from all over the United States in home improvement projects for needy Georgians. By the end of the week, 60 homes were renovated and many hearts had been touched with God's love.

Charleston UMC's Vacation Bible School was a major success. As a mission project, participants collected \$862 for Nothing But Nets, which provides bed nets to children in Africa who are at risk of contracting malaria from mosquitoes. At each gathering the VBS kids were asked what the



Among those honoring pastor Dan Walker (seated) at Woods Chapel UMC are (from left) Al Wilson, Earlene Darr, Truman Olive, Willodean Olive, Peggy Walker, Arlene Gifford, Verda Eaker, Sue Wilson and Bear Eaker.



Shoal Creek Camp and the West District sponsored a Youth Group Planning Retreat Aug. 15-16 that drew 53 participants from seven local church youth groups. Rod Hocott, Arkansas Conference minister with youth and young adults, led youth and adult leaders in planning activities for the upcoming school year.

theme was for the day, and their answer was an enthusiastic "Nets!" As a reward for achieving and exceeding the goal of \$500, the kids joined in a slam-dunk contest. In addition, an offering for Shoal Creek Camp was collected at the closing ceremony, bringing in \$177.

Pleasant Grove UMC, Jonesboro, hosted a Back-to-School party Aug. 16 for more than 60 neighborhood children. Participants dived into a giant banana split and ate lots of hot-dogs. St. Mark's Episcopal Church and Pleasant Grove UMC worked together to supply bags of school supplies for the children.

Amy Arnold, youth minister at Pleasant Grove, has already begun working with Ann and Marsha Patton of St. Mark's to supply Christmas gifts for 80 children.



Youth take part in the first Skate Day at St. Paul UMC, Malvern.

together for an afternoon of great food and entertainment. The event nourished both body and soul and included free food and entertainment.

School supplies were given away "to show our kids here in Polk County how important education is" and to give back to the community, one church member said. "We want to do our part to help as many kids as possible for school."

Numerous businesses and organizations in the community made donations and helped make the school supply project possible.

Twenty-nine youth from Cabot UMC participated in the Big Dam Bridge Walk for Children, sponsored by Methodist Family Health Aug. 1. Proceeds raised from this year's walk will be going to build a playground for the children cared for by

Methodist Family Health. The Cabot group raised almost \$800 for the project. In addition, the Cabot UMC College Praise Band provided music for



Pleasant Grove UMC pastor Larry G. Hunt helps create a giant banana split for a back-to-school party hosted by the church.

Rather than being a fund-raising event, the community dinner held Aug. 16 at Mountain View UMC was an awareness-raising event designed to bring people from all walks of life



Cabot UMC was well represented at the Big Dam Bridge Walk for Children Aug. 1. The church's praise band performed and 29 youth joined in the benefit walk for Methodist Family Health.



Vacation Bible School students at Charleston UMC enthusiastically supported the denominationwide Nothing But Nets anti-malaria campaign.



Teachers and school personnel gather for a salad luncheon hosted in their honor by members of Des Arc UMC.

IT HAPPENED, continued from page 12

pre-walk activities. All participants were served hot dogs and hamburgers. To cool down from the triple-digit heat, the youth ended the evening with a trip to Wild River Country water park.

Weiner UMC is rallying with the community to support its school district and help increase the student population in order to reach and exceed the required student minimum. For a Save Our School Ministry, a local farmer partnered with the church to provide a vacant tenant house. Members of the church remodeled the house over the course of two weeks and are now looking for a family with school age children to live in it rent-free.

In other news, the Weiner church hosted a Teacher Appreciation meal to show appreciation and support for teachers. The church will also sponsor a wild game meal — featuring venison, wild turkey, squirrel and rabbit — during Weiner's October Rice Festival. All proceeds will go to the Nothing But Nets anti-malaria program, which pro-

vides insecticide-treated bed nets to families in Africa.

"Giving Our Hearts Away," a mission study focusing on Native American Indians, drew 21 participants to Morrilton First UMC Aug. 16. Sponsored by United Methodist Women, the study was led by Emma Carrothers, chairwoman, and Mara Cawein and Pamela Brownlee. The gathering began with Native American music presented by Preston and Pat Sweeden. Attendees were asked to share their experiences and attitudes concerning American Indians. A video and discussion of the culture and history of Native Americans followed.

The Fellowship Hall held display tables covered with Indian artifacts and rugs handcrafted by Native Americans. Native American cookbooks were used to prepare a lunch featuring squaw bread, squash soup, corn salad and Indian pudding. The gathering closed with a prayerful water ceremony. An offering of \$206 was collected to send to the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference.

First UMC, Monticello, held a successful Beach Party Vacation Bible School that drew nearly 100 children daily. The following Sunday, the children shared what they learned during the morning worship service. As a mission project, VBS participants collected \$370 to purchase fans for the elderly in the community.

Thirty-five members and friends of Gillett UMC enjoyed a four-day/three-night vacation in Branson, Mo., in late July. Activities and fun include Splash Country water park, Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede, Silver Dollar City and "Noah: The



This group of 35 youth and adults from Manila UMC spent Aug. 2-3 in Branson, Mo., and attended "The Promise," a musical about the life of Jesus.

Musical." Other outings included putt-putt golf, shopping, the Amazing Pets show, go-cart racing and the fire and water production at Branson Landing.



Youth from Wynne First UMC pause before heading off for a swim break while on a mission/work camp trip to Savannah, Ga.



Members of Gillett UMC took in the sights and sounds of Branson, Mo., in a recent trip sponsored by the church.



At Morrilton First UMC, Mara Cawein and Pamela Brownlee lead a study on Native Americans.

Kids in Kitchen stir up impressive dishes at Monticello First UMC

MONTICELLO — Kids in the Kitchen, a summer cooking school that provided basic cooking skills for children in grades 5-12, was recently completed at First United Methodist Church here. The classes were offered under the leadership of Juanita Webb.

Two classes, each with 12 students, grouped fifth- and sixth-graders for one session, and seventh- through 12th-graders for the other.

The participants all had a lot in common, including an interest in cooking, eating, laughing, learning, sharing and caring for one another.

However, cooking skills were not the only thing taught. Time was set aside each day for devotions led by Lori Fallon and Hannah James, table graces taught by Judy Murphy and line dancing and exercise led by Dalene Stephenson. Janie Fuller taught the students proper table setting and talked with them about table manners and meal etiquette. David and Michelle Webb also assisted in the class.

The young chefs prepared a wide variety of items. They cooked and prepared omelettes in a bag, deviled eggs, chocolate chip meringue cookies, chocolate pudding, biscuits, corn



Fifth- and sixth-graders and leaders who participated in Kids in the Kitchen at Monticello First UMC are (front, from left) Miranda Majors, Mallory Clavet, Clark Jarrett, Britany Nall; (middle) Autumn Langley, Cait Flemister, Jessica Beaty, Kelly Hequist, Laura Smith, Ashley Berryman; and (back) David Webb, Judy Murphy, Anna Lafever and Juanita Webb.

bread, streusel topped applesauce muffins, coffeecake, basic yeast bread (from which they made Focaccia, cinnamon rolls, pigs in a blanket and angel biscuits), potato salad, brown-sugar glazed carrots, spaghetti with meat sauce, Southern-style peach cobbler, snickerdoodles, a decorated cake, pizza pockets, chicken and rice supreme, garden salad, English peas and hot fudge pudding cake, and more.

Copies of the child-friendly recipes used by Kids in the Kitchen are available for a donation of \$5 made to Kids in the Kitchen, First United Methodist Church, 317 S. Main St., Monticello, Ark. 71655. For more information, contact Webb at (870) 367-5804.

REBUILD, continued from page 1

a third New Orleans congregation — Mount Zion United Methodist Church, where the sanctuary is still in ruins, looking very much like it did in the days after the hurricane.

The urban, inner-city church is trying to rebuild its facilities, but Thomas has a bigger vision in mind. “My focus is on rebuilding the inner spirit of the people,” she said.

From the ruins of Mount Zion, a free clinic for the city’s neediest residents has opened in the church’s activities building. Called Luke’s House, the clinic sees about 15 patients every Tuesday evening with the help of church volunteers and medical volunteers from Louisiana State University.

“We love Luke’s House,” Thomas said. “It is a hands-on ministry and is the heartbeat of ministry for New Orleans’ recovery.”

Still, her faithful flock would like to have their church whole again.

“It has been a hard year for me, but it has been a hard three years for mem-

bers of this church,” she said of waiting to rebuild. “For two years, we didn’t know that we’d be a worshipping congregation.”

Mount Zion is surrounded by lots of rebuilding, including plans for a multi-family housing development across the street.

“We have a good group of children in the neighborhood, and we automatically inherit them on the weekends when they come to play on our grounds,” said Thomas.

Homelessness is another area of ministry here. Mount Zion hands out 40 to 50 vouchers every night so that homeless people can go to the Salvation Army for a clean bed, a place to shower and two meals. The vouchers cost \$8 and are supplied by the congregation and another area church.

Members of Mount Zion “are determined to come back and would not settle for anything else,” she said. “It will be a history-making moment when they get back into the sanctuary.”

Deaths

League City, Texas

HAZEL JEWELL STEWART VANLANDINGHAM, 83, the surviving spouse of United Methodist pastor Ralph Vanlandingham, passed away at her home in League City, Texas, on May 26, 2008.

She was born on Oct. 16, 1924, in Arkansas County, near the Sunshine community. She was the daughter of Julius and Pearl Stewart and a 1945 graduate of Humphrey High School. She married Ralph Vernon VanLandingham on June 1, 1945.

She became a minister’s wife when her husband graduated from Hendrix College and Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. She was helpmate to his ministry as he served pastorates at Hickory Plains, Carlisle, Bryant, Bastesville, Greenbrier and Sardis in Arkansas, as well as others in Texas and Colorado. He was chaplain at Air Force bases in Delaware, California, Nevada, Louisiana, Montana, England, Labrador and Vietnam. When he retired from the military in 1973, they took a parish in Colorado but eventually returned to Arkansas to reside in Greenbrier until his death in 1989. She then moved to Texas to be close to her oldest daughter, Terry Davis.

She was a soft spoken, gracious, and generous person, and although shy in social situations, she exuded a calm, quiet strength in support of her husband and her children. She lived her faith with integrity and an open heart

to all those around her. She laughed easily and forgave quickly. She was an extraordinarily creative individual, an accomplished artist in oils and acrylics who left a legacy of many beautiful paintings. She was a talented cook, seamstress and needle crafter. She was best friend, counselor and confidante to her children and, in her later years, had a very special fondness for her cockatiel, Pearly.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Ralph; her son, Barry; her parents, Julius and Pearl Stewart; her siblings; Julius Jr. and Winsett Stewart, Lucille Dent, Ruth Brewer, Doris Yarbrough and Roy Lee Stewart.

She is survived by three daughters, Terry Davis and husband Gary of Houston, Texas, Sharon Davidson and husband Scott of Missoula, Mont., Cindy Haugsjaa and husband Anson of Lolo, Mont.; a daughter-in-law, Toni VanLandingham; 10 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were held June 1 at Forest Park East Funeral Home in Webster, Texas, with burial at Crestlawn Memorial Park in Conway, Ark.



The Arkansas United Methodist publishes obituaries of clergy members of the Arkansas Conference and members of their immediate family, as well as lay persons who have held conference-level positions. Notices may be sent to: Editor, Arkansas United Methodist, 2 Trudie Kibbe Reed Dr., Little Rock, Ark. 72202, or emailed to jdennis@arumc.org.

Volunteers in Mission

This Volunteer in Mission listing includes mission opportunities offered by local churches and districts. Often there are openings on these mission trips and room for additional volunteers from elsewhere to join the team. For more information on any of these projects, contact the individuals listed or Don Weeks, Arkansas Area Volunteers in Mission coordinator, 18 Montagne Court, Little Rock, AR 72223; (501) 868-9193 or 681-2909; dweeks@arumc.org.

Arkansas: VIM Teams needed for tornado and flooding clean up.

Tornado Clean up:

- **Bryant/Benton.** Contact Kay Parda, (501) 944-2390.
- **Little Rock.** Contact Don Weeks (501) 681-2909.

Flooding Clean up:

- **Norfolk.** Contact Fire Chief Frank Baker — (870) 499-5527 office, (870) 499-5610 home, (870)405-0775 cell or Debbie Stanick — (870) 499-5954 home, (312) 972-0095 cell.
- **Oil Trough.** Contact Jackie Gregory, (879) 799-3231, (501) 412-7019 cell.
- **Calico Rock.** Contact Paul Seay, (870) 297-8878.
- **Augusta.** Judy Clark, (870) 347-5066, (870) 347-2216 home.



Sept. 26-Oct. 4: Shiprock, N.M., St. James UMC, Little Rock. Glen Duncan, (501) 551-1951.

Feb. 7-15: Costa Rica, a VIM experience sponsored by First UMC, Bryant. Kay Parda, (501) 847-026 or 944-2390 or kay@fumcbryant.org.

Immediate: Van Buren County, Ark., tornado recovery & rebuilding. Particularly need persons with carpentry and roofing skills. Don Weeks, (501) 681-2909 or dweeks@arumc.org.

Immediate: Urban restoration project in downtown Little Rock. Showers, kitchen & accommodation available at Quapaw Quarter UMC. Betsy Singleton, (501) 375-1600 or revbsb@aol.com

Village UMC holds camp meeting

HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE —

Bonnets, bib overalls and bluegrass music were the order of the day at Village United Methodist Church on “Camp Meeting Sunday” Aug. 10. Celebrating their heritage, many of the members attended the services in flowing gingham dresses and bonnets or their “best bib and tucker.”



Performing recently at Village UMC, Hot Springs Village, were the Camp Meetin' Singers (from left) Randy Lusk, Glenn Brooks, Ray Breedlove, Ed Pittman and Bruce Peterson.

The “camp meeting” is a phenomenon of American frontier Christianity, especially in the United Methodist Church. In sparsely populated areas of the 18th century, there were few churches and even fewer ordained ministers. Camp meetings partially fulfilled the religious needs of many rural dwellers. The extended prayer meeting services lasted several days. Often, several ministers were scheduled to preach and their sermons were usually quite lengthy. In order to participate in the services for several days, those traveling some distance to the meeting often found it necessary to “camp” at or near the event. Thus, the name “camp meeting” was

derived.

Associate pastor Norman Carter brought the morning message. The Camp Meetin' Singers, comprised of Randy Lusk (autoharp), Glenn Brooks (guitar), Ray Breedlove (string bass), Ed Pittman (guitar) and Bruce Peterson (mandolin), opened the services with a rousing rendition of “Giddy-Up Mule.” They accompanied the congregation in singing “I Saw the Light,” “Just A Little Talk With Jesus,” and “Will the Circle Be Unbroken.” Their special music selection was “Life's Railway to Heaven.”

A traditional potluck luncheon followed, with more than 125 attending.

Prospective students invited to join 'Window on Wesley' event at seminary

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Wesley Theological Seminary invites all who are considering masters level theological education to attend a fall “Window on Wesley” discernment and exploration event on Sept. 9 or Nov. 11, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., or on Oct. 21 from 5–9 p.m.

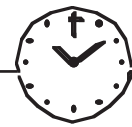
Window on Wesley events are opportunities to explore seminary education for those preparing for ordained or lay ministry as well as individuals pursuing other vocational paths. Each event includes community worship, information about degree programs and financial assistance, opportunities to talk with professors and current students, and a tour of the campus. Community members guide individual and group discernment times throughout the day. Participants are invited stay for dinner and an evening class at their discretion. Participation is free, but reservations are requested to assist with preparation.

Wesley Theological Seminary is one of the largest of the 13 United Methodist seminaries. Wesley prepares

more than 560 students from more than 30 denominations to become exemplary teachers, preachers and leaders through Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, and Master of Theological Studies programs. In addition to intercultural immersion opportunities and spiritual formation groups, the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts curriculums have options for specialization in Urban Ministry, Youth Ministry and Emerging Ministries.

Candidates for ordination may also participate in the Student Pastor Program, which allows students to pastor local parishes while pursuing their degree. Each spring semester, seminarians from other schools join Wesley students to explore the intersection between faith and public policy through the National Capital Semester for Seminarians.

To register for Window on Wesley, go to www.wesleyseminary.edu/visit. For more information about Wesley, contact Beth Ludlum, director of recruitment, at (202) 885-8653 or bludlum@wesleyseminary.edu.



Remember When

100 Years Ago

Sept. 3, 1908: Rev. Joe Ramsey, the blind evangelist, and Rev. J.F. Jernigan, the sweet singer of White River Conference, will assist Rev. J.H. McKelvy in the Salem camp meeting near Benton, including second and third Sundays in September. All preachers cordially invited to attend and help.

50 Years Ago

Sept. 4, 1958: Rev. James Clemons, Field Representative for Hendrix College, preached at the

morning worship service of First Methodist Church of Helena, on Sunday, August 24. Rev. Alf A. Eason is pastor of the church.

20 Years Ago

Sept. 2, 1988: Kellye Cash of Memphis, Miss America 1987, was a special guest at a statewide youth rally Aug. 21 at St. James United Methodist Church, Little Rock. With more than 500 youth attending, the former beauty queen sang and shared her Christian witness and testimony.



Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- Sept. 1-3: South Central Jurisdictional Senior/Middle Adult Leadership Training, Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.
- Sept. 2-9: United Methodist School of Studies, 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: 25th Annual Fish Fry, Camp Aldersgate, Little Rock.
- Sept. 30-Oct. 4: Interim Pastor Training Seminar, Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.

OCTOBER

- Oct. 19-22: “Let Your Life Speak” retreat for clergy and laity, Mount Eagle Christian Center.
- Oct. 20-23: Leaves of Gold senior adult event, Mount

Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.

Oct. 23: “What Are They Saying About the Soul?” lecture by Joel Green of Fuller Theological Seminary, Hendrix College, Conway.

Oct. 27-30: Autumn Time senior adult event, Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 8: Arkansas Conference United Methodist Women annual meeting, Benton First UMC.
- Nov. 14-16: South Central Jurisdictional Singles Retreat, Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center, Fayetteville.
- Nov. 15: Arkansas Area Ingathering, Arkansas Rice Depot, Little Rock.
- Nov. 15: “Unleashing the Possibilities of Your 20- and 30-somethings Ministry,” simulcast presentations at St. James UMC, Little Rock, and First UMC, Hot Springs.

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.

ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, a 1,000-member church in West Little Rock, is searching for a Children's Intern. This part-time person needs to have a strong faith in Jesus Christ, a passion for teaching children, and an interest in developing church leadership skills. The job requires good social interaction skills, creativity, and a willingness to work in a team environment. Computer skills are required and Early Childhood education is a plus. If interested, please send resume and cover letter by email to Pam Snider at pam@asbury-lr.org or by mail to: Pam Snider, Asbury United Methodist Church, 1700 Napa Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR 72212.

ELM SPRINGS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, a growing church in Northwest Arkansas, is seeking a part-time Director of Youth Ministries. Expected start date is Oct. 1, 2008. Experience preferred. Interested candidates may apply by mail to Elm Springs United Methodist Church, Staff Parish Committee, P.O. Box 8, Elm Springs, AR 72728, or email to umpreach@centurytel.net.

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

GROWING OPPORTUNITY IN FORT SMITH, AR, for someone with a vibrant faith and a heart for students. First United Methodist Church is looking for a team player who is passionate about leading youth with the message of Christ. Candidate must be a student of the youth and young adult culture with experience in youth ministry. Must be committed to leadership development; training and equipping youth for life's challenges is essential for spiritual growth and spiritual health. Candidate would oversee holistic ministry for 7th-12th grades and their families. For more information give us a call at (459) 782-5068 or contact Stephen at sdickinson@fsfumc.org.

FULL-TIME YOUTH PASTOR who will partner with student ministry team to cast and implement vision for all aspects of student ministry. A proven track record of success in student ministry, as well as a passion for recruiting, equipping and deploying volunteers for a powerful teen ministry is essential. Join our high energy staff! Submit resumé to Youth Pastor Search, First United Methodist Church, 206 W. Johnson Ave., Springdale, AR 72764, or email to mike@fumcwire.com.

SINGLES MINISTRY ASSISTANT, St. James United Methodist Church, Little Rock, 12 hours a week, oversight of volunteer ministries, visitor contact related to single adults. Contact Jenni Duncan, (501) 217-6708 or submit resumé to jenni@stjames-umc.org

People of Faith



Alan Fulcher, a member of Southside UMC near Batesville and a senior at Southside High School, led the way in constructing a new playground at the church. A Service of Consecration and blessing ceremony took place Aug. 6.

Alan is a member of Boy Scout Troop 320. The playground construction project was the final step toward the completion of requirements for the prestigious Eagle Scout badge.

Paige Passmore, 16, a member of Greenwood UMC, was recently honored as Volunteer of the Week when she served as an unpaid volunteer at United Methodist-affiliated Camp Aldersgate in Little Rock. Passmore spent three weeks helping with special camps attended by children with disabilities, development delays and various medical conditions.



Paige Passmore

The experience "certainly gave me a different outlook," said Passmore, a junior at Greenwood High School. For the campers the week is a radical departure from their regular routine, she said. It also gives the children an opportunity to enjoy the camp experience just the same as children without disabilities and medical conditions.

Passmore followed her brother Weston's volunteerism to Camp Aldersgate, where he spent three summers. She plans to return for the 2009 summer session.



Members of Southside UMC celebrate the completion of a new playground at the church. Alan Fulcher (center, striped shirt) led the effort as his Eagle Scout community project.

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