



United Methodist Arkansas

Sept. 19, 2008

UMs respond as wave of storms batter U.S.

■ *Texas, Louisiana coastal areas pounded by Ike, Gustav*

Cautioning that the work ahead will be expansive and costly, United Methodists in Texas and Louisiana have begun to assess damage from Hurricane Ike and respond to emergency needs along the storm's wide trail of destruction on the heels of Hurricane Gustav.

With 110-mph winds, Ike pounded the U.S. coast on Sept. 13, submerging thousands of homes and leaving millions of people without power as it swept northward. The storm has killed at least 30 people in Texas, Louisiana and states as far north as Illinois and

Ohio, according to news reports.

Officials with the United Methodist Committee on Relief have been in contact with Bishop Janice Riggle Huie of the church's Houston Area and Don Cottrill, director of connectional ministries in Louisiana.

Leaders of the church's Texas Annual Conference have requested UMCOR supplies for distribution, and UMCOR representative Sandra Kennedy-Owes was en route there to determine other needs.

"The impact of Ike and other hurricanes on life and property extends from Haiti to Houston," Huie said. "We are so appreciative of UMCOR's

See STORMS, page 7



Bishop William W. Hutchinson coordinates response to Hurricane Gustav from the storm-damaged sanctuary of Shiloh United Methodist Church in Maringouin, La. As Hurricane Gustav took aim at the coast of Louisiana, Hutchinson sent out messages of comfort and warning to clergy and laity using IRIS, an immediate response information system. A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose

Sadness universal when children die

[This report of ministry in the African country of Tanzania reflects the work of Charles and Karen Wiggins, United Methodist missionaries from Arkansas.]

By KAREN WIGGINS

BUNDA, Tanzania — Teddy is the mother of Adam. Adam is one of the exceptional children in my first English class in Bunda. How promising he is! Adam is the child who always stands at the road as I drive by, saying to me in sign language, "You make me proud."

Today, Neema and Salome were waiting for me to go to Teddy's home.

Her 6-month-old baby boy was found dead yesterday morning. So again, I get about \$10, grab a bag of papayas, tie one kanga around me, and throw another one over my shoulder. With malaria and AIDS so prevalent, we forget that we are able to die of all the things that kill our children in the United States. Jacob died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (S.I.D.S.). A very healthy baby woke up happy as usual, nursed and went down for a nap. While



Adam lost his baby brother, Jacob, to SIDS.

Teddy was washing clothes, Jacob just stopped breathing and died.

It was about a 30-minute drive up the road past our house. We went parallel to the mountains that separate us from the Serengeti. We passed children with satchels balanced on their heads walking to yet another school that I have never seen before. I had never been this far on this road before. Elephants were killed on this

See MOURNING, page 6

Bishop rules in favor of Bush Library lease

United Methodist News Service

A United Methodist bishop has ruled that a request for a decision of law about Southern Methodist University's right to lease campus property to the Bush Foundation is "improper, moot and hypothetical."

Oklahoma Bishop Robert E. Hayes Jr. rendered the decision after examining actions of the church's South Central Jurisdictional Conference in favor

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INSIDE HEADLINES

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■ Ozark Mission Project wraps up 12 summer mission camps involving 750 youth volunteers, page 9.

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Letters to the Editor

The good fight

I know it's not politically correct to go against modern moral escapism, or to side with God on issues He has dealt with thousands of years earlier, or to try to defend our Church's stand on moral issues such as homosexuality, gambling, drinking, smoking, gossip, infidelity, divorce, etc., or to speak out about these issues without fear of reprisal. We are blessed to have pastors such as Bud Reeves who has the courage to state his beliefs about our church's stand on ordaining homosexuals as pastors in our denomination. And we are blessed to have a bishop who is willing to state his beliefs on our state's efforts to legalize the lottery form of gambling.

There are probably lots of other pastors in our denomination who hold the biblical truths about the things God calls sin yet who do not have strong enough courage to openly state these truths in their roles as our spiritual leaders. They might offend someone, especially the chairman of some committee who doesn't like the pastor to confront socially sensitive issues. No wonder we are known by other denominations as the church where "anything goes."

No wonder our numbers are

declining. No wonder many of our idealistic youths, the ones you and I used to be like, are going to the other denominations such as "New Life" or some other branch that preaches living by moral standards based on God's word. You know, kids see through us. They know falsehood when they see it, and they sure don't want anything to do with it. God bless them!

I'm sure I will be labeled a religious fanatic by some. That's OK. Two years ago I would not have had the courage to express my beliefs. But now I know where I stand and on whose side I stand. And I'm at peace with life and my fellow man. I know God loves each of us, sinner and righteous, and each of us has the opportunity, while we still live, to repent of our sins and turn to God through his son Jesus Christ and all of our sins will be forgiven. And on that day when we stand before God we can say we fought the good fight and held to the truths in spite of our fear of what others might say or think about us. And we will be in excellent company as we will find out sometime in the future.

W.W. Whitehurst
Little Rock



By Jane Dennis

Editor's Corner

On the road

We are moving into uncharted territory for our family. Oldest daughter Lindsey turned 16 last week and has a shiny new driver's license that features her smiling face. (Note that I did *not* say a shiny new car to match!)

I am well aware that this milestone represents a critical turning point in my life as well as hers. Of course, like so many teenagers, it's a dream come true to have the ability to legally get behind the wheel of a car and drive off in any direction. But as Mom, I consider it my job to stave off that event for some time yet. This phase is still very new, and we're taking it slowly. (No road trips just yet!) A driver's license does not mean total, immediate and absolute freedom around here. That time will come. Eventually.

For now, I am confident that Lindsey knows how to operate a vehicle. She's been "practicing" with her driver's permit and an adult at her side since she was 14. She has a solid two years of driving experience under her belt, in all sorts of weather and



Jane Dennis

road conditions and familiar and unfamiliar locales. She successfully completed an extensive driver's education training course. Most of all, she has proved to us that she is a cautious, safe and smart driver. (She frequently even chastises me for my bad driving habits.)

But I do know what "having wheels" *really* means. It is symbolic of independence and self determination. I keep reminding myself that those are good and honorable characteristics and that I trust her to use and develop those qualities wisely. At least that's what I've strived to do for the past 16 years.

It also means my little girl is growing up, which I think is perhaps the hardest thing a mommy faces.

Yes, the teen-age driving phase is an important milestone for the teenager, but it's also a test of faith for parents. I'm pretty sure, just for a bit of insurance, I'll be asking God to ride along with her wherever she goes.

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

'No Lottery' signs, stickers available free of charge

"Vote NO Lottery Amendment" yards signs and bumper stickers are now available for individuals and churches. The signs and stickers are being offered by United Methodists Against Gambling, a coalition of church members which has the support of the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The signs and bumper stickers are available free of charge. They can be ordered by calling (501)

324-8005 or by emailing info@votenoarkansaslottery.com. While bumper stickers can be mailed, yard signs must be picked up at the Arkansas Conference ministry office on the campus of Philander Smith College, 2 Trudie Kibbe Reed Drive, Little Rock.

More information on the coalition and its opposition to the proposed lottery amendment is available online at www.votenoarkansaslottery.com.

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) 324-8031.



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Viewpoint

'No Boo rule' sets positive tone for games and life

I love sports. I enjoy watching the games, and although I am not much of an athlete (especially at 51), I still enjoy playing the games I can. That would pretty much be golf and Frisbee any more. As an avid spectator, however, I have been known to get a bit "over-enthusiastic."

I confess I have yelled at participants and officials on occasion. I did mature enough several years ago to stop yelling at athletes. When I was coaching my own kids and spectating at their sports, I learned not to say anything but positive, constructive or instructive statements (well ... mostly). Even at the college level, I don't berate the athletes; as a 20-year-old kid, I could not have played any game with thousands of people watching and taking my performance that seriously.

I am still growing in grace toward referees. I know they are doing the best they can. I can't imagine the pressure, even in pee-wee sports, of knowing that if you make a bad call, people will yell at you. I have never seen an official reverse a decision because I yelled at him. Yet I have not attained perfection in this regard. Recently at a Razorback game, I "booed" an official's call. My wife, who loves sports



Bud Reeves

but does not love obnoxious behavior, whose unfortunate task in life is maintaining my humility, said, "You know, it's a good thing they don't boo in church." Humility maintained.

Her remark did conjure up some comical possibilities. What if people did boo in church? Muddled sermon illustration — BOO! Off-key soloist — SHUT UP! Fumble the collection plate — FIRE THE USHER! Go past noon — OUT OF BOUNDS!

On the other hand, what if every expression in our church life was enthusiastic and encouraging? What if we limited ourselves to applause and affirmation? What if we responded in church with the fervor of the pregame "Hog-call" at a Razorback game? A beautiful anthem by the choir — YAY! A mission trip completed — GO TEAM! A baby baptized — the congregation leaps to its feet! A young person confirmed in the faith — the crowd goes wild!

I would like to propose a "No Boo" rule — at sporting events, in church, at home, school or office, too. We live in an angry culture. From the small evidences of verbal abuse and horn-honking drivers to the tragic events that randomly take human life

The Shepherd's Staff

By William O. "Bud" Reeves

— shootings in the workplace and even in churches — rage is all the rage. I believe we Christians could make a difference if we would refuse to enter into the anger that we see so prevalent around us.

At the age of 16, George Washington, the father of our country, wrote out some "Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation." Though some of his rules had to do with not chewing your fingernails and not putting your feet too close to the fire, Washington also said, "Use no reproachful language against any one; neither curse nor revile. Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for 'tis a sign of a tractable and commendable nature: and in all causes of passion admit reason to govern."ⁱ A return to civility is a great idea. When we act with civility and seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit on issues that divide us, we have what we Methodists call "holy conferencing." No Boos there.

I believe the "No Boo" rule is supported by Scripture. Jesus said, "It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles."ⁱⁱ Paul

taught us to "speak the truth in love," but also not to "let the sun go down on our anger." He wrote, "Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear."ⁱⁱⁱ And centuries before Christ, the Psalmist sang, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer."^{iv} Words of biblical grace and truth come from a heart warmed by the love of God and can heal a broken world.

I know there are some things that are worthy of anger: injustice, poverty, hunger, environmental destruction, etc. But most of what we get mad at is not worth furrowing our brow. Instead of being angry, critical, bitter people, why can't we encourage one another, affirm the blessings we enjoy, support those who are trying to accomplish something positive, and even lend our aid to help make our homes, offices, schools, churches, and communities better places? I believe we would see our lives become more positive, pleasant and productive. That's something to cheer about.

ⁱ <http://www.history.org/Almanack/life/manners/rules2.cfm>.

ⁱⁱ Matthew 15:11.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29.

^{iv} Psalm 19:14.

[William O. "Bud" Reeves is senior pastor of First UMC, Hot Springs. He can be reached at brobud@fumchs.com.]



Letters to the Editor

Body of the church

I send a big thank-you to Thompson Murray for his recent editorial ("Homosexuality: the issue that *will* go away," Viewpoint, Sept. 5) responding to columnist Bud Reeves. It is so important to let our gay friends know that they do have support and acceptance within the United Methodist Church, if not of the full body of the Church. Often it is difficult for gays and lesbians to remain in the church when they feel judged and maybe even unwelcome. It is not enough just to be tolerant; Christians should move beyond mere tolerance to full acceptance of all if we are to dwell in the spirit of the

Christ. Matthew 25:45 commands us to do no less.

Georgia Ross
Wynne



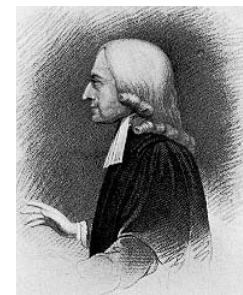
Loving conversation

Well said, Rev. Murray (Viewpoint, Sept. 5), well said and AMEN! I pray that I will see that day. I agree that young United Methodists will lead us to that day, but all of us — young and old — must not give up trying to have loving conversation about this issue.

Judy White
Jonesboro



In the words of John Wesley ...



"The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion."

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE By Mike Morgan



Viewpoint

Holy Conferencing: an opportunity for understanding

By DEWITT H. SMITH III

It was extremely gratifying and encouraging that so many United Methodists chose to participate in the “Holy Conferencing” gatherings at sites across the Arkansas conference on July 13, especially in light of the wide range of summer conflicts and a relatively short lead time. The participants provided useful information in responding to the evaluations, revealing interest in and suggestions for future Holy Conferencing events in our Arkansas Annual Conference.

I am sure that many readers might be asking one or more of the following questions:

- What is “Holy Conferencing”?
- Why is it different from any other church gathering?
- Is there an expected result?
- What is the benefit to the United Methodist Church?
- What is the benefit to me as an individual United Methodist?

Let me address these questions from the perspective of a United Methodist layperson whose beliefs



Dewitt Smith

were shaped by the then-Methodist Church while growing up in the '50s and early '60s and who believes that the Wesleyan approach to Christianity in the form of the United Methodist Church is relevant today and can make a difference in people's lives, in our nation's direction, and in the course of world events.

We United Methodists don't leave our faith in the sanctuary; we take it out on the streets and apply it to every aspect of our lives. We could call this “Applied Christianity,” and it is right out of John Wesley's play-book. Wesley's lifelong quest for spiritual holiness was inexorably tied to Christian service in his parish, which was, of course, the world. This Christian service thing (one might be tempted to call it “good works”), can take many forms ranging from physically performing labor for the benefit of those less fortunate to using one's mental gifts to help find long-term solutions to social problems. Today's world is plagued with many challenges and seemingly insurmountable problems, arguably more serious ones than ever before.

As Wesleyan Christians, we are called to seek pragmatic solutions to these problems. How can we as a church community tackle this when we can't even agree on what color the pew cushions should be? Come to

think about it, we United Methodists can line up on different sides of just about every issue. We can open our hearts and our doors, but we struggle more with allowing our minds to receive and consider ideas that are different from our own. Clearly, this is a disease that is not limited to the United Methodist Church, and it does not discriminate. It attacks both male and female, conservative and liberal, youngster and senior citizen, layperson and clergy. I am guilty and so are you.

But I believe we have a cure within the church. Allow me to suggest answers to the five questions posed earlier.

My personal definition of Holy Conferencing is a gathering of persons who are willing to engage in discussions about any issue by first opening their minds to the presence of the Holy Spirit and then to the concept of hearing and attempting to understand the opinions and thoughts of those with opposing views in a non-judgmental forum.

Holy Conferencing is conducted in an environment of reconciliation, genuine Christian love, and hope for the future. As such, it should be no different than other church gatherings!

The expected result is that all participants gain respect for each other and allow the Holy Spirit to empower

them to advance Christ's Kingdom here on earth.

The United Methodist Church will benefit from the energy and outreach which assuredly will result from removal of barriers among people and the resulting desire to bear Christian witness.

Individuals will move towards personal holiness as new doors are opened for Christian service.

Holy Conferencing will not miraculously result in instantaneous agreement and quick solutions to the challenges that we face. But it's a first step. We have to be big enough to open our minds to hear the concerns and ideas of others in order to create an environment in which we can advance toward lasting solutions to the problems which face church and society. I choose to believe that the diversity (pluralism if you will) in the United Methodist Church is one of our greatest assets because we have a much better chance of finding lasting solutions to problems when we hear from multiple points of view. I truly believe there is a power that will result from Holy Conferencing, and I look forward to the opportunity to meet and interact with other United Methodists from whom I might actually learn something that will help me to grow in my spiritual journey.

[Dewitt H. Smith III is a member of Oakley Chapel UMC, Rogers.]



Letters to the Editor

At God's table

Rev. Bud Reeves raises an important point in his column (Viewpoint, Aug. 15): the issue of homosexuality will not go away. One possible reason for this is that we haven't gone deeply enough into the idea of welcome and acceptance without full agreement. I see our current struggle reflected in the early church. This group attempted unity in a culture that, if possible, was even more fragmented and divided than our own. Specifically, I turn to Romans 14:1-15:13.

The factions within the Roman churches rarely mixed outside the church context and wouldn't have been accustomed to sharing meals together, a cultural sign of full acceptance of one another. So when these groups celebrated the communion

meal together, their disagreements and inhospitality over food (14:2), drink (14:21), and special days (14:5) exposed their culture's deep social fractures. Enter the apostle Paul who calls for acceptance and welcome (14:1, 15:7) and not just any welcome but one that involves hospitality of the most intimate kind, particularly reception to the table. Paul believes both sides are trying to honor God through their very different actions (14:6) and even agrees with one of the groups (14:14).

However, Paul sets aside his desire to be right in order to see the other person God has also welcomed. And so we continue to be the church in the midst of this controversy by setting aside our opinions long enough to see the image of God in the other.

I believe Rev. Reeves was able to do this by listening deeply to his gay friend. Paul seems convinced that the factions in Rome belonged together as part of God's new creation, and he pleads for a welcome that emerges from Christ's gracious welcome (15:7). In a wonderful and frightening action, God through Christ welcomes us all to the table, and so we are enabled to welcome one another and honor God even in our different expressions of faith.

Why does homosexuality continue to be an issue? Because we all (pro and con) have yet to deeply embrace our media message of “Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors.” We have yet to demonstrate a “willingness to stand together at the table of God's gracious hospitality” elbow to elbow with those we strongly disagree with. We have yet

to imagine an acceptance of one another that doesn't require mutual agreement. And we have yet to learn the Wesleyan practice of holding opposites in dynamic tension, not only in our beliefs but with one another as well. This dynamic tension in our church body — held together by God's grace — is truly what will enable us to welcome the “other” into this Methodist way that we travel (gay or straight; poor or middle class; homeless or suburban; immigrant or native; unchurched or churched; you or me). This welcome of the other is a way to “make disciples of Jesus Christ”, and ultimately to welcome and receive the One who is truly Other and who frequently comes in the stranger's guise.

*Paul Atkins
Benton*



Africa University issues urgent plea for funding

A few days after issuing an urgent plea for funds, Africa University's advisory development committee celebrated the school's resilience amid economic hardship. Committee members meeting Sept. 6 in Nashville, Tenn., learned that, despite staggering inflation rates and political unrest in the school's home country of Zimbabwe, the United Methodist-related institution continues to pay its faculty and increase enrollment.

In a Sept. 3 letter to United Methodist leaders across the globe, Fanuel Tagwira, the university's interim vice chancellor, implored congregations to pay 100 percent of their apportionments for the school so that Africa University can survive in Zimbabwe's dismal economic climate.

During the committee meeting, an optimistic Tagwira announced that Africa University had welcomed the largest class of first-year international students in its history and that the school continues to provide three meals per day for each student. While the university is still making payroll, some faculty members have asked to leave, and Tagwira said attracting new professors has been difficult.

UM missionary pens book about Palestinian mother's life

Alex Awad can trace the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through its impact on his mother's 90 years of life. The 62-year-old United Methodist missionary also can trace the influence the Christian church has had on his mother and her family. His new book, "Palestinian Memories: The Story of a Palestinian Mother and Her People," is a story of his mother's Christian faith and of the Palestinian people.

Although his mother, Huda, eventually moved to the United States and became a U.S. citizen, she never forgot her homeland and visited her family there as long as her health allowed it. When writing about the political side of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, he realized that his late mother's experience — similar to that of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians — would be a good way to introduce that history.

"The story of Huda is not only a story of tragedy ... but really, it's a



Alex Awad, who serves as a United Methodist Board of Global Ministries missionary in Bethlehem and Jerusalem, has written a new book about his mother's Christian faith and about the Palestinian people.

UMNS photo by John C. Goodwin

News Digest

story of victory, success, triumph over tragedy," he told United Methodist News Service.

UMCOR responding to catastrophic storms in Haiti

Hundreds of deaths and extensive flooding have been reported, and thousands of homes and livelihoods destroyed. In a country with limited resources and widespread poverty, more than 650,000 people have been left especially vulnerable.

UMCOR Haiti is on the ground responding with targeted direct assistance, and personnel that evacuated during the storms have returned safely. The office in Cap Haitien sustained minimal damage, and the staff is working in the North Department of Haiti, providing disaster relief for the short and long term.

Thomas Dwyer, director of operations for UMCOR's non-governmental organization unit, said that "in tandem with immediate relief, we are providing support to assist in rebuilding peoples' lives.

"Families will need tools and materials to help repair their homes, and children will need school supplies to return to school," Dwyer said.

"UMCOR is prepared and resources are mobilized to help people through this difficult process."

Survey to look at worship, giving and ministry trends

Do churches with contemporary worship grow more than churches with traditional worship? How does conflict affect congregational giving? Where are churches placing their ministry emphasis?

These and other questions relevant to church life will be explored in a United Methodist survey being conducted by the Office of Analysis and Research of the church's General Council on

Finance and Administration. Nearly 10,000 churches have been randomly selected to participate in an online survey, and another 200 will participate by mail.

"We will gain new insights on worship styles, ministries, age demographics, and a number of topics that can't be gleaned from statistical forms," said Scott Brewer, director of research for

the denomination. Survey results are scheduled to be available by the end of this year at www.gcfa.org.

4,000 volunteers prepare more than 1 million meals in a day

Take more than 4,000 students and volunteers, add tons of rice and soy, then blend well for one day. Those ingredients made for a record-breaking challenge as students from eight North Carolina colleges and universities joined together to pack more than a million meals for hungry people.

The food is now en route to El Salvador, Haiti and India. Stop Hunger Now, a United Methodist-supported nonprofit organization based in Raleigh, N.C., held the Aug. 23 challenge on college campuses in Raleigh, Chapel Hill and Greenville. The organization's previous record for a one-

day packaging event involving college students was 300,000 meals.

Women's commission provides better online access

A redesigned Web site for the United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women offers a wider variety of online resources in a user-friendly format.

The old site "was basically a notebook for text" that "had the skeleton of the organization" but no flesh, said Lindsey Graham, the commission's Web editor.

The new site, launched in early September and designed by X9 Technologies based in High Point, N.C., allows the commission to provide more online resources. That was a key goal, according to M. Garlinda Burton, the commission's chief executive.

"We realized there is a whole community of folk who already look to our Web site for resources and want us to offer more things," she said.

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of the private Dallas school's lease agreement for the President George W. Bush Presidential Center. The jurisdiction owns SMU, and the school's bylaws require the church to approve the sale or lease of campus land. Conference delegates voted 158-118 on July 17 to affirm the lease for the Bush presidential library, museum and policy institute.



Robert Hayes

The jurisdiction's executive committee, called the mission council, initially gave the green light to the lease in March 2007, and school officials approved the agreement last February. The lease charges the Bush Foundation \$1,000 for 99 years, renewable for up to 250 years.

Hayes, who presided during the jurisdictional vote, was asked by Jeannie Trevino-Teddle, director of the Mexican-American program at SMU's Perkins School of Theology, for a decision of law on the lease.

Specifically, Trevino-Teddle asked: "Is the approval of the lease of property of Southern Methodist University by

the South Central Jurisdiction and Southern Methodist University, at less than market value, to the Bush Foundation for the purpose of establishing a policy institute, in conflict with the articles of incorporation of Southern Methodist University, the rules of the South Central Jurisdiction and/or The Book of Discipline, specifically (Paragraph) 2503.4, which requires all United Methodist property to be 'kept, maintained ... for the benefit of The United Methodist Church and subject to the usages and the Discipline of The United Methodist Church' and said lease would subsidize a specific political and ideological point of view?"

In his Aug. 12 ruling that was recently obtained by United Methodist News Service, Hayes said the first portion of Trevino-Teddle's request goes beyond church law and involves secular, corporate and real estate law. "I do not believe I have before me a proper request for a ruling on church law," he wrote.

Decisions of law from bishops are automatically reviewed by the United Methodist Judicial Council, the church's supreme court, and Hayes has forwarded his ruling to that body for its decision. However, as of Sept. 12,

the issue had not been placed on the council's docket for this October. After that, the Judicial Council is scheduled to meet again in the spring of 2009.

Trevino-Teddle said she was disappointed but not surprised by Hayes' ruling. She noted that most of the jurisdiction's bishops had supported the actions of the mission council, which in a closed executive session voted 10-4, with one abstention, in favor of the lease.

"It did not surprise me that Bishop Hayes would rule the way he did," she said. "I look forward to the Judicial Council reviewing the decision."

The library proposal has been debated since SMU was placed on the Bush Foundation's short list of potential sites in December of 2006. Critics have questioned the appropriateness of linking the Bush presidency with the 11,000-student, United Methodist-founded school. They argue that many policies of the Bush administration, particularly the war in Iraq, are contrary to United Methodist teaching.

Library opponents have argued that the mission council did not follow church procedure and that the matter should have gone before the South Central Jurisdictional Conference, which meets once every four years.

In a Sept. 11 interview with UMNS, Hayes said the substance of Trevino-Teddle's request was not a question that would hinder the continuation of the Bush library project. "It was a question on whether SMU had the right to use it the way they did," he said. "It was not a direct dispute but whether the approval was in conflict with the articles of incorporation of SMU."

Hayes wrote that the request had been extensively debated by the jurisdictional conference, and that the vote affirming the lease "is in opposition to the position of the person submitting this request for a Decision of Law." He stated that the conference did not concur with other petitions on the SMU issue, including one referred by the 2008 General Conference, the denomination's top legislative body.

The bishop also ruled that the request for a decision of law was framed in a manner that suggests "matters of purported fact that seem to me to be hypothetical and speculative," he wrote.

"The request for a decision of law is posed in a manner that asks if things were done correctly," he told UMNS. "And they were. Everything was in order."

MOURNING, *continued from page 1*

road and striped of meat in a matter of hours last year.

When we got to the home of Teddy's in-laws, Adam was at the road to greet us. He looked so much older now. When there is a death, friends and families do just as I did. They stop, bring food and prepare to grieve. I gave Adam a hug and said, "Pole" (an expression of sympathy). He led us into the home.

As I held on to the edge of the house removing my shoes at the door, some of the sand in the cement wall crumbled off in my hands. The home is very much like every other home. On the crumbling walls were colorful posters. There was a large poster of a Japanese home and a white bridge over water with cherry blossoms. All the people here live with hope of a better life — hope that we with so many things can't really understand.

We ran to Teddy and cried with her. Salome and Neema know how to cry with moans and wails with their head in Teddy's lap and catching tears and wiping noses with the extra kanga. Having been taught to quietly cry and just be there, that was all I could do. I flashed on a time when my father tried to explain the reason we go to funerals to just quietly show that you came and you care.

Between the new relatives coming

in things were somewhat normal. Greetings and introductions to all who were there were a must and respectful at all times. I would greet the aunts and brothers as they would greet me.

At one point Teddy was telling about how Jacob died. The room was so quiet. Looking as if she were in a play on stage, she motioned with her hands patting her lap in-place of the child. She explained how she left him to sleep and how she found him. She gestured in an out-of-body way as she told how her husband preparing to go to work had tried to save the baby. Still very stoic she told of running for a neighbor's help and still no life.

With the entrance of new relatives or the ringing of her cell phone the moans began again. Into the cell phone, with a new pool in her eyes, she would just say "My baby is dead," to confirm the rumor.

At one point she wanted us to go see the grave. We walked through an area of land with charcoal hot spots on the ground where they had been cooking. Adam pointed out their scrawny dog knowing that we have dogs at our home. Passing through a hedge, we were among many graves. One new small mound was where we were headed. Adam held my hand, and I was reminded of the excited

time when Adam introduced me to his precious new little brother. At that time Teddy and I discussed her three sons and my three sons. Adam followed the rules and was not showing emotion. We all held hands and I prayed for Jacob explaining how the baby must be placed at the foot of Jesus. Then Teddy reached down and began combing the fresh dirt with her fingers as if to adjust a blanket for the comfort of Jacob.

Breaking all male rules, Adam's uncle sat in with the women and just sobbed. I was reminded of the time when I arrived in Bunda three years ago. I used to think that my Tanzanian friends were so close to death and that they saw it so much death, that they would not grieve as much as we do. Death hurts us all who are left behind, yet as Christians, we have the joyous understanding of life after death. How could you get through it without that knowledge?

When tears were tired and just had to have a rest, we just chatted. I told Teddy that Adam was such a good student that he would make a good teacher. I told her to keep in mind the scholarships we have at the Bunda Teachers College. She said he wanted to be a soldier. I just disagreed and asked her to please direct him to higher goals.

At this time Adam's 6-year-old brother, Joseph, had been just sitting on the coffee table in front of me, his faced filled with awe. He can not wait to be old enough to come to my school. I held his hand as Teddy said that Joseph told her that he wants to be president. She said, "I told him to just pull his socks up and become President of Tanzania." I agreed.

As we were leaving, all in the room just stood up for prayers. As drained as I was at this time, I prayed again. Heading through the crowds of people in the yard, I found Adam for one last hug and invited him to come see the books that are at my house waiting for the library. He said that he would like that. Watching the groups of people following me with their eyes, I waved to them and said, "Mungu abariki! (God bless you)." Adam was walking me out to the car when I saw all the men in chairs under the trees all turn to watch us. I called to them the same "God bless you!" They also returned the prayer back to us.

As Charles says, "Some days are for crying."

[Karen Wiggins and her husband, Charles, members of the Arkansas Conference, are United Methodist missionaries serving in Bunda, Tanzania.]

STORMS, continued from page 1

ability to quickly respond to the needs of so many."

South Texas gets slammed

The Texas conference is establishing relief and recovery offices in Houston and Beaumont, and staff is working to find out the status of each of the conference's more than 700 churches, including five congregations in Galveston, the hardest-hit city.

Many United Methodist churches are serving as shelters. Among them is Christ United Methodist Church in College Station, which is housing 180 residents, staff and families from Edgewater Retirement Home in Galveston.

Huie began a two-day tour of hurricane-ravaged areas with district superintendents. She visited the district southeast of Houston, including Beaumont, on Sept. 15 and planned to travel south to Galveston on Sept. 16.

"Both of those areas have significant damage, and we're still trying to find out how much. We know we have major, major damage to churches, parsonages and homes," said Rick Goodrich, assistant to the bishop.

Houston, where the conference office is located, was spared significant structural damage, but most of the city's electricity was knocked out. The conference office, however, has its electricity and phone service intact, enabling staff members to coordinate disaster recovery and relief.

"We are blessed in that regard," said Goodrich. "But it's catastrophic in

areas along the coast. It's going to be a very difficult situation for a long time. We need prayers."

Goodrich urged early response and recovery teams to stay away until the conference is ready to receive them.

"We appreciate everyone's heart to help us, but right now we need people to use their heads, too," he said. "We really need people to understand that we don't want anyone showing up uninvited. We can't deal with that right now. When we're ready to receive them, we will let everyone know. There's going to be a lot of work to do."

Louisiana hit again

Louisiana anticipates a need for case managers and for direct aid, Cottrill told Dixon in an e-mail.

"Our damage will be nowhere near that of Texas this time. But there has nonetheless been a great deal of wind and water-related damage on our coast and into the interior," Cottrill wrote on Sept. 15.

As they were still assessing wind-related damage from Gustav, church leaders said Hurricane Ike flooded most of the state's 250-mile coast, sweeping over many of the same towns and coastal spots flooded by hurricanes Rita and Katrina in 2005.

Although the city of New Orleans escaped the brunt of the latest storm, Plaquemines and St. Bernard parishes reported extensive flooding. And the Native American community of Dulac, La., was once again flooded, with

"A lot of the work just completed in the low-lying areas has come unraveled."

— Darryl Tate, director of disaster response, Louisiana Conference

New communication tool helps during disaster in Louisiana

United Methodist News Service

BATON ROUGE, La. — As Hurricane Gustav made a beeline for the coast of Louisiana, Bishop William W. Hutchinson sent messages of comfort and warning to clergy and church members.

"It really meant a lot to people to hear their bishop's voice offering comfort and words of advice," said Rhonda Whitley, assistant to Don Cottrill, director of connectional ministries.

The bishop used IRIS, a mass notification system designed by TechRadium, a software development and communications company based in Texas. For a monthly fee, the Louisiana Annual Conference is equipped to send out e-mail and voice

mail to thousands in just a matter of minutes, Whitley said.

Messages went to clergy and key lay leaders on their cell phones and landlines as well as through e-mail. Even when the conference office in Baton Rouge lost Internet connection, the bishop was able to record messages on his cell phone and route them through Texas.

When Gustav made landfall Sept. 1, the conference was well prepared because of the experience it had gained in the three years since Hurricane Katrina, officials said. One of the important lessons learned was the need to have pastors evacuate during potential danger.

Hutchinson's first message told pas-

See COMMUNICATION, page 10



A FEMA team searches Sept. 14 for stranded residents in Sabine, Texas, flooded when Hurricane Ike struck the U.S. Gulf Coast on Sept. 13. The United Methodist Committee on Relief is in contact with United Methodist leaders in the Texas and Louisiana Annual Conferences.

A UMNS photo by Jocelyn Augustino, FEMA

water reported in the United Methodist-owned community center and in Clanton Chapel United Methodist Church.

Preliminary reports from coastal parishes indicated that many of the same families assisted by the conference disaster response ministry after the 2005 storms were flooded once again. "A lot of the work just completed in the low-lying areas has come unraveled," said Darryl Tate, the church's director of disaster response in Louisiana.

Just north of New Orleans, Lake Ponchartrain rose and caused some flooding in the Slidell area, where the disaster response ministry recently had closed most of its cases and shut down its offices in Slidell and Abbeville.

Tate stressed that help will be needed from across The United Methodist Church as disaster response efforts ramp up again in the wake of Gustav and Ike. "UMCOR funding for response to Katrina and Rita cannot be used in this newest effort," Tate said. "Those funds must remain designated

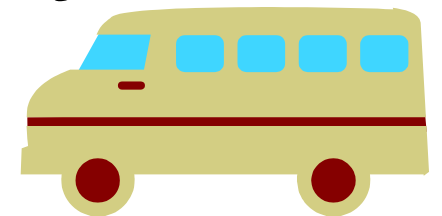
to the projects we are still working on to complete that work. Financial gifts and assistance will be badly needed to tackle the work that lies ahead in helping survivors of Gustav and Ike."

To aid Ike recovery work, send financial donations to UMCOR Advance No. 3019695, "Hurricanes 2008, Hurricane Ike." Mail checks to UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, N.Y. 10087, and write the Advance number and name on the memo line of the check. Credit-card donations can be made online. Donations for Gustav recovery work should be so designated.

Meanwhile, UMCOR's Sager Brown Depot in Baldwin, La., is open and in need of assembled flood buckets and cleaning supplies. Its managers ask that people call before making a delivery so that supplies can be shipped to the appropriate distribution area.

For information about volunteering in affected areas, United Methodists in Arkansas should contact Volunteer in Mission coordinator Don Weeks at (501) 868-9193 or 681-2909 or dweeks@arumc.org.

Bound For Camp Aldersgate!



Fill up your church bus with hungry passengers and head to Camp Aldersgate for our 25th Annual Fish Fry!

When: Saturday, September 27
Time: 4 to 7 pm

Where: Camp Aldersgate
2000 Aldersgate Road

Ticket Prices:

Adults: \$15
Children ages 4-11: \$10
Seniors (65+): \$10
Children Under 4: FREE

For more information & directions call 501-225-1444.

It Happened

Sports commentator and former professional football player Keith Jackson was a special guest Aug. 20 at a communitywide event and youth rally hosted by Ashdown First UMC. More than 200 persons turned out for the gathering, which included a street party, hot dogs and refreshments. After his talk, Jackson visited with youth and fans of all ages and signed autographs.

Jackson is a commentator for Arkansas Razorback football broadcasts. He is a former college all-American football player, six-time Pro Bowl player, and Super Bowl champ who played for the Philadelphia Eagles, Green Bay Packers and Miami Dolphins. He is now executive director of P.A.R.K. Charities in Little Rock, which helps trouble youth complete high school and attend college.



Jim Cross (left), pastor of Ashdown First UMC, welcomes Keith Jackson to the church-sponsored youth rally.

Greenwood UMC associate pastor Zack Underwood and his wife, Kerry, will return to Guatemala in December, along with church members Mindy James and Wendi Dungan, to work at Shadow of His Wings orphanage. The mission team is currently conducting fund-raisers to help defray costs of the mission trip. An ice cream supper was among the special events held.

First UMC, Monticello, hosted a districtwide reception Aug. 3 honoring South East District Superintendent Dennis Spence and his wife, Denise. The Spences were married July 18 at First UMC, Monroe, La.



Dennis and Denise Spence were honored recently on the occasion of their marriage.

Sulphur Springs UMC hosted a family of 17 displaced following the recent hurricane in New Orleans. They were relatives of a Sulphur Springs church member. The church prepared and served meals to the guests, including many prepared Cajun style. Church members provided cots and many other necessary items that allowed the church to provide comfort and hospitality to the guests.

In other news from Sulphur Springs, the Wacky Wednesday children's ministry kicked off Sept. 10 with a welcome back party called Bible Olympics. The weekly program is held at 5:30 each Wednesday.



At Greenwood UMC, Kerry Underwood serves Tate Cole homemade ice cream for a contribution to be used for a December mission trip to Guatemala.

Mark Kalkbrenner presented a program Aug. 4 to members and guests of United Methodist Women at Lakeside UMC, Pine Bluff. He reported on his experience teaching English to sixth-grade Chinese children during the summer 2007. Under the auspices of the US/China Educational and Cultural Exchange sponsored by the University of Bridgeport, Conn., he journeyed to Shanghai and subsequently conducted two different summer English camps in Haiking and Haiawan Wuyan. He also traveled the Beijing and Hangzhou before coming home. In addition to showing slides of these events, he displayed a number of interesting items that he brought back.

The meeting was hosted by UMW Circle 3, which provided a salad supper. Tables were decorated with Chinese artifacts, and table napkins were hand printed with the Chinese symbol for prosperity.

Marion UMC kicked off the new school year with a special blessing for

children and youth. More than 100 children, from preschool through high school, brought their backpacks to church for a special blessing during the Aug. 17 service. Each participant received a backpack tag with the church's name, cross and flame, and a scripture.



Audrea King, principal of Marmaduke Elementary School, receives her snack basket from Marmaduke First UMC.

Marmaduke First UMC showed its appreciation to teachers by delivering "snack buckets" to elementary and high school faculty at Marmaduke on the first day of school. The snack buckets were replenished through the week.

The Wesleyan Sunday School Class of First UMC, El Dorado, was named recipient of the 2008 Community Service Award presented by the South Arkansas Regional Health Center Aug. 12 in Hot Springs.

Accepting the award on behalf of the Wesleyan Sunday School class were Janis King and Melba Ainsworth.

Members of the Sunday School

See IT HAPPENED, page 9



To kick off the new school year, Marion UMC senior pastor Wayne Clark leads a special blessing for children and youth and their backpacks.



At Lakeside UMC, Pine Bluff, Mark Kalkbrenner prepares to make a presentation to United Methodist Women about his experience teaching English to sixth-grade Chinese children as part of a cultural exchange program.

Hard work & Christian service

Ozark Mission Project camps give youth opportunities to live out faith

Ozark Mission Project (OMP) hosted 12 hands-on mission camp for youth and adults this summer. Camps were held in Dardanelle, Jonesboro, Star City, West Memphis (2), El Dorado, Conway, Marianna (2), Magnolia, North Little Rock and Rudy.

More than 750 youth campers, adult campers, volunteer and college staff united to offer service to those in need across Arkansas. The volunteers represent more than 40 youth groups

in Arkansas and Texas.

Through their dedication and service, they built 59 wheelchair ramps, 20 porches, eight handrails and 13 sets of steps. They scraped and painted 73 houses, did interior painting of 17 homes, worked in 41 yards, cleaned 20 houses, repaired 35 existing structures, added window screening to 10 homes and completed more than 39 other miscellaneous jobs.

Lumber, nails and paint that were transported from camp to neighbors' homes in pick-up trucks helped to transform the houses of many Arkansans. The youth and adult campers shared the day, lunch and devotion time with neighbors to convey to them Christ's love, care and grace.

The devotional theme for the 2008 OMP camps came from Jeremiah 17:7-8, which says, "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

The chocolate brown T-shirt each camper received reflected the "Rooted" theme and depicted a knarled tree with roots dig-



OMP volunteers along with neighbors are all smiles and very proud of a wheelchair ramp built by campers at the Cold Springs Camp.



Youth participants in the Junior High OMP Camp pose with a neighbor and her freshly painted house.



Volunteers at the OMP Cold Springs Camp scrape and prepare to paint a neighbor's home.

IT HAPPENED, continued from page 8

class are actively engaged in numerous community projects and activities, all of which are designed to improve the quality of life for others.

Class members have treated clients and staff of Benchmark Industries, a rehabilitation program operated by the health center, to a traditional Christmas dinner, as well as a July 4th hotdog/hamburger cookout. They have also provided monetary and hands-on assistance to the United Methodist Children's Home facility for boys in Magnolia. Members of the class, through their Home Repair Mission group, converted an unused double garage into an attractive and useful recreation room for residents of the

home. The class also gives gift cards and other donations to the boys to meet the needs not adequately covered by the boys home budget.

Class members serve as Certified Hospice Volunteers, volunteer with Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross and are part of the church's Volunteers in Mission team that builds houses in Rio Bravo, Mexico. They also do home repairs and build wheelchair ramps for persons in the community and deliver hot meals to shut-ins as part of the church's Fellowship of the Sent program. They are involved in the church's Prayer Shawl ministry and have established a Dollar Giving Fund for mission work.

ging deeply into the soil. Each morning devotions encouraged campers to "go deeper" in their spiritual journey with Christ. Lunch devotions and evening worship reinforced the concept.

For the second year, OMP expanded its program and offered two junior high camps for those who have completed the sixth and seventh grades.

"These energetic and high spirited youth blew us away," said OMP executive director Nancy Mulhearn. "In three short days, these awesome junior high youth completed 54 projects; 10 of which were wheelchair ramps."

Additionally, college students will have an opportunity to engage in international mission through the OMP college mission to Rio Bravo, Mexico, in January. This will be the organization's third mission experience outside of

Arkansas offered to college students.

"Ozark Mission Project would like to invite first-time youth groups to register for a summer work camp in 2009," Mulhearn added. "We reserve 10 percent of our space for new groups, so register to join us as we seek to transform lives through worship, fellowship, and hands-on mission."

Youth group applications may be found on the OMP website at www.ozarkmissionproject.org. The 2009 camp schedule is expected to be completed and announced in late October. For more information about OMP, contact Mulhearn at (501) 339-4500 or nmulhearn@conwaycorp.net.

Founded in 1986 by United Methodist clergy and laity, OMP is affiliated with the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

You are invited to be part of a
HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE with
Bishop Charles & Mrs. Karen Crutchfield,
 and several recently ordained clergy, to leave January 14, 2009
 on a 10-day uplifting, educational, and religious experience in Israel.
 The Land is called the Fifth Gospel.
**What a powerful way to begin a new year, by walking the Via
 Dolorosa, visiting the Mount of Beatitudes, and many other
 inspiring sites in the Holy Land. This is truly the trip of a lifetime.
 Be one of the group which will travel from Arkansas!**
 For further information contact
 Rev. Ron Clark, Director of Travel Ministries, Educational Opportunities
 510 Kent Road, North Little Rock, AR 72116 Ph: 501-529-3142 rbclark2089@sbcglobal.net

“Evangelism in Small, Medium and Large Congregations” will be the focus of a one-day seminar hosted by the Arkansas Conference Committee on Evangelism Oct. 17 at First UMC, Heber Springs. Tony Holifield, pastor of Central UMC, Fayetteville, will deliver the message during the 10:30 a.m. opening worship service, and Carol Ann Blow, associate pastor of St. Andrew UMC, Little Rock, will provide special music. Lunch will be served at noon, followed by seminars from 1-2:30 p.m.

Topics and leaders include:

■ “Evangelism in the Small Church,” Dan Brand, pastor, Holiday Hills UMC, Greers Ferry.

■ “Evangelism in the Mid-size Church,” Jeff Jones, pastor, Sardis UMC, Bauxite.

■ “Evangelism in the Large Church,” Holifield.

Cost is \$10 per person and includes lunch. To register, send a check payable to First UMC, Heber Springs, to: 1099 W. Pine St., Heber Springs, Ark. 72543, by Oct. 13.

For more information contact David W. Bush, committee chair at (501) 362-2696 or Bush_Hog@suddenlinkmail.com.

South African pastor Trevor Hudson will return to Pulaski Heights UMC, Little Rock, for the second consecutive year as guest speaker for the T.J. & Inez Raney Preaching Series Oct. 17-19.

Hudson is a Methodist pastor and writer. His books include “Journey of the Spirit,” (Best Christian Book of the Year in 2003), “Listen to the



Trevor Hudson

Groans,” “A Mile in My Shoes,” “The Way of Transforming Discipleship,” “One Day at a Time” and his latest, “Questions That God Asks Us.”

Hudson will preach for services at 6 p.m. Oct. 17; 11 a.m. Oct. 18; and 8:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Oct. 19. “Living God’s Questions” will be the theme of the presentations.

The Raney Lectureship, established in 1951, was endowed by the late Mr. and Mrs. Alton B. Raney in memory of T.J. and Inez Raney, consecrated leaders in Arkansas Methodism.

It’s a tea party! United Methodist Women of Horseshoe Bend UMC will host its annual Autumn Quilt Show and Patchwork Tea Room from 1-4 p.m. Sept. 27. Lunch will be served by UMW members in long dresses and colorful hats. Guests will be invited to browse the collection of handmade



Coming Up

quilts and vote for their favorites. Admission is \$5, and all proceeds will benefit Camp Aldersgate. Persons who would like to submit a quilt or quilted home decor project for showing and judging are asked to call (870) 670-5392 by Sept. 25.

The North Central District Council on Youth Ministry Fall Rally is set for 1:30-7:30 p.m. Oct. 19 at Morrilton First UMC. Cost is \$20 per person. Ryan Rush, associate pastor of First UMC, Texarkana, will be guest speaker. Musical guest is Leyden. The agenda includes small groups, games, Youth Service Fund activities, food and worship. To register, contact Fonda Kirkman at (501) 329-5141 or northcentralds@conwaycorp.net.

A Gospel Hoe-Down at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 27 at Sulphur Springs UMC will feature Blue Grass Country. Dinner will be served starting at 5 p.m. for \$5. All are invited to share in some great food, fellowship and wonderful music.

Men Alive, a weekly men’s group at Pulaski Heights UMC, Little Rock, will present the second in the Men’s Fraternity series entitled “Winning at Work and Home” this fall. The Men’s Fraternity series runs three years and was created in 1990 by Little Rock minister Robert Lewis. It is now presented in more than 16,000 churches and organizations throughout the world. Daryl Coker is the chairman of the Steering Committee for Men Alive. Mark Saviers fulfills the role of host during the weekly Wednesday sessions.

“Last year (2007) we began the ‘Men Alive! Presents ‘Men’s Fraternity’ series,” said Coker. “The response was outstanding. Over 120 men registered for our fall and spring semesters and we had an average weekly attendance just under 100. The best part was that about 50 percent of those attending were new men under age 40.”

Coker stressed that the Men Alive presentation is not a recruiting effort in any way for new members of the church. “At no time is there any overture regarding joining the church, giving money or any other type of solicitation. We only ask that participants pay \$20 for their workbook.”

The fall semester begins Oct. 1 with coffee at 6 a.m. and the session at 6:10, concluding at 7:30 a.m. Gatherings will be held weekly through Dec. 10.

Coker stressed that the gathering is “for men of all ages, faiths, marital sta-

tus and stations in life. We welcome our brothers from throughout central Arkansas who are interested in becoming a better man, husband, friend, son, boss, employee or employer.”

For details, contact at Coker (501) 821-6668 or Saviers at (501) 716-5511.

The annual Blessing of the Animals at Pulaski Heights UMC, Little Rock, is slated for 2 p.m. Oct. 5 at the church, 4823 Woodlawn. All are invited to bring pets on leashes or in crates for a brief time of worship that includes blessing God’s creation and giving thanks for pets.

Black Community Developers Inc. of Theresa Hoover UMC, Little Rock, is among the sponsors of the fourth annual Recovery Jam, a community awareness event held to increase the public’s knowledge about substance abuse, mental disorders treatment and recovery. The celebration featuring food, entertainment and fun will be held from 4-8 p.m. Sept. 29 at the Little Rock River Market Pavilion, 400 President Clinton Drive. Local artists Integrity and William Staggers will be among the entertainers. For more details, contact Sandra Mitchell at (501) 663-7221.

United Methodist Women of Fairview UMC, Texarkana, will sponsor its annual Holiday Bazaar and Country Store from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 25 at the church, 1524 Laurel St. The event will feature holiday crafts,

white elephant items, baked goods and a drawing for a hand-quilted Razorback quilt. A soup/chili lunch will be available from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All proceeds will benefit missions, both local and national.

Bryant First UMC will host its annual Harvest Moon Craft Show and Marketplace Sept. 26-27 at the church, 508 N. Reynolds Road. More than 50 crafters from around the state are expected to participate. The event will feature the Country Store and Pantry, portraits by Picture This Photography Studio and lunch “on the terrace.” Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. Proceeds are earmarked for missions.

Brooks Holifield, the Charles Howard Candler Professor of American Church History at Candler School of Theology, Emory University in Atlanta, and an elder and member of the Arkansas Conference, will deliver the Willson Lecture at 7 p.m. Oct. 5 at Greene Chapel on the campus of Hendrix College in Conway. His address follows the presentation of the Steel-Hendrix Awards, which will be presented during a banquet at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are required for the awards dinner; the lecture is free and open to the public.

The event is sponsored by the Marshall T. Steel Center for the Study of Religion and Philosophy. For more information, contact J. Wayne Clark at (501) 450-1263.

Holifield holds degrees from Hendrix College, Yale Divinity School and Yale Graduate School. He is the author of several books on the history of theology and religion in America. He has received many awards and fellowships during his illustrious career.

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:

- **Bryan/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



Milestones

First UMC, Monticello, held a Service of Consecration Sept. 7 for the congregation's new Family Life Center. Bishop Charles N. Crutchfield delivered the message for the morning worship service, with South East District Superintendent Dennis Spence and senior pastor Bill Eason assisting.

After worship, everyone moved to the Family Life Center for the consecration. In addition to leadership by Bishop Crutchfield, Spence and Eason, Ian Beer, chairman of the Building Committee, shared the blessings of the new building. A south-of-the-border meal was served, with proceeds benefiting the district's Hispanic ministries. The REJOICE Choir, Chancel Choir and Kathy and Rex Borchardt presented special music.

Mallettown UMC celebrated its annual Homecoming Aug. 31 with worship services, a potluck dinner and afternoon of singing. Formerly known as Friendship Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the Mallettown church building is on the Arkansas Register of Historic Properties and the National Register of Historic Places. The church has served the community since 1878. It is located in Conway County, 5 miles east of Springfield, off Highway 124 on Mallettown Road. Charles Watt is pastor.

Trinity UMC, Little Rock, will celebrate its 50th anniversary this month. Festivities are planned for Sept. 26-28, and all current and former



The new Family Life Center at First UMC, Monticello, was recently consecrated.

members, friends and neighbors are invited to attend. The schedule includes a reception and dedication of a time capsule at 5:30 p.m. Sept. 26, followed by a worship service at 6:30 p.m.

Activities on Sept. 27 include an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., featuring church tours, exhibits, video presentations and refreshments. Radio Disney will broadcast live from the Trinity church parking lot from 10:30 a.m. to noon. There'll be fun for the whole family, including music, games and free hot dogs. A Gala Banquet begins at 6:15 p.m. at the Little Rock Embassy Suites. Tickets are \$40. This event will feature dinner, video presentations and a special performance by the River City Men's Chorus.

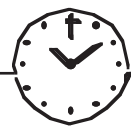
The festivities continue on Sept. 28 at the church, with Solid Grounds (coffee and hospitality time) at 8:30 a.m., Sunday School at 9:30 and worship at 10:45. A family-style lunch will be served at noon.

For more details or reservations for any of these events, call (501) 666-2813. Trinity UMC is located at 1101 N. Mississippi St.

Volunteer cleanup teams should contact the conference disaster response ministry at (225) 346-5193 or laumdisastermin@bellsouth.net.

Financial donations can be made to UMCOR Advance No. 3019695, "Hurricanes 2008, Hurricane Gustav." Mail checks to UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, N.Y. 10087, and write the Advance number and name on the memo line of the check. Credit-card donations can be made online.

On the Sunday following Gustav's landfall, Hutchinson preached at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in New Orleans. He noted the irony of the church being rededicated that day,



Remember When

100 Years Ago

Sept. 17, 1908: A splendid new \$23,000 church at Arkadelphia has just been completed and Rev. A.O. Evans, the pastor, and his people are rejoicing. This puts the pastor in fine shape to care for the large student body of Henderson College, as well as the growing citizenship of Arkadelphia.

50 Years Ago

Sept. 11, 1958: In the very first service held in the new chapel at the Methodist Children's Home, Loretta Hale and Bobby Merritt were married

on August 23rd at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon. ... Bobby has been a resident of the Home for ten years and Loretta has been here for three years. They are now residing at 1411 Broadway.

20 Years Ago

Sept. 16, 1988: Congratulations are in order for the Rev. Leonard Higgins, pastor of St. Andrew United Methodist Church, Fort Smith, who was recently commissioned a 1st Lieutenant in the United States Army Reserve. He will serve as chaplain at the 2003D Det 1 at Fort Chaffee.

Leadership training event set for South Central District

The South Central District will host a leadership training event from 2:30-5 p.m. Sept. 28 at Hot Springs First UMC, 1100 Central Ave.

Keynote speaker Bishop Charles N. Crutchfield will make a presentation on "Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations."

Workshops topics and leaders include:

- "Letting God Form Our Spirit," Karen Crutchfield;

- "Duties of the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee," Carroll Jackson;

- "Utilizing Church Communication Network for Workshops and Training," Teresa Holt;

- "Each One Wins One," Chester Jones and Debbie Perry;

- "Disaster Response," Dooley Fowler and Loyd Perry;

- "Wesleyan Economics: How to Grow Faithful Stewards in the Local Church," Bruce Bennett and Steve Wingo;

- "Christian Education for Holy Healthy Churches," Donna Flenniken;

- "Doing Effective Youth Ministry" Mike Meeks and Bill Skaggs;

- "Connected in Christ/Conference Resources," Mike Roberts and Maxine Allen; and

- "Turn-Around Churches," Leon Gray and Jeff Jones.

For registration information, contact the district office at (501) 622-2512 or districtoffice@southcentraldistrictumc.org.

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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

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COMMUNICATION, continued from page 6

tors "don't be heroes, get out of harm's way," and he gave them instructions on how to secure their churches and property. Once the danger passed, pastors were told to call the conference office with updates on their whereabouts.

"We begin a new week of assessment and activity, trying to get needed supplies to the hardest hit areas," Hutchinson said in a letter Sept. 8. "That will be our priority for some time. Fortunately, we have an extensive system of case managers and construction people already in place, and we will be using those folks to their capacity as we move into those phases."

African bishops issue renewed call to combat poverty

United Methodist News Service

Describing poverty as a “scourge to human dignity” that “robs people of hope,” United Methodist bishops in Africa have issued a church-wide call for renewed ministry to bring hope and greater prosperity to poor people on their continent.

Meeting for their second time, the 13 bishops that make up the church’s African College of Bishops outlined new actions to combat poverty in a Sept. 11 letter sent from the campus of United Methodist-related Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe.

The bishops expressed “righteous indignation at the current plight of our continent” and resolved to work with professional, community and non-governmental organizations to alleviate poverty in Africa. They view Africa University as a vital resource toward that goal.

“Poverty robs people of hope, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a call to hope, salvation and abundant life,” they wrote. “In Africa, we see poverty manifesting itself in environmental degradation, disease, hunger and malnutrition, inequitable access to education and even the exposure of some of the most vulnerable among us — the girl child, for example — to sexual and economic exploitation.”

While appreciative of the Holy Spirit for bringing peace and stability to areas of conflict in Africa, they

expressed concern for those displaced and still suffering as a result of the violence. They called upon churches in Africa and across the world to “continue to advocate for tolerance and understanding of differing views, cultures, ethnic and religious affiliations as well as for the equitable sharing and use of God’s gifts for the common good.”

The bishops’ call was consistent with an emphasis by The United

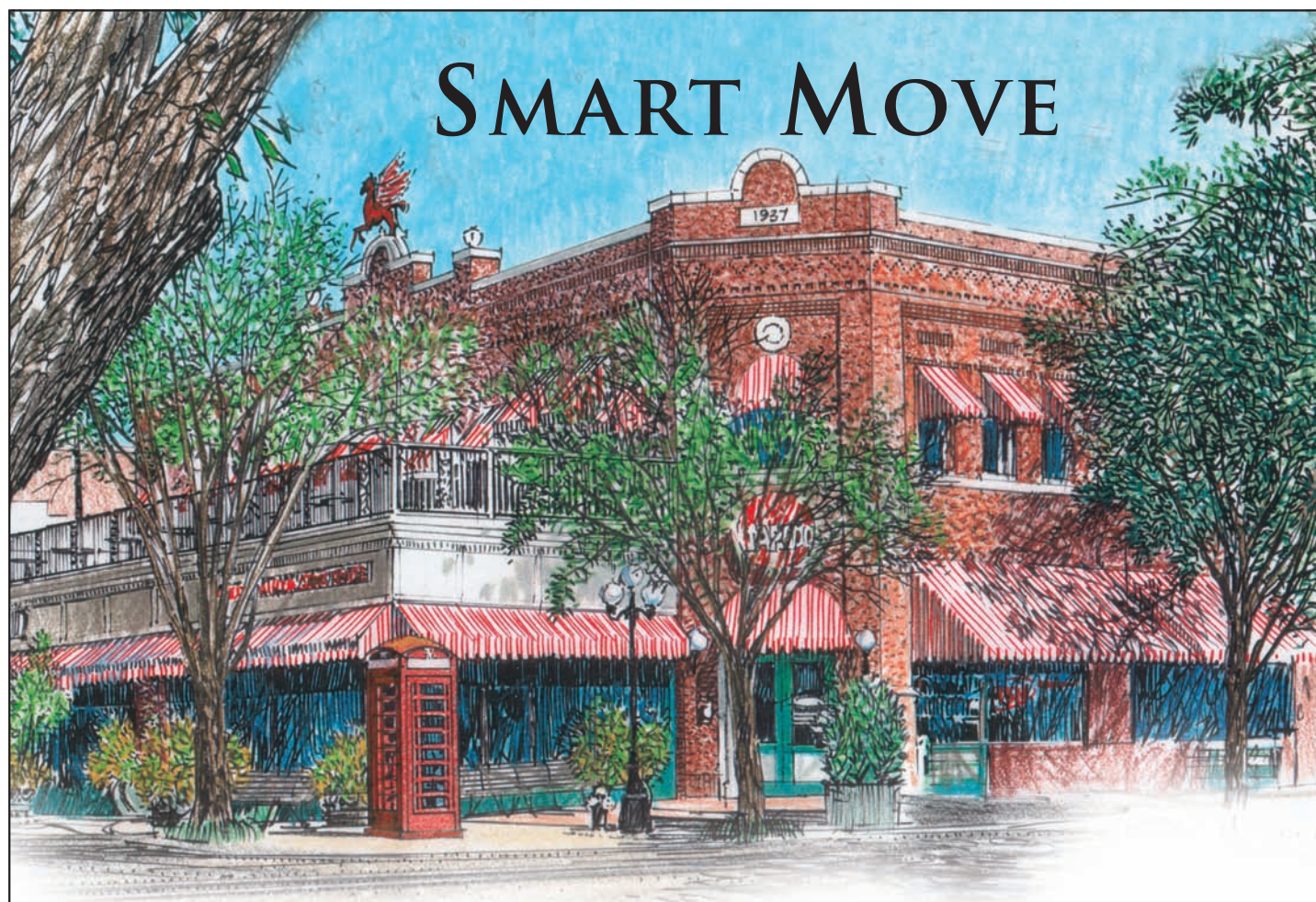
Methodist Church to eliminate poverty and diseases of poverty in the world.

Last April in Fort Worth, Texas, the 2008 General Conference approved four focus areas of ministry for the denomination for the foreseeable future. Two of those are to engage in ministries with the poor and to stamp out diseases of poverty by improving global health.

Since they began meeting as a col-

lege of bishops two years ago, the African bishops have collectively focused on poverty and its manifestations. During their most recent meeting Sept. 8-12, they shared individual progress and action plans being implemented in their respective conferences.

“It is our belief that Africa has all that it needs to build a future with peace, greater prosperity and hope,” they wrote in their letter.



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Calendar

SEPTEMBER

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. 10-12: Junior High “Refuge” retreat, Camp Paron, Paron, Ark.

Oct. 17: Arkansas Conference Evangelism Conference, with seminars relating to evangelism in small, medium and large congregations, First UMC, Heber Springs.

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 Conference 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.