



United Methodist Arkansas

November 21, 2008

Church leaders welcome Obama, urge prayers

United Methodist News Service

Gilbert H. Caldwell remembers a childhood in which his family gathered around a kitchen radio in their Texas home to cheer on Joe Louis as the African-American heavyweight champion took on white competitors in the boxing ring.

On election night on Nov. 4, the 75-year-old Caldwell and his wife, Grace, sat in front of his living room TV in Asbury Park, N.J., to cheer on another black man as Barack Obama sought to win the most powerful government office in the United States, perhaps in the world.

“I could not have imagined I’d live

long enough to see this,” said Caldwell, one day after Obama’s election as the 44th president of the United States. “The right to vote has been so important in the struggle for civil rights.”

A retired United Methodist pastor, Caldwell was a foot soldier in the civil rights movement and founding member of Black Methodists for Church Renewal. He emphasized the need to remember the struggles and sacrifices of the past as the church and the world look ahead with hope under a new leader in the White House. “When an event happens like the election of

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Communicating the Good News

■ *Conference plan begins with identifying key messages*

[Editor’s Note: This is the second in a two-part series on the communications ministry of the Arkansas Conference.]

By **JANE DENNIS**
Arkansas United Methodist Editor

Christians are called to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ. In today’s information-loaded, technologically advanced, electronically motivated world, that requires a wise and strategic plan.

The Arkansas Conference has a plan.

Over the past 18 months, the conference’s Communications depart-

ment, headed by Martha Taylor, has been studying, surveying and picking apart how the conference communicates, both internally — to its churches, pastors and members — and externally — to the unchurched and the secular world beyond the church.

The first phases of the plan have been implemented, with more to come in 2009. A new conference logo has been rolled out. Key messages that articulate what it means to be a United Methodist have been identified (and printed on bookmarks and wallet cards, among other things). A redesigned and restocked website will soon be launched. Training events across the conference to share these

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United Methodist pastor Blake Lasater spent 10 months in Iraq as a Navy chaplain, temporarily leaving behind his church, Living Waters UMC, Bentonville.

Chaplain shares lessons from war

[Editor’s Note: This is the final installment in a series on United Methodist pastors from Arkansas called away from their churches to military duty.]

By **JANE DENNIS**
Arkansas United Methodist Editor

A 10-month tour of duty in Iraq left an indelible imprint on United Methodist pastor Blake Lasater.

The founding pastor of Living Waters United Methodist Church in Bentonville, a Navy Reserve chaplain since 2005, was just a few months into the challenge of a new church start when he was notified that he would be deployed with the “Fighting Seabees” of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corp. He arrived in January 2007 in

Iraq’s Al Anbar province, which he described as “an absolute chaotic hell zone.”

Lasater spoke about his experiences as command chaplain for his battalion and the tests of his faith Oct. 30 at Hendrix College. He was a guest of the Hendrix-Lilly Vocations Initiative.

“When you’re a chaplain you’re there to minister to the needs of the men and women fighting in this war — and they have great needs,” he told a group of about 30 students and guests. “It doesn’t really matter how we feel about the war. This is actually a mission field.”

If he was direct before, Lasater

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Letters to the Editor

Peace with justice

The First Amendment letter from Louis Burgess (Letters, Nov. 7) made me think of taking the oath of office when a person swears allegiance to the Constitution with his hand on the Bible, not the reverse. To swear allegiance to the Bible would suit us Christians, but there might be a problem deciding who was actually in earthly Christian compliance. Do we want a theocracy with a TV evangelist as president? Would we expect him to deport or disenfranchise all who could not be certified as Christian?

Joe Whalen's letter (Nov. 7) offered clarification, also. Surely we agree with him that we do not get to select which scriptures we will follow. But scriptures sometimes appear to be in conflict. We find ourselves agonizing to resolve such contradictions. Rather than to explain each and every verse individually, I see a value in trying to be in harmony with Christ's

attitude of love in feeding the hungry, healing the sick, etc.

From time to time we Christians designate some to be second class. At one time we agreed it was OK to make Blacks slaves. We cited scripture to keep women from serving in some ways. Now, we have new groups to put in less-than-equal status. Wanting to be gatekeepers is tempting at times.

One man told me about his church splitting over where to put the piano. After things calmed down, he couldn't remember which side he was on.

Maybe you and I can skip the fussing and the fighting and the splitting. Let's go for the sharp thinking and the sharp jawboning and the sharp elbowing ... for peace with justice ... for the weak and for the outcast ... for everyone, everywhere.

Stan Reed
Batesville



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returned from his deployment absolutely determined to tell it like it is, no holds barred.

On the country: "Iraq is nothing but hell, sand and heat." Lasater has particular disdain for the bugs, knats, snakes and camel spiders that live there. The 135-degree temperatures and sand storms were no picnic, either.

On the dedication of the U.S. soldiers: "These guys and girls in Iraq, they don't want to leave. It has nothing to do with Bush; it has nothing to do with our country or politics. They re-enlist at a 90 percent rate and they want to stay and they want to extend because they say, 'We're in these villages, we see these children. We want to give them another life, give them a chance to grow up in peace.' ... I was so very proud and honored to serve with them."

On the monotony of military service: "You go for weeks on end with intense order and nothing happening. The monotony of it will drive you nuts."

On Halliburton, the U.S. contracting firm: Citing shoddy construction and electrical work, extravagant spending, deplorable working conditions and pay for third-country nationals, Lasater said he believes the company has committed "high crimes and misdemeanors" and engaged in what amounts to "paid slavery. ... They should be thoroughly investigated."

On gung-ho soldiers: "The Marines I met and served with, most of them, despise the idea of warfare. They feel it was their calling to go defend their country, but the last thing they ever wanted to do is pick up and gun and have to shoot somebody. ... I never served with a braver group of people."

On the hazards of a war zone: Unexploded mines, barbed wire, rocket launchers, snipers and well armed "former members of Sadaam's army who are mad at you because you invaded the country" are what make it a hazardous place to work he said. Once an IED (improvised explosive device) went off in front of his vehicle, "and the whole world blew up in front of us," Lasater said.

On U.S. centrality: "We need to get out and go to other countries and see how the rest of the world lives."

On what he learned and what was God's message from this experience: "The message I heard is to get outside the church and to be part of something larger than I am," Lasater said. "I think I discovered the true meaning of the cross. When Jesus talks about picking up your cross and how life is found in the cross ... it means giving up your life, maybe not literally, but putting aside all your selfish needs and wants and making a difference in someone else's life. And I discovered that by being a chaplain. I didn't find that out in the church."



By Jane Dennis

Editor's Corner

Pray for peace

An angel lives in my kitchen. She is really a Christmas angel, but she hangs around all year long.

My angel is a framed print that has been part of my Christmas decorations for some time. She has a flowing white robe, a glowing halo and is holding three white peace lilies. The banner above her head proclaims "Peace on Earth."

She came to reside in my kitchen four or five years ago when I was decorating for Christmas. About mid-January, I announced to my family that my Peace Angel was not coming down until we knew for certain that peace was achieved and our nation was no longer at war. I was staging my own mini protest amid the kitchen pots, pans, utensils and the daily stack of mail.

I just want peace.

I know peace is what our soldiers are fighting for. But it breaks my heart that men and women — some barely beyond being called boys and girls — are dying and being wounded every day, as wars in Iraq and Afghanistan rage on.



Jane Dennis

I just want peace.

I don't know how long my Peace Angel will live in my kitchen. She has already been ensconced there longer than I thought she would. It will be a glorious day when she can come down and be packed away.

Pray for peace.

Do what you can to work for peace. Do what you can to reach out to soldiers who are risking their lives for us and for our nation.

My small contribution currently is heading up a drive to collect hot chocolate and apple cider drink mixes for more than 500 infantry soldiers assigned to remote bases on the Pakistan border. Not only are they in one of the most dangerous places in the world, they are facing a bitter cold winter with few niceties. My cousin works in a support role to answer the unmet needs of our soldiers. I gladly accepted her challenge to help.

With my peace angel looking over my shoulder, I'm glad to do my part. Still, I pray for peace.

[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:

My “all time, all time no time small time” favorite comic strip is “Pogo.” It is one of the sad circumstances of life that Walt Kelly, creator of “Pogo,” died before my children and grandchildren could become acquainted with that gentle little “possum from the Okefenokee Swamp and his friend Albert Alligator.” Pogo and his friends were particularly adept at poking holes in our society’s political and social pomposity and inconsistencies. I can only begin to imagine what fun we would have had with them this past year.

Still, some of the phrases from Pogo are a living part of the American idiom. The most famous is: “We have met the enemy and he is us.” Then, of course, there are the Christmas carols like “Deck Us All With Boston Charlie, Walla, Walla, Wash and Kalamazoo...” I guess it is because of the carols



An Occasional Word from the Bishop

that I think of Pogo at this time of year. I’ve already heard carols in stores and in advertisements on television. The ads inserted in print media contain holly and Christmas trees. The *season* ’tis upon us.

In spite of the economic news, in spite of violence at home and abroad, we have much for which to be thankful in this season. Our nation has elected a new president, and there will be a transfer of power in accordance with our laws and without violence in the street. There will continue to be open and candid discussion and debate about how best to harness the power of our nation to effect economic recovery. For me, the most important reality is that you and I continue to have

the opportunity to celebrate the birth and promise of our faith.

I consider the right to worship freely to be the foundation for all the freedoms we enjoy in this nation. We may disagree with some on points of theology or biblical interpretation, but we respect the right of others to hold different points of view. We extend this same respect to those of other faith traditions. As United Methodist Christians we simply seek to live such winsome, inviting, faithful lives that others will want to know and embrace the Jesus we love.

The key to this witness is our presence in worship. It is in corporate worship, surrounded by both



Charles Crutchfield

friends and strangers alike, where we hear the Word proclaimed, and find our spirits lifted by the music of faith. The temptation in this Thanksgiving — Christmas — New Year’s season is to become so caught up in the “much-ness and many-ness” of our calendars that we forget the heart of why we celebrate.

We have much for which to be thankful. The doors of our churches are open, often. It is the season wherein we celebrate the birth of the One who is the ultimate source of all our hopes. Our faith in Christ gives strength and purpose to our lives. Our priorities are ordered and focused. It is a season of and for renewal. Let us embrace the heart of Thanksgiving and Christmas, lest in all our busyness we discover with Pogo that “we have met the enemy and he is us.”

Faithfully,

Charles M. Crutchfield



Can Barack Obama change the importance of race for us?

By JENEANE JONES

I watched the civil rights movement play out largely on nightly television. Brown vs. Brown meant my elementary school-mates all looked different. But the teachers all looked the same. Housing discrimination was outlawed, enabling black people to move into previously all-white neighborhoods. But when we did, white people left, and so did the quality of our neighborhood services. While my family could shop in the same markets as white people, the store managers didn’t seem to mind that the produce was a bit older, the bread a little staler.



Jeneane Jones

I recall that, at age 11, I cringed and turned away as the black and white news film flickered on the TV set and Walter Cronkite described water hoses being turned on people who looked like me on the streets in Birmingham. In those days, my father was a firefighter in the newly integrated fire department of Oakland, Calif. As the family watched together, he

explained that the brutal force of the fire hoses on those young people could break ribs, tear skin and even kill. One of a few blacks in his East Oakland fire station, my father had been taught personal lessons about the pain of those hoses. Some of his white co-workers had turned them on him before, during a fire, blowing him off a roof.

I wonder now what my late father would say about the election of Barack Obama as our next president of the United States.

The night after the election, a homeless man rolled his wheelchair up to a line of people behind a black SUV on a street corner in Washington, D.C. They were waiting to buy a newspaper chronicling that day’s historic events. “What’s the fuss?” the man asked no one in particular. “What do you think that man can do?” His comments went largely ignored, but the man kept talking. He asked people to buy him a newspaper and some food and to help fill the cup of change he jangled. After I promised him a paper, he thanked me, but kept telling us, “He won’t do anything. He’s just another black man.” There was bitterness and pain in that voice, a homeless black man claiming wisdom he’d rather not own.

This country and its people have been marketing and branding the concept of color to generations, to every race of people, to every country — and getting results that no Madison Avenue advertising firm ever could achieve. When describing inanimate objects, black is impressive, beautiful — the classic black dress, the sleek black limousine. But used to describe living, human creatures, the hues of black and brown become synonymous with concepts like “less than” and words like “suspicious” and “dangerous.”

On election night, just before midnight, one African-American man, a black man, introduced the possibility that a marketing strategy that had succeeded for generations might soon

face its own demise — that using black to mean “less than,” or to suggest being a liability, is inaccurate.

The election of Sen. Barack Obama as our 44th president signals transformation — of a word and, with it, a people. It was the pronouncement that the United States is no longer operating under the black and white paradigm that qualified leadership must have a particular look that is white and male.

President-elect Obama’s success at the polls is an acknowledgement that a person of color, particularly an African-American man, can lead a nation — not based on oratory, but on a man’s willingness to reach out to a diverse group of U.S. citizens with a

See CHANGE, page 5

FOR HEAVEN’S SAKE By Mike Morgan



Viewpoint

Steady stewardship counters panic, anxiety

Everyone is aware of the economic turmoil afflicting our national and world markets recently. I've seen it referred to as the "Panic of 2008." It certainly has seemed that way, hasn't it? The pundits are saying it is the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the '30s, which, in my memory, they also said in 1987 and 2001.



Bud Reeves

There is no doubt that there are some serious economic issues going on: the mortgage crisis, banks failing, the stock market dancing all over the map (but mostly lower), jobless rates up. It is a concern, especially for folks on fixed incomes who depend on equity investments.

I don't pretend to know that much about economics, but I know that panic is not a good way to operate in any situation. The dire predictions of the talking heads on TV are usually worse than reality, and even through troubled times, people of faith can prevail.

I still believe in America, and I believe we have learned enough in the last 75 years or so that another Great Depression is unlikely. As former President Bill Clinton said on "The David Letterman Show": "For the last 200 years, everybody that has bet against America has lost."



The Shepherd's Staff

By William O. "Bud" Reeves

However, the current economic crisis has stirred feelings of panic among church people, too. In the church, we are dependent upon the support of our members and friends, and it's all voluntary. When money gets tight, will people be able to contribute? Will we be able to support our ministries?

I believe we will, because our stewardship toward God is not fundamentally a matter of economics. It's a matter of faith. Our giving to God is based on our love for the church and our desire to support the life-changing ministry we do. Our giving is a response of gratitude to God for the blessings he has already given to us — a practical, verifiable sign in our lives that we love God more than our possessions. These deep principles of faith are not subject to the fluctuations of the stock market because they are grounded in the faithfulness of almighty God.

In a financial crunch the fundamental rules of good stewardship do not change, because they are grounded on Biblical principles. Faithful giving to God is based on:

Priority. Our giving is our first commitment to God, a primary deci-

sion we make in allotting our family budget.

Proportionality. Different families have different capabilities because of the way they have been blessed financially. What is important is not the amount of the gift, but the proportion of income the gift represents. The Biblical standard of giving is the tithe, or 10 percent, and effective churches continue to encourage families to strive toward that goal.

Consistency. The ministry of Christ continues year round, so it is important to keep a regular habit of giving, so that our church can keep offering a full range of services and programs to make disciples.

Joy. The discipline of giving brings the fulfillment of knowing that you are obeying God and supporting vital ministry. "God loves a cheerful giver." (I Corinthians 9:7)

The promise of faithful stewardship is equally Biblical. God will pour out his blessings on his people when they are faithful. (Malachi 3:10) And we will be enriched in every way for our generosity in giving. (I Corinthians 9:11)

Indeed, my experience in previous crises has borne this out. In 1987, the

church I was serving built a new building and paid for it in four years. In 2001, the church I was serving was in the middle of its third expansion project. We ended the year with growth in every area, including finances. I'm sure the history of churches all over Arkansas bears this out. Tough times are great times when the people of God are faithful. We have a chance to bear witness to God's faithfulness, and we have an opportunity to help people who are hurting. When it comes down to it, our ministry is not dependent on the politics of Washington or Wall Street; we have a much bigger God, and he will prosper his people who live with a focused faith and a strategic vision for the future.

I believe much of the current economic meltdown has been caused by the human problem: sin. The greed, pride and materialism we have seen in the last few years have brought us to this point. But I worship a God who overcomes sin, and our faithful response to God in these difficult times is a witness in our church and in our community that we trust in God to provide as long as we stay faithful. When everyone around us is panicking, it may not be easy to stay focused. But "with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26)

Stay the course. Be faithful. Be blessed.

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

Beyond a black and white election: hope in Obama

By ADAM HAMILTON

Watching Barack Obama's victory speech and reflecting upon the significance of his election as the next president of the United States left me profoundly moved.

In his gracious concession speech, even Sen. John McCain acknowledged that this was an historic moment, describing Obama's election as a "great thing" for the



Adam Hamilton

nation. Newspapers sold out across the country as people snapped up tangible reminders that they were present for this event.

The election was the fulfillment of a dream and the beginning of a new chapter in America. This was clearly true when it came to the issue of race. It was seen in the tears flowing down the faces of African Americans at 10:01 p.m. on election night as the race was called in Obama's favor. And it was felt in the hearts of all Americans, black and white, who have longed for an end to the racial divide in our country.

Beyond the question of race,

Obama's election marks the beginning of a new chapter in America's international relations. After years of declining international public opinion toward the United States, this change in office symbolizes what many believe will be a significant change in how America is viewed by other nations — both our friends and our foes. On the continent of Africa where China is gaining increasing influence, Barack Obama's election was hailed with resounding enthusiasm. In Asia, in Muslim countries and throughout Europe, the president-elect is seen as a new kind of American leader — one who inspires hope while leading with

confidence and humility on the world stage. One senses that there is a new day dawning and here, too, race was a positive factor. Further, his election itself reminds those in other nations of the promise and hope that America represents.

Yet in the final analysis, Obama's election was about far more than race and international affairs. Most who voted for him saw in him an ineffable quality of leadership that is essential to the task of leading. Great national leaders articulate a country's highest ideals in such a way as to inspire others to sacrifice in order to live into

See ELECTION, page 6

UMs look forward to nets outreach in Côte d'Ivoire

DABOU, Côte d'Ivoire — United Methodist leaders held up a vision of hope for Côte d'Ivoire during a worship service that signaled the start of an historic week of outreach. A sense of expectation added to the excitement of the Nov. 9 service as dignitaries from the church and government spoke about plans to distribute free bed nets to protect families from mosquito-borne malaria. The distribution begins Nov. 11 and lasts throughout the week.

"Tomorrow, we look forward to beginning this historic distribution of 855,000 long-lasting, insecticide-treated nets to prevent malaria in the women and children of Côte d'Ivoire," said Bishop Janice Riggle Huie, who leads the denomination's Texas Annual Conference. Nearly 1,000 volunteers from Côte d'Ivoire and more than 30 people from Texas spent Nov. 10 preparing for the distribution.

Phone cards still helping soldiers remain connected

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The people of The United Methodist Church have donated more than 13 million minutes of conversations with loved ones to U.S. servicemen and servicewomen serving overseas. The Phone Card Project, five years old this month, was started by United Methodist Chaplain Lt. Col. J. Maddox Woodbery and was initially pushed by the denomination's Illinois Great Rivers Conference. The chaplains who distribute the cards say many serving in conflict zones could not afford to call their family.

With Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays coming up, these cards are

CHANGE, *continued from page 3*

message that draws masses together. Throughout his campaign, Obama refused to reject his ethnicity. At the same time, he refused to let it define him. He is an example to all of us of what it looks like to define ourselves, as Martin Luther King Jr. said, by the content of our character.

In the days following his election, the comments and tactics of fear continue: Obama is "mysterious," "we know little about him" and on and on. So race in America is still an issue. But he gives us reason to believe that the importance we place on race can change and be diminished. Most significantly for people of faith, Barack Obama offers us the chance to be part

News Digest



Bishops Benjamin Boni (left) of Côte d'Ivoire and Janice Riggle Huie of Texas (center) help distribute mosquito nets in Alepe, Côte d'Ivoire on Nov. 11.

UMNS photo by Mike DuBose

vital. Initially, people donated cards, but then began sending money for the cards. When that happened, the Endorsing Agency developed a card with the United Methodist logo and a message stating that the card is provided by the people of The United Methodist Church, who are also praying for the safety of the troops. One 120-minute card costs \$4.95 and 15 orders for 5,000 cards have been placed since the program began.

To contribute to the phone card program, send checks payable to: United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA), General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, PO Box 340007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007.

Faith groups call for end to immigration raids

WASHINGTON — The United Methodist Board of Church and Society and the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race are among signers of a letter to President Bush that calls for an end to all raids

of that change. With his call for unity, he has reintroduced to us the concept that Jesus Christ himself tried to teach — that we are all one in the eyes of God. Barack Obama's victory calls us together as one America. As Christians, we can raise that refrain to a new level, adding that we are one in the Spirit, one in the Lord.

The eyes of the world were watching us on election night — out of curiosity, even out of admiration. From today forward, they will watch us to see what becomes of this new era.

[Jeneane Jones is assistant chief executive over media relations for the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race.]

"which separate families and create distrust and fear among all community members." The letter expresses concern about "the growing dependence on raids as a primary means of dealing with our broken immigration system." It also calls for legal, safe and orderly avenues for workers and their families to migrate to the United States with their rights fully protected.

Bishops adopt new guidelines for deacons

ST. SIMONS ISLAND, Ga. — The United Methodist Council of Bishops has approved guidelines for interpreting the circumstances for allowing deacons to administer Holy Communion and perform baptisms. The new sacramental

authority for deacons — granted by the denomination's top legislative body at the 2008 General Conference — becomes effective in January.

The new sentence in Paragraph 328 that describes the ministry of the deacon in the United Methodist Book of Discipline — "does not fundamentally change the sacramental privileges of the order of deacons," the bishops noted. That sentence reads: "For the sake of extending the mission and ministry of the church, a pastor-in-charge or district superintendent may request that the Bishop grant local sacramental authority to the deacon to administer the sacraments in the absence of an elder, within a deacon's primary appointment."

The bishops said the new language is an attempt to describe the extraordinary missional reasons that justify exceptions to general church practice. However, in all cases, the Discipline gives the bishop final discretionary authority to decide under which circumstances to grant local sacramental authority to a deacon.

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Fayetteville musician comes to aid of historic church

By **SUSANNAH PATTON**
Northwest Arkansas Times

FAYETTEVILLE — Jonathan Story would do just about anything to keep a historic home from being bulldozed, even if it means putting the house on a truck and hauling it to a new location.

Story, who plays the organ at Central United Methodist Church on Dickson Street, said he found out in 2006 that the church's new youth building and parking deck would have to mean the removal of an old home, a home that he'd admired since he was a child. He put in an offer of \$1 for the house on the condition that he would pay for the relocation.

It was sort of a win-win for the church. They wouldn't have to pay to have the house demolished, and they would be contributing to its preservation.

The home was originally built in 1906 for Mary Clancy, a schoolteacher at Washington Elementary and the wife of a Union Civil War veteran.

Her father, Alexander Hendry, was the supervising architect for Old Main, which is coincidentally the first building that Story developed a fascination for.

"When I was a kid it was falling in. It was then restored, but I can remember when it had a fence around it because it was unsafe," he said.

In 1994, at the age of 12, Story helped save the Ozark Theater from being demolished.

The theater was an opera house, built in 1904, he said, and had a lot of history behind it. The city was going to demolish it for a parking lot. Story gathered signatures for a petition and also spoke at City Council meetings.

Eventually they backed off, he said,

and the building is now used for offices.

At 14, Story teamed up with local preservationist Paula Marinoni to form a committee to save Carnal Hall on the University of Arkansas campus.

"Back then it was falling down, and the University was about to tear it down," he said.

Again, Story gathered signatures and even got former Gov. Mike Huckabee to sign the petition at a football game.

Story then got busy doing what most high school kids do and his preservation efforts slowed down. And then the yellow house was threatened.

"I had my eye on this house for a while," he said. "I couldn't get it off my mind.

"Finally, I went to the church and made an offer. They accepted, and here we are."

Now Story sits proudly in the living room of the 2,100-square-foot home. The walls are adorned with photographs of historic buildings, the bookshelf lined with history books and biographies.

It wasn't easy for Story to put the house on the market.

"I'm kind of torn," he said. "The house has really grown on me. I hate to give it up."

But Story has already fallen in love with another home in the Washington Willow Historic District.

"It's older than this one and needs help even more," he said.

Story has always had a passion for local history. Besides wanting to be a concert pianist, he plans to continue his hobby of renovating old homes and

supporting preservation projects.

That passion got him involved with the St. James United Methodist Church on Willow Avenue, which Story said is the oldest continuously serving Methodist church building north of the Arkansas River.

"The building goes back to right after the Civil War," he said. "It was



Jonathan Story of Fayetteville has used his musical skills and his passion for preservation to help the historic St. James UMC in Fayetteville.

originally a house and was converted to a church. It's built with brick that was left over from the construction of Old Main."

Fayetteville was the first town south of the Mason-Dixon line to integrate its schools, Story said, and the church was the driving force for that. The church was the center of the Civil Rights movement in Fayetteville and was twice attacked by the Ku Klux Klan, he said.

The building is in need of some renovation work, which the church has been doing when money allows. Story decided to help out by doing benefit organ and piano concerts for the

church.

"I've raised \$ 7,500 so far," he said. "I'm going to keep going as long as they need the money."

Pastor Gary Lunsford said Story approached him one day and offered his help.

"It was perfect timing for us because we'd just finished the sanctuary ceiling, and we'd thought our roof was in good shape, but with the heavy rains we had this spring, we had three leaks in a new ceiling. We needed a new roof, and there was no money," he said. "Jonathan said, 'Why don't I see if I can do a series of concerts for you?'"

He did one at Pulaski Heights Methodist Church in Little Rock and one at Central. His next concert will be Nov. 23 at Central United Methodist in Rogers at 3 p.m. Admission is free and a love offering will be taken.

To schedule future benefit concerts, contact Story at (479) 422-3131 or jtstory@uark.edu.

The money he raised put the church more than halfway toward raising \$14,000 for a new roof. Lunsford said the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas made a grant to complete the project. "Without Jonathan's help, we'd still be struggling," he said.

The church started the renovation project seven years ago, Lunsford said, using only money acquired through fundraising and donations, and Story has been a big supporter.

"It's not just the concerts, but he's always promoted our restoration project. He's supported it and backed it," he said. "He's a great guy with a great heart. I wish there were more like him."

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ELECTION, *continued from page 4*

these ideals. Obama's election signals his ability to do just that. As but one example, 52 percent of people making more than \$200,000 per year voted for him, despite the fact that Obama's plan calls for an increase in taxes for most of them.

In the midst of times of crisis, the gift of leadership becomes even more important. A major theme of both the Obama and McCain campaigns was "change." Most Americans know that what most needs to change is us — "we the people" need to change. Obama was willing to articulate that in his campaign. His election is in part a sign that many voters believe he has the capacity to lead us to change.

Finally, Obama's election represents the desire of millions of voters

for a president who can see the gray in a world that is often painted in black and white terms. He is comfortable dealing with paradox and complexity. He has the ability to pursue a conjunctive approach to faith and politics — one that brings together concerns of both the left and the right into a powerful third way. This is something familiar to United Methodists. Methodists have historically had the ability to hold together the concerns of both liberals and conservatives, to preach both the evangelical and social gospels, and to attempt to understand and acknowledge the important positions deeply held by people on opposite sides of the theological or political divide, bringing them together in what some might call a "radical center."

A few examples: Obama articulates a personal Christian faith and a desire to follow Jesus Christ, and he holds this together with a progressive concern for social justice and individual rights that he sees as rooted in his faith. He supports the right of a woman to choose, and he is the first Democratic candidate for president to write into the Democratic platform a commitment to reduce the number of abortions in America. He believes that marriage is defined as the union of a man and woman, and he supports the rights of states to grant civil unions. He believes that government has an important role to play in addressing the welfare of the populace and, to the chagrin of some in his party, he supports faith-based initiatives as

important to addressing the welfare of our people.

The challenges facing our country are great. Barack Obama is not the answer to all of these challenges. But to the degree that he exercises his leadership potential well, he will bring Americans together around a common vision; he will draw upon divergent perspectives in developing a plan to address our challenges; and he will inspire and lead us to make the sacrifices and changes necessary to navigate through our present crises in pursuit of a brighter future.

[Adam Hamilton is the author of "Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White: Thoughts on Religion, Morality and Politics," and is senior pastor of the 15,000-member United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kan.]

OBAMA *continued from page 1*

Barack Obama, we cannot help but recall what brought us to this moment," he said.

Across the United Methodist Church, leaders hailed Obama as an agent of change, a friend of the disenfranchised, a "gift" to the world and a bridge-builder among cultures, social orders and national ideologies. Others urged United Methodists to commit to pray regularly for the incoming president as he faces the daunting challenges of two wars, a stumbling economy and a battered international reputation under the administration of George W. Bush, who is United Methodist.

"A new page in history has been turned," said Jim Winkler, chief executive of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, the church's social advocacy agency. "Virtually the entire world is grateful for and approves of the election results."

'Arc of history'

Erin Hawkins, chief executive of the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race, said the election of the first African-American president signals an important step toward restoration in the world. "It means truly, in the poet's words, that the arc of history is long but it bends toward justice. It means that this nation is ready to chart a new, bold future of fundamental change," Hawkins said.

An African American herself, Hawkins said the historic election is more significant than anyone can adequately express. "A truly African-American leader and his African-American family will soon occupy the White House, which was built by slaves more than two centuries ago; and together they will lead this nation into a world and a 21st century full of hope and transformation," she said.

James Lawson, a civil rights leader and retired United Methodist pastor who helped organize the sanitation strike in Memphis in 1968, said the election of Obama is transformational.

"... The election of Barack Obama for the United States at this time and for the world is a gift," said Lawson, speaking from Nashville, Tenn., where he organized nonviolent sit-ins at segregated lunch counters in 1960. "... It has to be understood that this is the way in which the spirit of God works in human circles."

Prayers for a new president

In St. Simons Island, S.C., the United Methodist Council of Bishops paused during their semiannual meeting to offer up hymns and prayers for Obama, the nation and the world on the day following Election Day.

"We are praying that God will grant you wisdom, courage and protec-

tion in your presidential leadership," the council wrote in a Nov. 5 letter to the president-elect. "We are also praying for all the leaders of the world's nations, who will collaborate with you in the arena of common concerns that impact the global community."

James V. Heidinger II, president and publisher of Good News, an evangelical caucus of United Methodists, said everyone should pray for Obama as he prepares to take office in January. "The pressures, challenge and responsibilities of the presidency must be overwhelming. Christians everywhere should remember to lift him before the Lord daily for wisdom, strength and guidance as he leads the nation," Heidinger said.

Crossing barriers

According to exit polls, Obama handily won the vote of women, Hispanics, African Americans and the nation's youth.

Raúl Alegría, president of the United Methodist caucus of Hispanics and Latinos, noted that the nation's Hispanic population is not monolithic in its voting but that Obama's message transcended cultural and ethnic lines.

"The messages he conveyed regarding transforming the systems that affect persons — particularly in their pocketbooks and issues of economics — are issues that resonated with people who are Hispanic and Latino, just as they did with other groups," he said. "The message I heard with respect to matters of justice and wanting to bring a sense of unity into our country resonated personally with me because I feel like our country has had some division, and we are at the point in our nation's life where we can look forward to working together in common purpose."

Julie O'Neal, a staff member with the denomination's Young People's Ministries, believes youthful voters were drawn to Obama's "humility and honesty and desire for leaders to be transparent."

"I think young people were so energized and vocal because this election captured something within them that had never been spoken directly to or about them before. I think they saw themselves in this election," O'Neal said.

Others said matters of faith were a factor. Both Obama and opponent John McCain are professing Christians.

"Barack Obama is a person of deep faith," Winkler said. "I was reminded of that fact last night when he made sure the (election night) festivities in Grant Park began with an invocation. I fully expect The United Methodist Church, for the first time in many



U.S. citizens line up at the Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew United Methodist in New York to cast their vote on Nov. 4. Members of the congregation on Manhattan's Upper West Side provided coffee and snacks on Election Day. UMNS photo by James K. Karpen

years, will be welcomed in the White House."

In Arizona, McCain's home state, United Methodist pastor Karen Vannoy praised McCain's "incredibly healing concession speech."

"His reminder — that what we share as Americans is so much greater than what divides us — is even more true for us as Christians," said Vannoy,

pastor of First United Methodist Church in Phoenix. "Because we share Jesus as Lord, we share common ground much broader and more important than any of the kingdoms of this world. We share the faith that our future ultimately is not dependent on any president, and that we must work together as a voice for the last, the least and the lost."

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December 7, 4 p.m.

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Tour Dates

No Reservations Required

December 18, 7:30 p.m.

Missouri United Methodist Church
204 S 9th St., Columbia, MO

December 19, 7:30 p.m.

Christ of the Hills
United Methodist Church
700 Balearic Rd, Hot Springs, AR

www.hendrix.edu/candlelight

HENDRIX





Coming Up

United Methodist Women at Sequoyah UMC, Fayetteville, will host their annual Mrs. Santa's Cookie and Craft Sale from 9 a.m. to 12 noon Dec. 13 at the church, 1910 Old Wire Road. All proceeds will benefit mission projects of Sequoyah UMW.

Lockesburg First UMC will host the Lockesburg Community Thanksgiving Worship Service at 6 p.m. Nov. 23. Tommy Halsell, pastor of Mount Carmel and Macedonia United Methodist churches, will bring the message. A community choir will perform. The pastors of First Baptist Church, Lockesburg Cumberland Presbyterian and The Lighthouse, as well as Michael Jennings of First UMC, will also participate in the service.

The Praise Team from Salem UMC, Benton, will present a repeat performance of a original musical/drama "The Inn Keeper" at 6 p.m. Dec. 14. The drama, written and produced by the praise team, tells the original Christmas story through the eyes of the man who had "no room in his inn." The drama features several original songs written by SD Davis. Admission is free. All are welcome.

"Two from Galilee," a musical dinner theater production that tells the timeless Christmas story of Mary and Joseph of Nazareth and the very special way that God touched their lives, will be presented Dec. 12-13 Henderson UMC, 13000 W. Baseline Road, Little Rock. The production includes a cast of 46 includes men, women and children and many more working behind the scenes on elaborate costumes, a multi-tiered set and in other roles.

"It's wonderful to see so many of our folks stepping out of their comfort zones to do something extraordinary in the name of Christ," said Kevin Lyon, pastor at Henderson and cast member. "Non-singers are singing, people have been sewing and building and painting, and others will be participating by serving food."

Pam Wildschuetz, Henderson's minister of music, directs the production, with assistance from Charles Stanley, assistant minister of music. Proceeds will benefit the Henderson Building Fund and will be used to retire the debt on the Family Life Center.

The message of "Two from Galilee," according to Wildschuetz, "is that God loves us so much that He sent

His Son to live, suffer, and die for our Salvation. We believe this presentation will be an opportunity for God to touch our lives and the lives of those who come."

The dinner begins at 6 p.m. each evening, followed by the musical at 7 p.m. Cost for the meal and the musical is \$20 for adults and \$15 for those under 12. Free childcare will be available. Call (501) 455-2209 for reservations.

The fifth annual "Christmas in the Quarter" tour of classic homes is coming up 2-5 p.m. Dec. 7 in Little Rock's historic Quapaw Quarter district. Featured homes this year include one of our city's most authentically restored Queen Anne houses as well as a superb example of 'green' new home design and construction. The event is hosted by Quapaw Quarter UMC.

Guests may take a trolley, walk or drive from home to home on the 1.7-mile tour, with hosts at each location. The event is a fundraiser for the church's various ministries that include a weekly breakfast for the poor and homeless, a food pantry that distributes food to more than 10,000 hungry people each year, a performing arts camp for at-risk teens, and more.

This year's homes include:

◆ The Hanger House (ca. 1889). One of the city's best known and most authentically restored Queen Anne homes.

◆ The Croxson House (ca. 1909). Designed by renowned Little Rock architect Charles Thompson, this Dutch Colonial is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

◆ The Wilson House (new). In an Eastern Arkansas Agrarian style, this home is a superb example of green design in construction and operation.

◆ The Cox House (ca. 1896). This Colonial Revival home was designed and built by noted architect Frank Gibb and retains the original six fireplaces and Tiffany glass window.

◆ The Southwell Residence (2008): Built in Tudor style with a steeply pitched roof and decorative half-timbering, this new home takes the dominant form of many early 20th century suburban homes.

◆ Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church (1920-1926). Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the church is built in a Gothic Revival style with Queen Anne Characteristics. Gothic trusses crown the sanctuary, which retains its original

stained glass windows.

The tour begins at Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church, 1601 S. Louisiana St., and tickets may be purchased there or in advance by contacting the church office at (501) 375-1601. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$5 for children, and free for 5 and under.

For more information, go to www.qqumc.org.

Camp Aldersgate, Youth Home, Pulaski County Humane Society, Nothing But Nets and Bridge2Rwanda are among many charitable organizations that will participate in the annual Mission Market from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Nov. 23 at Pulaski Heights UMC, 4823 Woodlawn, Little Rock. All are invited to shop for gifts that benefit worthwhile nonprofit organizations here at home and around the world.

Time to plan ahead. Hendrix College will present the John and Marjem Gill Annual Preaching Workshop with Renita Weems April 22-23.

Weems is a Biblical scholar, author and public speaker and has been the William and Camille Olivia Hanks Cosby Endowed Professor in



Rehearsing a scene from "Two from Galilee," to be performed at Henderson UMC, Little Rock, are (from left) Wally Johnson, Alan Wildschuetz and Kevin Lyon, portraying the Three Magi.

Humanities at Spelman College in Atlanta. She has also taught at Vanderbilt Divinity School and been the guest lecturer at Ashland Theological Seminary, Mercer University, Iliff School of Theology and Claremont School of Theology. She holds degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary and Wellesley College. She has written five books, numerous articles and lectured at more than 25 conferences. She makes frequent appearances on National Public Radio and has been in documentaries produced by PBS and BBC.

For more information or to register go online at www.hendrix.edu/religiouslife. Cost is \$60 if received before April 15; \$85 after that date. Cost includes workshop, resource materials, two lunches, one dinner and one continental breakfast. Two scholarships are available from each district in the Arkansas Conference. District Superintendents have details.

Connected in Christ

Church 'building block' seminars set

Three Connected in Christ team training "building block" seminars will be offered in coming months in three different locations across the state.

The seminars are designed for all congregations interested in the Arkansas Conference Connected in Christ ministry for emerging smaller congregations, as well as for congregations already engaged in the Connected in Christ ministry.

As a key component of Connected In Christ, team training is design to bring laity and clergy together as partners for transformation and ministry planning. The seminars are designed to be experiential, dynamic, inspirational and informative and to help participants be more faithful and fruitful in ministry.

The seminars will be held on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch

and all materials are provided.

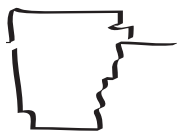
The schedule includes:

■ "Total Impact: Connected In Christ and the United Methodist Way" — Jan. 17, Searcy First UMC; Jan. 24, First UMC, Malvern; Jan. 31, Heritage UMC, Van Buren.

■ "Ministry in Color: Relational Dynamics, Team Building and Leadership Using the Birkman Method" — Feb. 7, Searcy First UMC; Feb. 21, First UMC, Malvern; Feb. 28, Heritage UMC, Van Buren.

■ "Transformational Ministry Planning" — March 7, Searcy First UMC; March 14, First UMC, Malvern; March 21, Heritage UMC, Van Buren.

Congregations are asked to provide a list of participants from their church, by emailing Michael Roberts, executive director, at mroberts@arumc.org or calling (501) 324-8016.



It Happened

The people of Living Waters UMC, Bentonville, celebrated All Saints' Sunday with a candle light remembrance ceremony that honored family and friends who passed triumphantly through death to life everlasting. The altar was symbolically decorated to represent the great river of life where the saints will gather and rejoice that life triumphs over death.

Each person was invited to come during the communion ceremony to light a candle in memory of ones who deepened their faith and love of God. Parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends and teachers were remembered.

Family and friends who passed from this life during the previous year were remembered in a special ceremony where their names were called and family members came forward to light a special rose-shaped candle that was then placed in the fountain of water, one of the focal points of the worship service.

"These rose candles are a reminder that our lives and the lives of those we love will never be lost, but will find fulfillment in the River of Life that flows from the eternal city of God," said pastor Blake Lasater.

The service, with 168 participants, ended in a celebration of singing and music.

A dozen United Methodists from across Arkansas attended the recent four-day NOMADS Reunion and Annual Meeting in Shawnee, Okla. NOMADS (Nomads On a Mission Active in Divine Service) offers persons with recreational vehicles the opportunity to share their time and skills in United Methodist projects, including churches, camps, mission agencies and local neighborhoods.

Arkansans participating in the gathering included Kathy and Paul Bauer of Cherokee Village, Sue and Ronald McDonald of Camden, Charleen and

Ron Glasgow of Garfield, Linda and Jerrel Fielder of Conway, Doris and Cecil Jones of Royal, and Carol and Howard Stoner of Texarkana.

Activities at the conference included seminars to enhance leadership and work skills, Bible study, devotions, entertainment and fellowship.

The NOMADS organization is made up of 993 active members from 44 states and one Canadian province. During 2007-2008, NOMADS sponsored 179 three-week projects in 33 states and Mexico. During this time 1,438 workers donated 127,151 hours performing work valued at \$2.3 million.

St. Paul UMC, Malvern, has begun Sunday night services at 6:30 p.m. featuring messages by the church's lay speakers and praise music, followed by refreshments and fellowship.

In other news, St. Paul's United Methodist Men will be selling smoked-hams and turkey breasts Nov. 25-26. Another sale is planned prior to Christmas. Plus, United Methodist Women will host a Holiday Sweet Shoppe bake sale Dec. 13. The Chancel Choir will present a Christmas Cantata at 11 a.m. Dec. 14, followed by a concert at 6 p.m. featuring the handbell choir and youth chimes.

And finally, St. Paul is proud to be the South Central District's Disaster Relief Center. Coordinator Troy Cate reports that the disaster relief trailer is almost completely stocked with tools and other supplies and ready to respond when a disaster strikes.

United Methodist Men of St. Paul UMC, Little Rock, honored their veterans on Nov. 9 with a soup and salad dinner. St. Paul has 35 veterans, 10 of whom served in combat situations. Each of the veterans was recognized for his service. Chaplain Ed Simpson, Command Chaplain of the State of Arkansas and pastor of Calvary Baptist

Church, was the guest speaker. He told the group about the role of a chaplain in today's armed forces. Boy Scouts from Troop 30 provided the color guard and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The evening concluded with the singing of "God Bless America."

Members and friends of the Bell Chapel/Red Hill Charge gathered Oct. 19 at Red Hill UMC for an "old fashioned Sunday." Worshippers arrived for the special event wearing long dresses, bonnets and aprons, or overalls/blue jeans and straw hats. Following the morning worship service, all enjoyed dinner on the ground. The "old fashioned" menu included corn-meal dumplings, great northern beans, fried ham, pork roast, cornbread, purple hull peas, butter beans, chicken and dumplings, nanner pudding, coconut pie and more.

Paris First UMC is blessed with an active youth group and J.A.M. (Jesus and Me) weekday children's program. Recent activities have included a back-

to-school swim party, birthday celebrations, work on the church hall renovation project and numerous community projects. Special thanks go to Paris United Methodist Men for providing meals each Wednesday.

October included a Fall Harvest bonfire at the home of Kathy and Nick Jewel. Jordan Forbus won a contest by inviting the most friends to Wednesday night activities and got to "pie" Rachel Hamilton, who volunteered for a coconut cream facial.

Fairview UMC, Texarkana, United Methodist Women hosted its annual holiday bazaar Oct. 24 and had a good turnout. The Razorback drawing went to Barbara Gilbert of Texarkana.



Symbols of worship were part of the All Saints' Sunday celebration at Living Waters UMC, Bentonville.

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Start your year off right by spending a Saturday with the girls...at church, in jeans!

We'll hear a great speaker, sing together and laugh 'till it hurts. Our goal will be to smarten up God's way; has anything else ever worked?

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Pat Odom via phone: 870-862-1341

E-mail: Pat.fumc@suddenlink.net

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Arkansans who participate in the NOMADS ministry and attended the recent annual meeting in Oklahoma include (from left) Kathy and Paul Bauer, Sue and Ronald McDonald, Charleen and Ron Glasgow, Linda and Jerrell Fielder (front), Howard and Carol Stoner (back), and Doris and Cecil Jones.



People of Faith

Meredith O'Hara of Little Rock, child care liaison for the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church, was one of four persons honored as this year's Outstanding Early Childhood Professionals by the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission and the state Department of Human Services' Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education.



Meredith O'Hara

The honorees were praised as "a group of early care and education professionals that play a vital role in preparing young children for school success and years beyond." The awards were presented Oct. 17 at the Arkansas Early Childhood Association's Annual Conference in Hot Springs.

O'Hara works with more than 100 United Methodist early care and education programs, emphasizing the importance of providing the best care possible. Most recently she has focused her efforts on 30 child-care programs in a Quality Initiative Project. She worked closely in the design of the Arkansas Quality Rating and Improvement System and the Arkansas Out of School Network.

Prior to O'Hara's work, only 14 percent of Arkansas' United Methodist early care and education programs were Quality Accredited. Today, more than 30 percent have become accredited or are in the process.

Educator Diane Clark Vogler praised O'Hara as "truly a visionary in the world of child care ... We cannot begin to measure the passion she has and exhibits for excellence."

Tyrone Gordon pens book on Lord's Prayer

"FOCUS: Living the Lord's Prayer," is a new book by Tyrone Gordon, pastor of Saint Luke Community United Methodist Church, Dallas, and formerly a member of the Arkansas Conference.

The "FOCUS" title is an acronym for Faithful, Open, Centered, United, and Solid — the key ingredients of Christian living. The book, which costs \$10, is well suited for small group discussions.

Cokesbury Bookstores is offering a special discount of 25 percent for a

limited time. Use offer code FO09 when ordering by contacting (800) 672-1789, shopping online at Cokesbury.com, or calling your local Cokesbury Store.

Others honored along with O'Hara are Belinda Shook, superintendent of Beebe Public Schools; Kay Calvert, an instructor with Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia; and Kathi Bergman, child development/mental health manager at BRAD Head Start/Early Head Start/ABC Program in Pocahontas.

Tammy Jo Teltow was among a select group of 15 writers from across the United States chosen to take part in the recent Native American Writers' Gathering sponsored by the Native American Comprehensive Plan of the United Methodist Church in Tulsa, Okla.

Among the distinguished leaders of the gathering were Delores Twohatchet, (Comanche/Kiowa) a lifelong educator, award-winning writer, photographer and United Methodist curriculum writer; and Safiyah Fosua, director of invitational preaching ministries for the General Board of Discipleship, Nashville, Tenn.

Teltow and her husband, Randy, are active members of First UMC, Clarksville.

The Methodist Family Health Foundation Board has welcomed two new members — Anne Powell-Black and Jan Snider.

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Powell-Black, president of American Home Life Insurance Co., brings her passion for the Arkansas Center for Addictions Research Education and Services (Arkansas CARES) to the board. "I have been involved with Arkansas CARES for a number of years and I think it is a wonderful program that needs to be supported," she said.

The mission of Methodist Family Health is very near and dear to Snider's heart. "My mother lived at the Children's Home while she was growing up and has very fond memories of her time there," she said. "I believe if you can save an individual, you can save a community. You've helped not only the individual but also the entire family."

Snider works in commercial real estate development and management.



Jan Snider



Anne Powell-Black

Calendar

NOVEMBER

Nov. 30: United Methodist Student Sunday, churchwide special Sunday with offering.

DECEMBER

Dec. 5: Welcome the Children Institute: "Exploring the American Mosaic: Race and Cultural Identity," Ferndale 4-H Center; sponsored by UAMS Partners for Inclusive Communities.

JANUARY

Jan. 10-15: Perkins School of Youth Ministry, Highland Park UMC, Dallas.
Jan. 17: "Total Impact: Connected in Christ and the United Methodist Way" training seminar, Searcy.
Jan. 24: "Total Impact: Connected in Christ and the United Methodist Way" training seminar, First UMC, Malvern.
Jan. 31: "Total Impact: Connected in Christ and the United Methodist Way" training seminar, Heritage UMC, Van Buren.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 7: "Ministry in Color: Team Leadership Using the Birkman Method," Connected in Christ training seminar, Searcy.
Feb. 21: "Weaving a Web of Connections: Using Internet Technology for Effective Ministry," Arkansas Conference event, Philander Smith College, Little Rock.
Feb. 21: "Ministry in Color: Team Leadership Using the Birkman Method," Connected in Christ training seminar, First UMC, Malvern.
Feb. 27-March 1: VERITAS 2009, Arkansas Conference youth event, Hot Springs.
Feb. 28: "Ministry in Color: Team Leadership Using the Birkman Method," Connected in Christ training seminar, Heritage UMC, Van Buren.

MARCH

March 6-7: Arkansas Conference Children's Choir Festival, Lakewood UMC, North Little Rock.
March 7: "Transformational Ministry Planning," Connected in Christ training seminar, Searcy.
March 14: "Transformational Ministry Planning," Connected in Christ training seminar, First UMC, Malvern.
March 21: "Transformational Ministry Planning," Connected in Christ training seminar, Heritage UMC, Van Buren.

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.

Jan. 24-Feb.1: Costa Rica, construction, sponsored by Rogers Central UMC. Les Oliver, les@cumcrogers.com.

Jan. 9-18: Santiago, Chile. Construction work and painting at LaEsperanza, a sheltered workshop for adults with disabilities. First UMC, Texarkana. Patty Morel, (870) 772-3404 or pattytxk@aol.com

Feb. 1-7: Rio Bravo, Mexico, construction, sponsored by Jasper UMC. Larry Acton, (870) 420-3969.

Feb. 7-15: Costa Rica, construction, sponsored by Bryant First UMC, Heber Springs First UMC and Jonesboro First UMC. Kay Parda, (501) 366-1828 or kay@fumcbryant.org.

Feb. 8-15: Rio Bravo, Mexico, construction, sponsored by Northwest District United Methodist Women. Larry Acton, (870) 420-3969.

Feb. 21-March 1: Costa Rica, construction. Larry Acton, (870) 420-3969.

March 1-9: Costa Rica, construction. Larry Acton (870) 420-3969.



March 21-28: Shiprock, N.M., working with the Navajo Indians, sponsored by Calico Rock UMC. Paul Seay, (479) 970-0696.

May 23-31: Salud Y Paz, Guatemala, medical mission, sponsored by Pulaski Heights UMC, Little Rock. Doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, anesthesiologists and other willing helpers needed. Gwen Efird, gwenefird@comcast.net.

New and ongoing: "This Ole Church" VIM mission project. Help restore and repair churches in the Arkansas Conference. Teams will be painting, weather proofing, general repairs, landscaping and other jobs. Teams DO NOT do roofing, plumbing or electrical. The church that asks for teams will provide housing, help prepare meals and provide showers. The teams will supply their food, the materials, tools and labor. Any church can apply for help through their District Superintendent. Teams can sign up by contacting Don Weeks at dweeks@arumc.org.

Churches that have asked for teams: First UMC De Queen. David Williams, pastor; St. James UMC, Lonoke, David Scruggs, pastor.

Remember When

100 Years Ago
Nov. 19, 1908:



Our church at El Dorado is enjoying a year of unusual prosperity. About 117 accessions up to date: forty-eight or fifty of these on profession of faith. Collections and salary will be paid in full. The Sunday school has already raised \$100 for missions and we have one more missionary day before conference.

50 Years Ago

Nov. 20, 1958: Senior High Youth of Central Methodist Church in Fayetteville sponsored a "Southeast Asia" dinner on Friday evening, November 7 in Wesley Hall. The fellowship occasion was under the leadership of Miss Susan Dulan and Mrs. Wayne White, Chairman of Christian Outreach and Advisor in the Area of Outreach. The emphasis on Southeast Asia was appropriate because of the church school emphasis in missions for youth in the area, "The Lands in Between."

20 Years Ago

Nov. 18, 1988: On October 30, Bella Vista United Methodist Church reached a membership milestone — 1,000 members. Anida Stewart, formerly of Traverse City, Michigan, joined the church that day and became the 1,000th member. One of Bella Vista UMC's latest projects is assisting with establishing a second United Methodist congregation in the Highland's area of Bella Vista Village.

At McCabe Chapel UMC

Play, exercise for kids top priority for NLR church

NORTH LITTLE ROCK — What started out as a stormy Saturday morning ended up being the perfect afternoon for the children of North Little Rock's Dark Hollow and surrounding communities. On Oct. 4 at Lorene Joshua Park, 85 Hispanic and African-American children played with their parents, soared into orbit on a jumping castle, danced their cares away, and tested their athletic skill on an obstacle course.

Parents received free blood pressure screenings and community resource literature for treatment and referrals. Children were given educational color sheets on heart health and the benefits of physical activity and good nutrition.

McCabe Chapel United Methodist Church, the Dark Hollow Community Development Corp. and volunteers from the Baptist Health Care System collaborated to help combat childhood obesity by getting children off of the

44th annual carol service set for Hendrix

CONWAY — Celebrating its 44th year, the Hendrix Candlelight Carol Service will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4-6 and at 4 p.m. Dec. 7 at 4 p.m. at Greene Chapel on the Hendrix campus.

The service, a traditional favorite to begin the Christmas season, presents the Christmas story through Scripture lessons and music. Admission is free, but reservations are required. Reservations will be accepted Nov. 24-25, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Dec. 1-5, from noon to 2 p.m. For reservations, call (501) 450-1495.

This year's Candlelight Carol tour performances will be presented in Columbia, Mo., and Hot Springs Village. The first off-campus performance will be Dec. 18 at 7:30 p.m. at Missouri United Methodist Church in Columbia. The final service will be Dec. 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Christ of the Hills United Methodist Church in Hot Springs Village, located at 700 Balearic Road. No reservations are required for the tour performances.

Music will include choral works by Hans Leo Hassler, Charles Villiers Stanford, Damijan Mocnik, David Willcocks, John Gardner, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, and others, as well as the traditional processional, "Once in Royal David's City."

couch and outside to play. A grant from the Arkansas Conference Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns helped make the event possible.

According to statistics supplied by Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, nearly 40 percent of children in Arkansas between the ages of 2 and 19 are overweight. According to *The New York Times*, of those children and teens who are overweight, 28 percent are African-American, 23 percent are Hispanic, and 17 percent are Caucasian.

As a result, more and more Arkansas children face an increase in the incidences of childhood illnesses such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, asthma, mental health issues, high cholesterol and other chronic diseases that are beginning to affect our children at an early age, which in turn limits their quality of life and mortality.

"And as a church alive by the grace

Deaths

Little Rock

DORIS ADAH McQUANY NORMAN, 77, of Little Rock, a retired public school administrator and surviving spouse of United Methodist pastor Varnell M. Norman Sr., died Nov. 5, 2008.

She was born June 11, 1931, the daughter of Kelly and Adah Beaty McQuany of Louisville, Ky. She attended Philander Smith College where she met and married Rev. Norman. Together, they faithfully served churches in the former Little Rock Conference, including White Memorial, Little Rock; Wesley Chapel, Little Rock; and St. Paul Maumelle, Little Rock.

She graduated from Philander Smith College in 1958 and later earned a master of education in administration degree from the University of Arkansas. During her 35-year tenure as an educator in the Pulaski County Special School District, she earned the name "Stormin' Norman."

She attended St. Paul Maumelle United Methodist Church, was a Diamond Life member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., lifetime member of the Arkansas Retired Teachers Association, Philander Smith College Alumni Association and Arkansas United Methodist Historical Society.

She leaves to cherish her loving memory three children, Varnell Norman Jr. and wife Re-Ester of Austin, Texas; Cassandra Norman of Little Rock; and Mark Norman and wife Natasha of Rossville, Kan.; four grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents and her husband, who died in 1989.

Funeral services were held Nov. 10 at Winfield United Methodist Church, Little Rock. For memorials, the family requests donations to the Doris Norman Memorial Scholarship Fund at Philander Smith College.

Share your good news

To share news and announcements from your church or church group, send to: *Arkansas United Methodist*, 2 Trudie Kibbe Reed Dr., Little Rock, AR 72202, or email jdennis@arumc.org.

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: mtaylor@arumc.org.

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

ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 1700 Napa Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR 72212, is seeking a part-time organist to accompany Chancel Choir for traditional Sunday morning worship services, Wednesday evening choir rehearsals, funerals, weddings and other special worship services throughout the year. Please send resumé to Dr. Bryan Fink, Asbury United Methodist Church, 1700 Napa Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR 72212, or email bryan@asbury-lr.org. Applications accepted through Nov. 30, 2008.

FULL-TIME DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES at Asbury United Methodist Church in West Little Rock. Responsible for implementation of a full program that provides the youth and their families the opportunities for spiritual growth in worship, fellowship and service. Prefer bachelor degree with background in Christian Education or equivalent work experience. Direct all inquiries to Dr. Bryan Fink, Senior Pastor, 1700 Napa Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR 72212, or email to bryan@asbury-lr.org. Closes Nov. 30, 2008.

DIRECTOR FOR YOUTH MINISTRIES at Greenbrier First United Methodist Church. Vital, growing, dynamic church needs an enthusiastic person/couple to direct youth program. Must have a heart for ministry with young people. Must be at least 21 years of age. Prefer experience with church youth ministry. Applicants will undergo a criminal background check. Part-time position with salary of \$20,000. Please send resumé and 3 references to Greenbrier First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 126, Greenbrier, AR 72058.

NOW HIRING: Executive Director, Central Arkansas Ministry for Homeless Families. Requires degree in social sciences, experience in case management, fund raising, 501(c)(3) administration, coordination of community services. Send resumé and salary requirements to: homelessministryinfo@yahoo.com.

PLAN, continued from page 1

and other communication tools with clergy and laity are being developed.

"The key messages provide a center for which a lot of our communication work can happen," said Roy Smith, conference director of ministries. "They help us clearly identify our core, the fabric of who we are, so we can tell others."

The key messages, written in "nonchurch" language, non-insider language insures that they are understood by someone unfamiliar with the church as well as the lifelong Methodist, Smith said.

In addition, a local church tool kit of communication resources is in the works. It will contain templates for promotional materials, information about stewardship campaigns, local church resources and mission opportunities, all of which can be customized for the local church. The tool kit is expected to be ready for distribution by mid-2009.

"The tool kit will provide useful resources any local church can use to communicate and share who they are in their communities," Taylor said.

Communications consultant Jessica Szenher, a member of Little Rock's First United Methodist Church, conducted the study that resulted in the comprehensive communications plan. "She stressed that branding is more than a new logo," Smith said. "It's being clear and trying to create across your organization more clarity about who you really are, because it's an identity statement. So we hope these are tools to try and describe that a little bit better."

The communications team is also interested in collecting stories from

local churches that reflect and bring to life the key messages.

"What's exciting is the transformation that really is happening in local churches," Taylor said. "We are already starting to collect stories and examples of ministries. These can be used by our staff as they go about their work in the conference and by local churches, too."

As an example, Taylor cited the recent article in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* about First UMC, Hot Springs, and its ministry that serves families with children with special needs.

"What a powerful statement that is, saying, 'You know what? We really mean it when we say there's a place here for you.' It's those types of stories that we are gathering and sharing that live out our key messages."

As part of that story sharing effort, "more will be shared with the secular media than what we've been able to do in the past," Taylor said. "We believe there are many powerful stories that deserve a broader audience than just us knowing it here within the United Methodist Church."

The new web site — which will still be located at www.umc.org and has a tentative launch date of Nov. 26 — will be easier to navigate and contain many more resources and information links, Taylor said.

"The site will be a portal to the tools and resources people need to do their ministry," Taylor said. "As well, it will be a point of entry for individuals wanting to learn about the United Methodist Church in Arkansas."

The revamped web site and the new logo are both the work of Patrick

Children's Home honors Magnolia group

MAGNOLIA — The Junior Charity League of Magnolia recently was presented a sponsorship award from the Methodist Children's Home. The League made a substantial donation last fall that allowed the boys residing at the Methodist Children's Home in Magnolia the opportunity to enjoy a vacation in Branson, Mo., and to also receive a new computer.

The award was presented by Maggie Beeler, director of community development for Methodist Family Health Foundation, and Joslyn Harney, teaching-parent, Methodist Children's Home Magnolia.

"For the majority of the boys, this was their first time to ever stay in a hotel," said Harney. "The joy in each of their faces made this a memorable experience for all of us."

The computer was also a huge hit with the boys because it operates countless applications at lightning

speed.

"The Junior Charity League has been a tremendous support for our boys. This award and our thanks can only scratch the surface of how appreciative we are to have the generosity and support of such a community minded organization," said Beeler.

Magale Manor is one of six group homes under the Methodist Children's Home umbrella. Teaching-Parents Joslyn and Art Harney live in the home that serves up to eight youth. The Harneys provide a stable "home-like" environment for males ages 12 to 18. In the group home, the youthful residents can experience healthy family interactions and learn to manage emotions and behaviors. Mental health services are also provided, and youth attend public schools. Other group home locations are in Fayetteville, Heber Springs, Helena-West Helena, Searcy and Springdale.



A new Arkansas Conference web site will be launched later this month.

Shownes, the conference communication coordinator.

The communication plan will be launched in phases over the next two years, Taylor explained. "The response from the leadership and local church pastors about the initial phase has been positive."

The ultimate goal of the entire plan and effort is to help churches make disciples of Jesus Christ. "We understand it's not just about newspapers or a web site or brochures," Smith said. "But the ability to communicate our message is a fundamental part of spreading the gospel in the world today."



EMBRACE OUR

Tradition

OF

Christmas

CONNECT TO A CHILD

Christmas is a time for families to gather together in loving celebration. Sadly, many children suffer from abuse, neglect and abandonment, and for them, Christmas has no joy. Years ago, families would come to us and take a child home with them for Christmas. Today, that loving gesture isn't possible, but that spirit remains alive through your generous giving. This Christmas, please consider joining in our tradition of helping children by connecting to a child.

Please send your Christmas donations to:
 Methodist Family Health Foundation
 P.O. Box 56050
 Little Rock, AR 72215

(501) 661-0720
To donate online, visit www.methodistfamily.org.



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 Methodist Children's Home
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