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Ministry report: opportunities, challenges abound

Editor's Note: The Imagine Ministry team released their findings since beginning their research last July. What follows is the report in its entirety.

The Imagine Ministry Team expresses its appreciation for all the individuals and congregations that have entered and become engaged in the ongoing conversation about the present and future of United Methodism in Arkansas. Over the past year the IM Team embraced a process of discernment and learning with regard to looking at ministry in a new way. Dr. Gil Rendle and Bishop Charles Crutchfield guided us in the steps of the work before us.

The first step was the "discovery phase" as we had much to learn as a team and individual members about "who we are" as a collective whole comprising the local churches of the annual conference.

The second step was the "inclusion phase" in which we listened and gathered six vital streams of data and information from individual members of local churches, the congregations of the Annual Conference and a study of the structure and offices of the Annual Conference.

The third step we are now entering is the "distilling phase,"

where the team will test the information and learning and be as transparent as possible in digesting and reporting its findings and suggestions as it moves forward. The team is planning a series of regional meetings in early 2011, sharing what it has learned and suggesting steps into our future as the United Methodist Church in Arkansas.

The IM Team wanted to share with you some of what we have heard and learned over the past year.

In this discovery phase analyzing statistics comparing the year 2004 with 2008, we had to admit the harsh reality that we have lost ground. This has been evident since 1968 as a church. Church growth programs over the past forty years have been addressing this reality, and from each initiative on church growth we have gained valuable information. The statistics are hard and difficult numbers, but they are only part of the story. The better question is, "What will we do as God's people with the situation before us, and how will we follow God's guidance in the new time?" Arkansas United Methodism, and in fact, the Christian community in America finds itself in a wilderness and, as Bishop Crutchfield and Dr.



Lively discussion during Imagine Ministry breakout groups provided important feedback to the Imagine Ministry team. Over 800 individuals attending Annual Conference in June participated in one of the 81 small group gatherings.

Rendle said at Annual Conference, we have been and will continue to be shaped in the wilderness journey still ahead.

We are also in an important time of a larger transition that faces all of Christianity and our culture. Dr. Phyllis Tickle's book *The Great Emergence* suggests that we are in a five hundred year transition to doing Christian ministry in a new way. All of this information encourages us to trust the prompting of God's Spirit to guide us in our wilderness wandering. It can be, as Bishop Janice Huie has suggested, "a messy time in the wilderness"; things are

not as clear and concise as we want them to be. There is no book on how to do this; our calling is to follow God with faith through the wilderness and be shaped into a new people in this process.

In March 2010, more than 1,600 people responded to the invitation as individuals and congregations to join the conversation at the four regional meetings. We learned in these meetings that our congregations and pastors are highly motivated to be part of this conversation and that change is welcome. However, we are captured

[See MINISTRY page 3A]

Alice Preston: teacher, pioneer, inspirational leader

JANE DENNIS

Alice Walker Preston was not one to raise her voice. She didn't have to. People listened, respected and responded to her quiet demeanor and steady sensibility. Her kind, gentle spirit and soft voice belied the bold pioneer strides she took as an educator, community servant and United Methodist church leader. She spent her life in service to the Lord.

Alice Preston was 102 years old when she closed her eyes for the final time June 24 and met the Lord. She lived for the last 10 years in Hot Springs with her son, Rev. Richard C. Preston, and his family.

Even in her waning days, she was doing the Lord's work. When a technician arrived at the Preston home to set up a breathing apparatus for the centenarian, she looked him in the eye and asked, "Are you saved?"

"Those were her last words," said her son. "She was something else."

Alice Walker was born in Paraloma (Howard County) on Dec. 16, 1907, the daughter of Lizzie and Rev. R.W. Walker. After she married Clark Preston and started a family, she took on teaching responsibilities in a one-room schoolhouse in Murfreesboro (Pike County). She was the school's sole teacher from 1929-1965, and the school became her namesake, Preston Elementary.

She taught children in the first through 7th grades. "She had to be real flexible in order to communicate with each level," said her son, a retired United Methodist pastor.

She was attentive and caring and was known to comb the hair of children who arrived at school needing such help. Aware that some older students had the responsibility of caring for younger siblings, Preston would tell them, "Don't miss

school. Come on and bring the baby," recalled her son.

As a part-time student, she worked toward her college degree over the course of 20 years, graduating in 1952 from Philander Smith College, Magna Cum Laude with Distinction.

One of her most enduring legacies was her leadership in fostering the peaceful integration of the Murfreesboro school system in 1965. She influenced the students at the all-black Preston Elementary School and its sister high school at Clow to accept the invitation of the Murfreesboro all-white public school to integrate a year before the state law became mandatory.

"No school merger of black and white students was more peaceful and amicable than what transpired in the Pike County seat," wrote retired United Methodist pastor O. Freeman Henderson, a columnist for the



Following her retirement from teaching, Preston was a political leader and was recognized for her accomplishments.

Murfreesboro Diamond newspaper. "Encouraged and coaxed by one in whom all had the utmost confidence, the school transition was effected

[See ALICE page 8A]

On leaving home to go home

As I write my first column for the *Arkansas United Methodist*, I'm still a few days away from living in Arkansas.

Newspaper deadlines keep newspaper people thinking ahead of themselves, writing for the future while living in the present.



Amy Forbus

I'm honored to take on this assignment. But accepting this job means my husband, John, and I must pack up our lives and say farewell to Carrollton, Texas—and Aldersgate, the United Methodist congregation we've called home for the past decade.

After our first house-hunting trip to Little Rock, we stopped to visit John's parents. We had stayed for just one night, and they asked if we would soon be taking a full weekend to continue looking.

"No," we said, almost simultaneously. "We aren't willing to miss church."

We savor our time with this community of faith. John is still teaching 7th- and 8th-grade Sunday school, and he led this summer's youth mission trip. I continued singing with the band at 8:45 worship, and in the choir at 11:00, until the week before starting this job.

And on July 11 we both witnessed the baptism of a particular 1-year-old, whose parents scheduled that sacrament so we could stand with them and respond, "With God's help, we will so order our lives after the example of Christ, that this child, surrounded by steadfast love..."

What would you do if you knew you only had five Sundays left? What if you only have that many now, but you simply don't have the luxury of knowing it?

Engagement in a community of faith matters. It makes a difference that you're there. The body of Christ

is less complete if you don't show.

Thankfully, where Aldersgate United Methodist Church is concerned, we didn't have to do anything differently than before we learned of our impending move. We continued to uphold it with our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. And as we live apart until our house sells, John will continue doing the upholding in my absence.

Moving to Arkansas is a homecoming for us. We have reason to look forward with joy, but that doesn't prevent our looking back with a measure of sadness.

I spoke recently with my friend Mary Brooke Casad, who is the wife of a pastor and daughter of a bishop. Steeped in the itinerant life, she understands the significance of our move.

Mary Brooke told me that when she was a child, her father received an appointment in her mother's hometown. As overjoyed as her mother was to be moving "home," she remained keenly aware that she was also leaving a home—the place where their children were born, and where the family and their ministry had blossomed.

After they had emptied the parsonage of their belongings, Mary Brooke remembers resting her head in her mother's lap as they made the late night drive to her hometown. Every few minutes, she found herself roused from the edge of sleep by her mother's sobs.

With several United Methodist clergy in their family, this emotional reaction has happened often enough that they have a name for it: "This Little Piggy Cried All the Way Home."

Believe me, as I return to Razorback country, this little piggy can identify.

Amy Forbus assumes her role as editor of the Arkansas United Methodist August 2. She can be reached by email at editor@arumc.org or by phone at 501.324.8037.



WILLIAM O. (BUD) REEVES
Special Contributor

The winds of renewal are blowing across the United Methodist Church. It is too soon to tell if it is the hot air of rhetoric, or if it is truly the fresh breeze of the Holy Spirit. There are signs of hope in new forms of worship, new church starts, and new missional initiatives. The Council of Bishops has issued a "Call to Action." Meaningful conversations are being held from the top levels of the church to local congregations. Will it make any difference?



Bud Reeves

I believe the renewal of the United Methodist Church will occur in four areas.

The reformation of the church will be **Biblical**. It will involve a rebirth of passion for the Word of God contained in the Holy Scriptures. The great revivals in the Old Testament centered on the Word. Josiah found the Deuteronomical literature in the seventh century B.C.E., and it reformed the nation. After the Babylonian exile, the nation of Israel and the religion of Judaism was re-formed by the reading of the Word and the celebration of worship (Nehemiah 8).

The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century C.E. was in large part due to the power of the Word in the hands of the people.

Though the age of print is dying, the power of Scripture is not. In new ways made possible by the Internet Age, we need to ground our disciples in the Word that is still "inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

The reformation of the church will be **Spiritual**. By that I do not mean "spiritual, but not religious," as the current mantra of our culture goes. I mean the renewal of the church will be a movement of the Holy Spirit of God, an Acts 2 manifestation of God's presence in the churches and lives of United Methodists. Such renewal cannot be organized, programmed or "bureaucratized." Forty years ago,

Signs of hope for church renewal

Dr. Albert Outler predicted that "The next Great Awakening will surely be pneumatological—an unprogrammed outpouring of the Holy Spirit" (*Evangelism in the Wesleyan Spirit*). This is the only hope for true, deep, and lasting change.

The reformation of the church will be **Missional**. It won't have to do so much with what is going on inside the church as outside the church. People in our communities and people in our world are broken and hurting—dying from diseases of poverty and hunger, lacking physical and educational resources to thrive, lost and lonely and looking for love. We cannot wait for the yearning masses to enter our church buildings to find comfort. But as we reach out and offer the love of Christ in practical and relevant ways—as Wesley did—we will find a missional movement reborn. We will find fruitfulness as we "rescue the perishing."

One practical aspect of this renewal is technology. To be missional in the 21st century, United Methodists, especially on the local church level, must embrace the digital revolution. Communication through social networking, learning online, worship utilizing the expansive capabilities of video and internet will become the currency of

the church in the future, as it already has in the culture.

The reformation of the church will be **Institutional**. A Spirit-led, missionally-oriented church simply cannot support the massive superstructure that served our denomination well a half-century ago. Connection is important for United Methodists, but it must be redefined in fluid, nimble, and resourceful ways that become helpful for local congregations and individual disciples who seek to be faithful to Christ.

Reforming the institution into a movement is historically unprecedented, and it will be messy if it happens. It may result in a denomination that is smaller in numbers, but greater in impact—but not for long. Ultimately all that matters is the Kingdom work—to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

At least a lot of people are talking about renewal. Much ink is being spilled writing about it. Or to use a more contemporary metaphor, the birds of change are "twitter"-ing. Can it really happen? I feel a burgeoning sense of hope in the heart of the church that we can reverse our decades-long decline. We can make disciples in a new age. We can become the church God calls us to be.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

Thank you for sharing the good news about the work that First United Methodist Church of Pine Bluff is doing in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. We are proud to be the sponsor of House #10 in Pine Bluff, and work is well under way.

As a matter of clarification, "Gather at the Table" cookbook has raised \$29,000 to date. All of that amount (except for \$1,000 in administrative cost) has been given

to benefit Habitat for Humanity. In addition, memorial gifts for Kathy Campbell and Jeanette Johnson as well other contributions have been made in the amount of \$16,726.42. Thus, a total of \$44,726.42 has been given to support the project. Our congregation is continuing to sell cookbooks to raise the remainder of funds needed, and we are committed to seeing it through to completion.

David Fleming, pastor
First UMC Pine Bluff



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Submission Deadlines

Issue Date	Submission Deadline
Sept. 3, 2010	Aug. 18, 2010
Oct. 1, 2010	Sept. 17, 2010



CHARLES CRUTCHFIELD

AN OCCASIONAL WORD from the Bishop

Dear Friends:

As you read this, we will have just completed a family reunion with Karen's mother, her three sisters, and her nineteen first cousins and assorted extended family members. We expect somewhere between seventy-five and a hundred people to show up for the event. This is a really new experience for me. We could hold a family reunion with both sides of my family gathered around a couple of church fellowship hall dining tables! I fully expect

to be overwhelmed, particularly since I have met only one of Karen's nineteen first cousins. I also expect to have a great time!

Family reunions and family gatherings at Thanksgiving, Christmas, weddings, and yes, even at funerals give us the opportunity to rehearse our history, the relationships we value, the love we share, and the bonds that will never break regardless of distance or circumstance. They also give us the opportunity to meet new family

members we have never met before.

When we gather for worship on Friday or Saturday night or Sunday morning, we do much the same thing. We rehearse the history of our faith, we share love and we welcome new family members into the fellowship and we affirm once again the ties that bind us together—the ties of grace and forgiveness and hope, and a vision of God's Kingdom that lies just ahead.

There is no substitute for corporate worship. I have

experienced the joy and presence of God when alone. But nowhere does God speak to me as directly as when I gather with my family to sing the songs of Zion and to praise my creator and to hear the word of God broken like life giving bread.

Worship is never just about me. That is why, though we may worship in solitary on occasion, worship in the company of others is so significant. It is not just about me, it is about the witness I make before God and others that God is

at the center of my life, that Christ is the savior of my life and that the Spirit of God is encouraging and strengthening my life.

I will be in worship next Sunday with my family, my extended Christian family. I hope you will be too.

Faithfully,

Charles Crutchfield

Ministry report: opportunities, challenges abound

Continued from front page

by "fear and worries" about the future.

In April 2010, 902 individuals responded to the Web Survey, 80% of the respondents were laity. The summary of the analysis revealed:

- Majority of responses related to spiritual awakening (i.e.—get back to Bible basics, rely on Holy Spirit, trust Jesus, teach Holy Spirit, stronger connection to Christ, prayer, Kingdom of God.)
- Give lay leadership voice, involve all people in decision making, youth to elderly.
- Issues with itinerancy and guaranteed appointment.
- Holding to traditional UMC doctrine and worship.
- Concentrate on evangelism and better outreach.
- Lack of vision/fear of change.

In the "Breakout Sessions" of the Annual Conference, June 2010, 810 people gathered in 81 circles of 10, to participate in a conversation of appreciative inquiry regarding the annual conference. In this stream of information we learned that we are working at our best when: "when we are connectional and relational," 43 percent marked as a high value; "unity" as a high value with 21 percent. Also highly valued were communications that are clear, promoting missions, visioning and holy conferencing.

In a question on missions, "when we help others in need, crisis, and disasters both local and world" 89 percent marked it as a high core value.

Volunteers in Mission and UMCOR were held as highly valued. The possibility of a "mission portal, emphasizing reaching new people while helping those in need" was seen as a way to invite marginal church people and previously unchurched people into the church body was highly valued.

On the question "When is the conference at its best in helping our congregations be purposeful in our ministry and reach out to new people in our communities?" The top core value listed - training and education, 29 percent marked as a high value; good communications, 16 percent; new church starts, 12 percent; Connected In Christ, 11 percent. Leadership, open to new approach, conference listening to local church,

demographics, pastor appointed to mission field were all held as highly valued, but in lower percentages.

At the 2010 session of the Annual Conference, 242 churches completed and submitted the "three question responses." Thirty-five percent of the responses were from churches with fewer than 34 in average attendance, while 70 percent of the responses returned were from churches below 99 in average attendance. Of the 8 churches with an average attendance of 600 or more, 7 churches responded to the survey. The data received in narrative form did correlate closely to the summary given in the Web Survey.

- Appreciation that the issues at hand are being addressed and the local churches are being consulted
- Some do not expect much of anything to come of the Imagine Ministry process
- Great need for prayer and reliance on the Holy Spirit to guide the anticipated change
- Need for spiritual awakening, prayer, Bible basics, trust in God, Wesleyan teaching
- Most embrace the position that change is needed
- Most identified new and enhanced ministry programs
- Few seem to be truly trying to "think out of the box"
- Most identify the common approaches
- Some seem to be quite comfortable with the status quo; although expressing the need for outreach ministry and the resulting growth

- Concern about losing touch with the gospel
- Concern about aging membership
- Concerns about closing of churches
- Concern that the value of small churches is being overlooked
- Great need to attract and retain young families, youth and children
- Concern that the older generations are unwilling to change
- Concerns the older generations will be ignored
- Concern the United Methodist way will be lost
- Concern that traditional worship does not attract younger generation
- Concern that traditional worship will be lost
- Concern about how local economics affect the church
- Concern about financial survival
- Apportionment process is broken—does not adequately consider the local ministry needs
- Appointment process is broken
- Church views not adequately considered in appointment process
- Clergy tenure is too short
- Clergy need to be more to be more passionate in the pulpit
- Church and clergy shouldn't be so liberal
- Church and clergy need to avoid political issues
- Clergy need to be better trained and mentored by experienced clergy
- Clergy salary structure needs an overhaul to

help assure fairness and to lengthen clergy tenure

The Imagine Ministry Team is processing this information and other sources of learning to say:

- In many areas of the state we have churches that are struggling to survive. We have some excellent examples of churches being innovative and making disciples that are transforming the community and world.
- We have some unique assets as an annual conference in the New Church Start Institute and Connected in Christ.
- We have learned that highly vital churches come in all sizes, ethnic representations, church settings, and geographies, but they consistently share common factors that work toward influencing congregational vitality.
- Dynamic churches tend to have inspirational preaching, lots of small groups and programs for children and youth, and a mix of both traditional and contemporary worship services, effective lay leaders, rotating lay leadership, more topical preaching in traditional services, pastors who work at developing and mentoring lay leaders, and length of pastoral appointment.
- The Annual Conference works at its best when it is relational in its connection, sharing in missions and communicating that need through the connection and training and equipping both clergy and laity for ministry.

We ask for your prayers and input in the coming months as we begin to test the ideas and factors stated above as we think together about how we "make disciples of Jesus Christ."

Bishop Crutchfield said in the concluding remarks of the Episcopal Address at the last session of the Annual Conference, "We were born for this hour, for this week, for this year. God has given into our hands the gift of a precious opportunity... we can stay as we are and slowly die. We can embrace the risk of deep change and live. Choose life!"

May God make it so.

Grace and Peace...
The Imagine Ministry Team

Additional Resources for Individual Study

The Imagine Ministry Team has used the following scriptures and readings in the past 12 months. Dr. Gil Rendle's presentation to the Annual Conference can be viewed on-line at www.arumc.org. Individual discs of his presentation can also be ordered on-line. Dr. Rendle, a United Methodist pastor and organizational consultant, was hired to facilitate the Imagine Ministry team's work.

Recommended Scriptures

Acts 2, 6, 10, 15
 Luke 8:4-8 "The parable of the Sower of the Seeds"
 Matthew 28:19-20 "The Great Commission"
 Exodus 14 "The Wilderness Wanderings"
 II Corinthians 9:6-15 "the theology of sufficiency verses scarcity"
 Luke 5:1-11

Additional Reading

Leadership without Easy Answers by Ronald Heifetz
The Starfish and the Spider by Ori Brafman and Rod Beckstrom
Deep Change by Robert Quinn
The Great Emergence by Phyllis Tickle
Finding Our Story: Narrative Leadership and Congregational Change by Larry D. Golemon

Haiti Volunteer in Mission teams ready to serve

LINDA BLOOM*

So many United Methodist Volunteer in Mission teams are signing up for work in Haiti that a request already has been made for 2012.

Through its Haiti Response Plan, the church is now rotating teams into the country to assist with earthquake recovery. "I've got weeks that are too full," said Susan Meister, the U.S.-based coordinator. "The response has just been tremendous."

Space remains for additional teams this year, she added. So far, 107 teams, including ecumenical teams, have been scheduled for 2010.

In April, directors of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) approved a \$565,000 grant to support the pilot phase of a volunteer team project sponsored with the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. The next month, jurisdictional coordinators for United Methodist Volunteers in Mission led three work teams to Haiti composed of people who would eventually lead their own

teams.

Meister is coordinating with the Rev. Mike Willis, the volunteer management coordinator based at the Methodist Guest House in Port-au-Prince. Doug Nagle is serving in Haiti as the finance and hospitality coordinator.

Leaders of the volunteer teams have United Methodist Volunteers in Mission training, along with previous experience in Haiti, Meister said. No children under the age of 16 are allowed on the teams and youth ages 16 or 17 must be accompanied by a parent.

"The teams that have come back say it's physically exhausting and emotionally grueling," she noted.

Most teams will spend seven to nine days in Haiti. The size of each team is limited to 10 people, who must all arrive and depart at the same time.

On a typical schedule, a team would arrive in Haiti on a Monday, stay at the guest house overnight, be driven to a remote work location for a few days, return for an overnight at the guest house and fly home the

next day.

Scheduling is complicated by housing and transportation arrangements. "Usually, there is a pretty significant delay between when people request dates and when we can respond to them," Meister explained. "Our goal right now is to have five projects open at a time in the field."

Besides paying their own expenses, teams contribute \$3,500 each, to which matching funds are added. The total is sent to Haiti to pay for workers and supplies. "One of the major goals of this grant was to employ Haitians at a ratio of 2 to 1," she said. "We take that very seriously."

Meister, who did communications work for UMCOR after Hurricane Katrina, noted that this is a different type of volunteer experience. Volunteers in Haiti will witness a higher level of hunger and poverty, face language and transportation issues, endure oppressive heat and manage with a lack of infrastructure.

"Haiti was in a difficult spot before the earthquake," she added.



A UMNS PHOTO BY JIM JONES

Children attend school under a tarp at the Carrefour Methodist Church in Haiti. Tents and temporary wood structures are providing makeshift classroom space for students whose schools were damaged or destroyed in the earthquake.

"Now, the rubble is just everywhere. They don't have any place to put it."

Some team placements are available for the rest of 2010. January and February of 2011 are essentially closed, Meister said, with 31 teams scheduled and several more pending. Twenty-five teams are awaiting

confirmation on dates in March through July of 2011.

More information is available at www.umvimhaiti.org.

*Bloom is a United Methodist News Service writer based in New York.

Steel-Hendrix award winners to be honored at Oct. 21 event

Hendrix College will honor three Arkansans during the 26th annual Steel-Hendrix Awards banquet. The event will take place at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 21 in the Bates dining room. Kevin Roose will deliver the keynote Willson Lecture at 7:00 p.m. in the Worsham Performance Hall.

Jay Clark will receive the Youth Director of the Year Award. The Mary and Ira A. Brumley Award for Religious Education will be presented to Saville Henry and Kathy Webb will receive the Ethel K. Millar Award for Religion and Social Awareness.

Clark currently oversees the youth ministry of Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church in Little Rock and has also served at First United Methodist Church in Benton. He previously worked for the New England Conference, overseeing youth ministry in a five state area; the Interfaith Council at Columbia University; and the Division on Ministries with Young People. Clark served as an elected delegate to the 2004 General Conference and the 1996 and 2008 South Central Jurisdictional Conferences. Currently, he serves on the steering committee of the Youthworker Movement and the Perkins School of Youth Ministry. Clark and his wife Karen have one son, Quin.

Saville Henry graduated from Lonoke High School in 1950 and completed one year at Hendrix

College before marrying her husband of 58 years, Carol Henry. Henry has devoted her life to the spiritual well-being of children. She has served as the director of the North Little Rock Community Youth Center and Christian Education Director for First United Methodist and Lakewood United Methodist Churches in North Little Rock. She later served as the North Arkansas Conference Youth Coordinator and is an Honorary Lifetime Board Member of Camp Aldersgate, where she has volunteered and helped the camp with fundraising for over 35 years. Henry has two children and two grandchildren. She is a member of Lakewood United Methodist Church, where her daughter, Cindy Henry Russell, is the Associate Pastor.

Kathy Webb represents District 37 in the Arkansas House of Representatives. She is the first woman to serve as Vice Chair of the Joint Budget Committee and Chair of the Special Language Committee. Webb graduated from Randolph-Macon Woman's College with a B.A. in Political Science and attended graduate school in history at the University of Central Arkansas. She

serves on the board of many Little Rock area organizations including the Arkansas Foodbank Network and is a member of the Missions Committee at First United Methodist Church Little Rock. Webb is the co-owner of Lilly's Dim Sum, Then Some, an Asian restaurant in Little Rock. She has been a small business owner for nearly 15 years.

Kevin Roose is a 23-year-old writer born in Oberlin, Ohio. He is the author of *The Unlikely Disciple: A Sinner's Semester at America's*

Holiest University. The book recounts his experiences during a semester at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., one of the world's largest evangelical Christian universities. After returning to Brown University, Roose continued to write for national publications as well as local newspapers. In 2008, he was given a Royce Fellowship and graduated from Brown in 2009 with an English degree. He now lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Tickets for the banquet are \$15

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www.christianbiblecollege.org

Music Minister—Part-time music minister needed for Grace UMC, Conway. Responsible for music in worship, directing choirs, oversight of handbell choir, praise and worship team, and children's music program. Experience with variety of worship styles and choirs/ensembles preferred. Submit your resume to the attention of David Hawkins at david.hawkins@graceconway.org or via fax at 501-329-6006.

AC exhibitors provide deals, services for church leaders

JESSICA SZENHER

For the Arkansas United Methodist

Artistic, practical and fun. Mission-oriented, inspiring and informative. The 77 exhibitors at the 2010 Annual Conference brought a bevy of benefits to those who stopped by their tables surrounding the Hot Springs Convention Center arena. In addition, close to \$4,000 in revenues from the exhibitors helped defray administrative expenses of the meeting.

The largest exhibitor by far was the Cokesbury Bookstore, which offered titles like *Yes, I Have Sinned, But I Have Several Excellent Excuses* by James Moore. A coupon in each delegate's packet offered \$10 off a purchase of \$50 or more during Annual Conference. Methodist Healthcare System of Memphis staffed enough tables to allow all delegates who chose to participate to take advantage of the health screenings at some point during Annual Conference.

At one of the most colorful and intriguing booths, Carolyn Howard of Gardner United Methodist Church in Hot Springs explained the paintings she and others have created as part of the church's Painting with a Purpose ministry. Church members reflect on a Bible verse and then paint the image it brings to their mind. Proceeds from the sale of paintings and cards benefit the church's food pantry.

"It makes witnessing easier," said Howard. "It's a different way to share the Word of God. When you take a hobby and add the authority of the Word, it will bloom." Howard was thrilled with the number of people who had visited the booth and purchased cards to help the homeless.

Dorothy Burns, also of Gardner UMC, explained her painting of the empty tomb with a folded napkin inside it. "Jewish tradition says that when you leave a crumpled napkin, you are done. When you fold the napkin, it means you are coming back. He did!"

Dianne Schoemaker of Winfield United Methodist Church has operated the Little Rock Signarama with her husband Jack for 12 years. A member of Winfield all her life, she sells a lot of signs and personalized advertising specialty items for churches and schools.

"Bob Crossman said Signarama should have an exhibit, and I think it was a good decision for us to come," shared Schoemaker. "This is the fifth year we've been an exhibitor. We get lots of business leads, and in the past few years we've been selling quite a few blue denim shirts to all the UMW members."

Karen Minor of First United Methodist Church in Little Rock works at Laurence E. Schmidt Center, a nonprofit that provides mental health therapy to clergy and their families. She explained

the Center has a booth at Annual Conference because it is a good opportunity to have one-on-one talks with ministers. The center's director, Rebecca Spooner, has been instrumental in the development of the Clergy Counseling Network, a statewide network of counselors providing services to clergy at little or no cost to them.

Jake Mitchael, a rising senior at Hendrix College whose home church is Central United Methodist in Rogers, manned the booth for his college and enjoyed talking with alumni and parents and grandparents of Hendrix students who visited with him.

"It has been great to make those connections," Mitchael said. "We're promoting the Miller Center for Vocations, Ethics and Calling. I think they should add service to the name because the center also provides service opportunities like the trip I took to Glide United Methodist Church in San Francisco."

The Ozark Mission Project (OMP) booth was staffed by Hank Goodwin of Lakewood United Methodist Church, chairman of the board of the nonprofit organization headquartered in Conway. He enjoyed being at Annual Conference because he heard stories from OMP parents about what the experience has meant to their children.

"OMP transforms lives. I am involved because 12 years ago I went to OMP and had the opportunity



Carolyn Howard of Gardner United Methodist Church in Hot Springs displays some of the work from Painting with a Purpose, an art group at the church that reflects on scripture and then paints the image it brings to their minds.

to see my own son transformed by the experience," Goodwin said. "I, too, was transformed when all the Sunday School lessons I'd ever heard made sense because of my experience there."

Though Mount Eagle Retreat Center just survived another storm and loss of trees, LaNell Tabor of Conway First United Methodist Church was at the Mount Eagle booth.

"I'm a lover of Mount Eagle," she said. "My husband and I were married there and I'm working to

help more people know about our Spiritual Direction Program in conjunction with Perkins School of Theology. We want to let more people know that both clergy and lay people can participate in this program."

Whether the exhibits were about insurance programs or Conference-wide ministries, all the exhibits at Annual Conference offered an opportunity to meet people who were happy to share their knowledge and experiences with delegates and guests.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE UPDATE

Other actions and activities of the Eighth Session of the Arkansas Conference, June 6–9, 2010

Resolutions

Resolutions can be read in their entirety online at www.arumc.org.

- Resolution #1 "Resolution on Care of the Environment" was passed.
- Resolution #2: "Resolution on Hospitality" was amended to make it clear that the resolution would not undermine the rule of law or subvert constitutional principles that govern the legal process of immigration. The amended resolution passed.
- Resolution #3: "Resolution to Serve the Poorest Communities of the Arkansas Annual Conference" was referred to the Board of Ministry and Council on Finance and Administration for study and to be brought back to the Conference in 2011.
- Resolution #4: "Resolution to Provide Funds to Congregations Serving the Poorest Communities of the Arkansas Annual Conference" After debate, the resolution failed.
- Resolution #5: "Health Care Resolution" The resolution was amended and passed.
- Resolution #6: "Requesting the Judicial Council Reconsider Decision 1032 On Its Own Motion" The resolution was passed by a vote of 311 to 205.

Awards

- Denman Evangelism Awards—Ben Ault, Journey UMC, Ft. Smith (Youth), Bill Stanley, Marked Tree UMC (Laity), Dan Williams, Midland Heights UMC, Ft. Smith (Clergy)
- Horizon Stewardship Award—Andrew Balenton, Ebenezer UMC, Conway
- Widow's Mite Award: Spadra UMC, Regina Turner, pastor
- Jay Lawhon Volunteers in Mission Award: Byron and Janice Mann
- Micah Mission Awards: Haven UMC, Hot Springs, Clyde Hughley, pastor and First UMC, Little Rock, Michael Mattox, pastor
- Peace with Justice Grant Awards: Primrose UMC, Arkadelphia FUMC, Nothing In Return, Hamburg FUMC, McCabe Chapel UMC, Conway Cradle Care, Justice For Our Neighbors, and Hunger Task Force.
- Jim Beal Barnabas Award: John Fleming, pastor, Sheridan UMC
- Interfaith Awards: St. James UMC, Little Rock (Church), Malik Saafir, Theresa Hoover UMC, Little Rock (Individual), Stephen Copley, Justice For Our Neighbors (Individual)
- Youth Minister of the Year: Jay Clark, Pulaski Heights UMC

OBITUARIES

LUCILLE RUTH—Lucille Ruth, 84, of Bossier City, La., formerly of Fort Smith, passed away Wednesday, July 28, 2010 in Bossier City. She was born in Fort Smith on November 2, 1925 to the late Claude and Mamie King Craig. She was a member of First United Methodist Church in Stamps, Ark., and a member of the United Methodist Women. She was preceded in death by her husband the Rev. Bennie G. Ruth, one sister and two brothers.



Lucille Ruth

The funeral service was held July 31 at Edwards Funeral Home Chapel in Fort Smith with the Rev. Don Parr officiating. Burial followed at Barling Cemetery under the direction of Edwards Funeral Home.

She is survived by two daughters, Sandy Ruth of Bossier City, La., Cindy Groce of Benton, La., two sons, Ron Ruth of Roland, Okla., and Rick Ruth of Fort Smith, Ark., one brother, Hugh Craig of Beaumont, Calif., thirteen grandchildren and nineteen great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society, 3291 North Thompson, Suite D 104, Springdale, Ark., 72764.



Find the Arkansas Conference of The United Methodist Church on Facebook

SUMMER CAMP FUN TEACHES K

'Destination' offers mission vacation, UMC-style



ABOVE: Joe Rogers, volunteer coordinator with the Arkansas Rice Depot, explains to students taking part in Destination: Little Rock some of the ministries that take place through the Depot. Fifteen students and four adults from Elm Springs United Methodist Church and First United Methodist Church-Siloam Springs spent a part of their mission trip helping at the depot. RIGHT: Carly Perrine helps sort canned vegetables during a work project at the Arkansas Rice Depot.



RHONDA OWEN
For the Arkansas United Methodist

That summer camp provides fun and games, there's no doubt. But it can also present teaching opportunities about how to serve God while being of service to other people, plus show children a glimpse of the world beyond what they see every day.

"Destination: Little Rock" this year gave 15 youngsters in rising fourth through eighth grades the chance to leave their hometowns of Siloam Springs and Elm Springs in northwest Arkansas and travel to central Arkansas to learn about service firsthand.

On June 25, they spent a morning at Arkansas Rice Depot in Little Rock, learning about hunger in Arkansas. As their service project, they sorted pallets of canned goods and organized the cans so they would be ready when another group comes in to assemble food packages for senior citizens.

The day before, the children cleaned the courtyard at Quapaw United Methodist Church in downtown Little Rock, then toured Heifer Ranch in Perry County to learn about service on an international scale.

"We're teaching them that they

can serve others," says Kaylea Hutson, minister to families with children at Siloam Springs First United Methodist Church. "They learn to witness, to share their faith without words."

Hutson says she created the Destination program three years ago to present children with real service opportunities at an early age. The conference's Ozark Mission Project (OMP) provides opportunities for middle-school and high-school students, but at that time there was no program for younger children.

"The ultimate goal of the program is that kids will have five years of service under their belts before they are old enough to be in OMP," she says.

The first two years, Destination campers from Siloam Springs First UMC traveled to Joplin, Mo., for service projects. This year, they were joined by youngsters from Elm Springs United Methodist church for the trip to Little Rock.

Denni Palmer, director of Christian education at Elm Springs UMC, wanted to participate because she believes in children having opportunities to serve God at an early age.

"We need to get the kids off the sidelines and into service," Palmer says.

The children's reasons for wanting to participate in Destination indicate they appreciate the opportunity offered them.

"I wanted to learn more about worshipping God and doing service," says Gretchen Palmer, 9, when asked why she chose Destination for her summer camp experience.

Heyden Smith, 13, along for his second Destination camp, says of service, "I like it when it makes people smile."

Carly Perrine, 9, says she signed up for the camp "because it sounded fun." And it has been, she says, noting that her favorite activity was the visit to Heifer Ranch. "It was cool. We learned they send animals all over the world to people in need. They pass on the gift."

The children held fundraisers such as selling barbecue chicken throughout the year to fund their trip and so they could donate \$100 to each organization they visited.

Hutson hopes Destination expands beyond Siloam Springs and Elm Springs. Already, North Little Rock First United Methodist Church, which provided the group with lodging this year, "wants to tag in."

"My dream is it grows and becomes a great mission in the conference," she said.

'Jesus Rocks' keeps kids on their physical and spiritual game

RHONDA OWEN
For the Arkansas United Methodist

Summer camps sometimes present opportunities to blend the silly with the sublime, such as using "fly-swatter hockey" so children can practice what they've learned about fair play from the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus Rocks—Asbury United Methodist Church's summer sports and fitness camp—melds Biblical principles with sports activities, allowing children to exercise minds and bodies while learning about God.

On the evenings of July 6–9, about 70 children studied Bible verses relating to sportsmanship, competition, perseverance and winning, then engaged in a variety of serious and not-so-serious sports-related activities.

Pam Snider, children's minister at Asbury, says Jesus Rocks was created five years ago to give children an alternative way to learn about God.

"All churches do Vacation Bible School—so do we—but we felt there

was something more needed that was based on Christian values."

Jesus Rocks is free and open to children entering kindergarten through fifth grade. This year's camp included group sports such as kickball, basketball and soccer, plus gymnastics and schoolyard games like jumprope and foursquare.

Some games had a twist. As an example, there's the previously mentioned fly-swatter hockey for which the kids used fly swatters instead of sticks to move their balls. "It's the funniest thing you've ever seen and the kids love it," Snider says.

Another unusual activity was "chair volleyball" in which the children played a game of volleyball without leaving their seats.

A child doesn't need to be athletic or sports-minded to attend Jesus Rocks. Everything is geared for learning through fun.

"We don't do a lot of internal competition," Snider says. "We don't have winners and losers."

At each opening session, the

campers discussed a scripture that set the theme for the evening. One night, a lesson on sportsmanship was tied to 2 Timothy 2:5. On another, the lesson on winning was tied to 1 Corinthians 9:25.

Guest speakers each evening also added their life experiences to the lessons. They included Marian Kursh, center on the University of Arkansas at Little Rock women's

basketball team, and Kara Newman, whose son participates in Arkansas Special Olympics.

Jan Wall, a dietician at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, spoke on the role nutrition plays in keeping the body healthy. In keeping with that message, Snider says, only healthful food was served during the camp. The children drank Gatorade or water instead of sugary

soft drinks.

Each camp session, children contributed an offering to benefit Special Olympics, which was this year's Jesus Rocks mission project. Snider says collections in the past benefited Camp Aldersgate, Heart and Hooves, and Heifer International.

"We try to choose things that are tangible for the kids and that they can understand."



LEFT: Emily Simants, 5, and Cole Ludwig, 10, prepare to push off on the water slide during Family Water Sport Night at Jesus Rocks sports and fitness camp. During the previous three camp sessions, the children learned what Jesus has to say about competition, winning, perseverance and sportsmanship. On the last night, their families were invited to play water games. RIGHT: Ted Bowden leads children in prayer before they run an obstacle course.



KIDS IMPORTANT LIFE LESSONS

Pine Bluff camp serves up free fun for at-risk kids

RHONDA OWEN

For the Arkansas United Methodist

"I got a fish! I got a fish!"

A young boy broadcasts his news exuberantly as he trots along the pond bank after his first catch—a still-hooked catfish towing his rod and reel through the water further and further away from his reach.

The fish had taken its chance to flee when, in the thrill of the first tug on the line and bob of the bobber, the boy dropped his whole rig into the murky water. But the fish's escape doesn't dampen the boy's enthusiasm.

He dodges other children and their fishing lines as he keeps his eye on the rod moving toward the pond's center. After narrowly missing getting tangled in another child's line, he gives up the chase to stand silently watching the one that got away.

But giving up on one fish doesn't mean he gives up on fishing. He gets another rod and reel. When a fish takes the bait, he holds on tight while two older boys help him reel it in.

"I got a fish! I got a fish!" he says again, grasping with both hands the line holding his second "first catch." Written on his beaming face: Fishing is just plain fun—hook, line and sinker.

On a steamy morning in June, the little fisherman and 44 other children caught their first (and many their second and third) fish at Healing Place Ministries on Old Warren Road in Pine Bluff. The fishing camp was one of many "firsts" the children experienced at the weeklong day camp in June.

Year-round, Healing Place offers adult programs that include crime victims' advocacy, physical fitness, nutrition, recreation, counseling and support. But during the summer, Healing Place's building and grounds resound with children's laughter during four week-long day camps.

Healing Place's Youth Enrichment Summer Camp sessions are held in the building and grounds behind the home of the ministry's founders, Edna and David Morgan. Edna Morgan also serves as a pastor at First United Methodist Church in Pine Bluff; David Morgan is senior pastor at St. Mark's United Methodist Church.

"I think we had a fabulous time," Edna Morgan says. "For most of the kids, it's the only camp experience they've ever had."

Morgan says she and her husband began the summer program four years ago because they wanted disadvantaged children to have the camp experiences they missed during their own childhoods.

The camp for at-risk and special needs children ages 7-14 began June 14 and ended July 9. Although they planned to keep attendance at 25, Morgan says they couldn't turn down any child so they ended up with 40-60 participants each week.

The day-campers fished, played basketball, jumped rope and hula-hooped. They also



Edna Morgan, a pastor at Pine Bluff First United Methodist Church, coaches a youngster on how to reel in a catfish after one tugs on his line during the Healing Camp Ministries fishing derby June 25. The camp gave 45 children their first opportunity to catch a fish. The children's catches were bagged, labeled and stored in a cooler so the kids could take them home later in the day.

attended workshops in nutrition, self-esteem, coping with bullying and peer pressure, anger management, etiquette and conflict resolution.

"We thought about it and decided this camp would be a really good idea," Morgan says. "Then we thought about partnerships with other people and starting asking who was interested." Pledges of assistance began to pour in from area churches, agencies and individuals.

"Ask and it shall be given you," Morgan says, quoting from the book of Luke.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission stocked the Healing Place pond with 600 catfish for the camp's fishing derbies, plus provided fishing equipment for the children. Other partners, supplying everything from crayons to instruction to meals, include: Arkansas Minority Health Commission, Pine Bluff First UMC, Pine Bluff Police Department, Jefferson County Sheriff's Department, Jefferson County Red Cross, Trinity Church of God in Christ Feeding Program and Chester Hines Youth Center.

Most of the children attending camp are from outreach and youth centers in Pine Bluff, Morgan says. Others are enrolled by their parents. Camp is free, although parents can choose to pay \$10 if more than one member of their family attends.

A variety of activities fill each day. On June 23, the children fished for a couple of hours then went back to the main building for a class on dining etiquette, after which they wolfed down a fried-chicken lunch supplied by Trinity Church of God in Christ in Pine Bluff. In the afternoon, they went outside to jump rope, learn archery, play kickball and basketball — or simply run and play.

Giving the campers time to romp outdoors means a quieter time indoors, Morgan explains, adding that volunteers and visitors always

remark on the young campers' attentiveness and manners.

"We provide structure for them, a loving environment and space to be kids," she says, adding that many of the campers live in neighborhoods where it may not be safe to play outside. "We give them chances to run off some of their energy so they can sit down and concentrate on what they're doing."

In practice, the philosophy that a tired child is an attentive child appears to work. The children settle into their seats at two rows of tables with minimal rowdiness while Patricia Johnson, assistant coordinator of Pine Bluff Volunteers in Public Schools, sets up props for an etiquette lesson.



David Morgan, director of Healing Ministries Summer Youth Camp in Pine Bluff, helps a camper hold up his prize catfish catch during a fishing derby June 25. Morgan and his wife, Edna, created the program four years ago to give at-risk children a summer camp experience.

As Johnson lays out plates, cutlery, glasses, teacups and other accouterments of fine dining, Morgan keeps the 45 campers occupied with a lively and lung-bursting rendition of "This Little Light of Mine."

As the song ends, a small boy gives a satisfied sigh, grins and says, "That was fun!"

After explaining that there's a right way and a wrong way to eat, Johnson holds up a teacup and asks the children if it's proper to extend a little finger as she's doing.

"Yes!"

"No," Johnson says. "We call this 'flying finger syndrome.' We don't want our pinkies flying."

Little heads nod. She has their full attention.



A camper at Healing Ministries in Pine Bluff watches her line intently so she doesn't miss it when a fish takes bait. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission stocked the Healing Place pond with 600 catfish and donated fishing gear for the kids. Every child caught at least one fish during the camp's fishing derby.

Alice Preston: teacher, pioneer, inspirational leader, 1907–2010

Continued from front page
with a minimum of problems.”

Preston was the first black teacher at Murfreesboro High School. As the school's social studies teacher, she discovered plenty of new challenges.

“I met some of the young white kids who are grown now who were her students,” Richard Preston said. “They talked about how they tried to irritate her. They worked hard to make her miserable. But it didn't work. She was that kind of person. They didn't get to her.”

In 1979, Preston was appointed by Gov. Bill Clinton to the state Board of Education. She served for 10 years. She was part of the earliest Silver Haired Legislative Sessions that focused on issues and concerns of the state's half-million residents over 65.

“She left such a legacy in the field of education,” her son said.

After retiring from teaching in 1968, she followed other pursuits. In 1975, she became the first woman and the first black elected to the Murfreesboro City Council.

She received many honors in her lifetime. She was named one of the Horizon 100 Arkansas Women of Achievement in 1980 and received the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education Distinguished Alumni of the Year Citation in 1992. She was named Citizen of the Decade by the Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce.

Preston was a devoted member of Scott's Memorial United Methodist Church at Lockesburg. She was recognized in “Who's Who in the United Methodist Church” and served as a member of the United Methodist General Council on

Ministries. She served as president of the Southwest Conference Women's Society of Christian Service 1968–73. The establishment of the Arkansas chapter of Black Methodists for Church Renewal was something she “pushed for” in the late '60s, according to her son. She was elected on the first ballot as a lay delegate from the Southwest Conference to the 1972 General and Jurisdictional conferences.

“She never tried to rule by rigid authority or by haughtiness of manner,” wrote Henderson. “Having known ‘Miss Alice’ most all my life, especially that last 50 years in which we shared Christian fellowship and purpose out of the Valley Grove United Methodist Church, to me she even seemed shy. However, the steady and sincere look in her eyes tended to denote a warm, compassionate and understanding heart always ready to reach out to those around her. She had the God-given ability to inspire others to devotion and enthusiasm to follow that which was not only right but also wise ...”

Alice Preston was preceded in death by her husband, Clark Preston; her parents, Rev. R.W. Walker and Lizzie Walker; one brother, Sylvester Walker; and two sisters, Beatrice Johnson and Hattie Fountain. She is survived by one son, Rev. Richard C. Preston, and his wife, Hazel; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were held June 29 at Scott's Memorial United Methodist Church, with interment at Paraloma Cemetery.

Jane Dennis is a freelance writer and former editor of the Arkansas United Methodist.



Alice Preston was a major force in the peaceful integration of the Murfreesboro school system in 1965.



Alice Preston poses with one of her many classes during her early teaching years.

Churches can use CyberSafety Training Kit to help protect children and youth

A new, inexpensive training CD developed by the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) is now available to help churches and community groups protect children and youth from the perils that exist in the digital world of cell phones and cyberspace.

The CyberSafety for Families Training Kit allows the church to be more directly involved in providing awareness and training around technology to help ensure that children and youth are protected as they navigate the internet world, says the Rev. Susan Hay, Director of Effective Practices in Young People's Ministry at GBOD.

“Technology plays an ever-increasing role in the lives of chil-

dren and youth,” Hay says. “While the rapid advancement in computer technology offers exciting opportunities, it also creates new dangers. Social networking sites, video games, cell phones with cameras and texting have created opportunities for abusers to have access to vulnerable individuals in ways that were unimaginable just a few years ago.”

Mary Alice Gran, Director of Children's Ministries for GBOD, says helping to develop healthy habits in families is an important role for Christians.

“Just as we teach children how to develop the habit of brushing their teeth every day, and saying their prayers every night before they go to bed, or grace at lunch, we need

to help children and youth develop healthy habits when they are communicating with people in person or on the Internet,” Gran says.

“As church leaders, we are called to be in ministry with people, not just the people in our local congregation, but the peoples of our communities and our world. So the development of this resource, CyberSafety for Families, takes the knowledge that we have gained and makes it available for everyone as part of our mission,” Gran says.

The training kit was created for GBOD by Paul O'Briant, Chief Information Officer in the Currituck County (N.C.) Public School District and a member of Pilmoor Memorial United Methodist Church in Cur-

rituck, N.C.

“We live in a world where technology is an integral part of all we do. According to recent data from the Pew Internet and American Life Project, over 93% of adolescents are online,” says O'Briant, whose father, the late Rev. Clarence O'Briant, served in the North Carolina Conference.

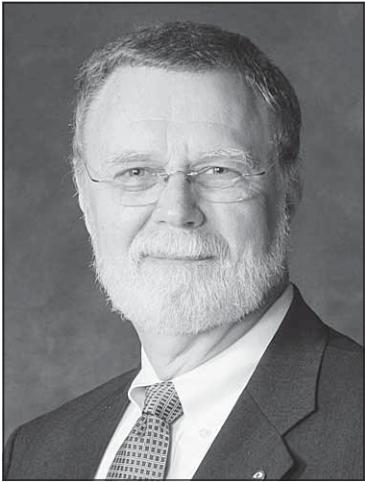
“As parents and other adults in the church, we owe it to our children to educate ourselves about the benefits and risks associated with online behavior,” he says. “That is the only way we can help keep them safe. This job is too important to leave to someone else.”

The training kit's CD includes a section on “what you need to know

first,” a planning guide, teaching plans with schedule options, handouts and a slide presentation. Subjects include safety in the high tech world of computers, cell phones, video games and social networking sites.

“For \$35, you get everything you need to help the parents in your church, and even in your community, to be empowered to help themselves and their children be safe—at least as safe as they can be in the cyber world,” Gran says.

The training kit is available online at both The Upper Room (www.upperroom.org) and Cokesbury (www.cokesbury.com) and also at Cokesbury bookstores nationwide.



Hathcock



Bush



Davis

UMFA welcomes new board members

The Rev. Philip L. Hathcock of Maumelle, Douglas Bush of Blytheville and Granger Davis of Conway recently joined the Board of Directors of the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (UMFA). The Foundation manages \$95 million in endowment funds and other charitable assets that benefit local churches and other United Methodist ministries.

“Our board plays the key role in guiding us in our mission to strengthen and expand United Methodist ministries through the creation and administration of permanent charitable endowment funds,” said UMFA President Jim Argue, Jr. “We are delighted to welcome these new board members to our important work.”

Davis, an award-winning financial advisor for Edward Jones, has provided financial services to individual investors for the past 20 years. A native of Memphis, he is a 1988 graduate of the University of Central Arkansas and serves on the Dean’s Advisory Council for the UCA College of Business. He and his wife Jan have two children, Carson and Emma. Former president of the United Way of Central Arkansas and the Conway Morning Rotary Club, Davis is a member of the Conway Chamber of Commerce and First United Methodist Church in Conway.

A native of Fayetteville, Hathcock is the Director of Conference Ministries and Assistant to the Bishop of the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church. He was named district superintendent for the Central District in 2004 after having served as senior pastor of First UMC Conway for the previous 12 years. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and the Divinity School of Duke University. Hathcock has twice served as a trustee of Hendrix College and currently serves as a member of the Arkansas Educational Television Network Foundation. He

and his wife Gwen have two children and two grandchildren.

Bush, a CPA in private practice, is treasurer of the City of Blytheville and former president of the Blytheville Rotary Club. He is a member of the board of directors of Westminster Village and has served as treasurer for Habitat for Humanity. He holds a degree in Finance from the University of Tennessee and has a Masters in Accountancy. Bush is a pilot and offers his services on Angel Flights, responding to medical emergencies.

A member and certified lay leader at First United Methodist Church of Blytheville, he is a choir soloist, Sunday School teacher and president of Methodist Men. Previously he chaired the church Finance Committee and Trustees.

UMFA is among the largest of the 52 United Methodist Foundations in the country. Founded in 1963, UMFA holds over 500 accounts that are managed by an independent investment consultant in three investment pools utilizing six professional money managers.



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COMING UP

Worship Fair postponed to 2011

Worship Fair, originally scheduled for Aug. 13–14 at St. Paul UMC in Little Rock, has been postponed until early next year. Those who have already registered may choose to receive a refund or apply their fee to the rescheduled event. The new dates will be announced as soon as presenters’ schedules are confirmed.

Sponsored by the Arkansas chapter of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts, with the theme “Making the Ordinary Extraordinary,” Worship Fair will focus on planning and performing meaningful worship and preaching during the “Ordinary Time” that stretches between Epiphany and Lent and between Pentecost and Advent. Clinicians include John Thornburg, Anna Laura Page, Gail Wells and Liz Wright.

Following 22 years in pastoral ministry, Thornburg began a song leading and worship consulting ministry (www.congregationalsinging.com). He will lead two workshops, “Making the Ordinary Extraordinary: Preaching through the Dog Days” and “Beyond Filling in the Blanks: Restoring Joy to Worship Planning.”

Page received a B.M. degree in vocal music education with a concentration in piano, and a M.M. in music theory with a concentration in organ from the University of Kentucky. She will lead reading sessions for choral music (including the music for the next Conference Children’s Choir Camp) and keyboard music.

Wells is a member of St. Paul UMC in Little Rock, and headed up the task of making new stained glass windows for the St. Paul sanctuary. She will offer an introduction to stained glass to guide participants through the steps of how to design a project, glass selection and cutting, making frames, foiling, soldering and completing a project. (Note: the stained glass workshop will not be handicapped accessible.)

Wright is a member of St. Paul UMC in Little Rock. She has been active in leading the church’s vacation Bible schools, and she will oversee activities for children grade 3 and older.

Pre-registration is recommended and will be available at

www.arkansasfumwa.org after the new event dates are announced. For information, contact Robert Armstrong, (870) 772-4092, or rca1950@swbell.net.

Web-based Christian education training

Individuals interested in para-certification in Christian Education can receive the training through eChristianEd, a web-based series of courses beginning Aug. 23. Completion of five of the six courses offered by eChristianEd meets the academic requirements for para-certification through the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Provided through Columbia College in South Carolina, eChristianEd provides affordable and accessible training for volunteers and paid staff in Children, Youth, Adult and Family Ministries. eChristianEd is endorsed by the Arkansas Conference and recommended by General Board of Higher Education and Ministry with scholarship assistance available. Foundation courses provide training needed in understanding the Bible, theology for ministry, and foundations for Christian Education.

Tuition is \$500.00 and registration is \$50.00 per semester. An on-line class for Basic I will be offered this fall starting the week of August 23. Contact Rev. LaVerne Keahey at (501) 851-7009 or keaheyh@aol.com. Additional information can be found at www.eChristianEd.com.

Religion and Race event in September

The 2010 gathering of the South Central Jurisdiction’s Commission on Religion & Race, “Calling Forth Right Relationships: Creating Community,” is Sept. 16-18 at the Kendall Center on the campus of Philander Smith College. The plenary speakers are Giovanni Arroyo, General Commission on Religion and Race and Bill Mefford, General Board of Church and Society. Workshop tracks offered include leadership development, ministry with the poor and creating new places for new people. Registration is \$35. Register on-line at www.arumc.org/register.

Harvest of Hope delivers one millionth pound of rice to help the hungry

What does one million pounds of rice look like? Visualize 25 tractor trailers parked bumper to bumper, stretching over five city blocks. And what do you do with 1 million pounds of rice? If you are the Arkansas Rice Depot, you feed millions of Arkansans.

Arkansas Rice Depot recently took delivery of a tractor trailer filled with 40,000 pounds of rice from Harvest of Hope. This truckload was special: it contained the one millionth pound of rice purchased by Harvest of Hope. Representatives from DeWitt and Batesville Harvest of Hope were on hand to celebrate.

"One million pounds of rice is an amazing gift for us," said Laura Rhea, president and CEO of Rice Depot. "That represents 10 million servings of rice for hungry individuals in Arkansas. We couldn't continue to feed the large numbers of hungry children, families and seniors in our state without the generous contributions of organizations like Harvest of Hope."

Harvest of Hope is a DeWitt, Ark. organization that uses the proceeds from selling smoked pork roasts and chickens each July to purchase the rice, which is delivered to the Rice Depot.

Julie Simpson, the leader of the group in DeWitt, is still amazed at the community support the sale receives each year.

"Our community is made up primarily of farmers," said Simpson. "Times are tough for them. So when they offer time and money to help us, I am touched."

Volunteers are what make the effort a success, according to Simpson. "Our volunteers work 14-hour shifts during the days leading up to the sale: smoking meat, selling tickets, and other duties," said Simpson. "When I ask them why they work so hard, they all respond, 'We believe in this cause.'"

This is one of three Harvest of Hope events

that take place each year. The others are scheduled in Batesville and Malvern, over the Labor Day holiday. This year will be Malvern's first Harvest of Hope.

Watermelon delivery

Rice Depot also received a truckload—about 40,000 pounds—of seedless watermelons from the Society of St. Andrew, a national gleaning ministry that works with produce farmers and processors to get excess food to the hungry.

In the past, the Society of St. Andrew has provided Rice Depot with other types of produce, including peas, corn and potatoes. This time, Rice Depot was fortunate to receive a traditional summer treat that hungry families are sure to enjoy. "This is a bumper year for melon. We've found food banks to receive 40 loads of fruit in the Southeast," said Bob Fritchey of Society of St. Andrew.

"Produce is expensive. Hungry families have to make do with what they get, which is often canned goods," said Rhea. "The more than 300 food pantries we serve seldom have fresh fruit to distribute."

Almost 30 percent of Arkansas families with children present struggle to have enough money to buy food. The melons in this load represent as many as 40,000 servings of melon. The only cost for the fruit is trucking, since the watermelons are arriving from Florida. Transportation costs are approximately \$2,400, or 60 cents per melon.

"Society of St. Andrew could almost certainly help us get another truck of produce this summer," said Rhea. "But we need financial contributions from generous Arkansans to make it happen."

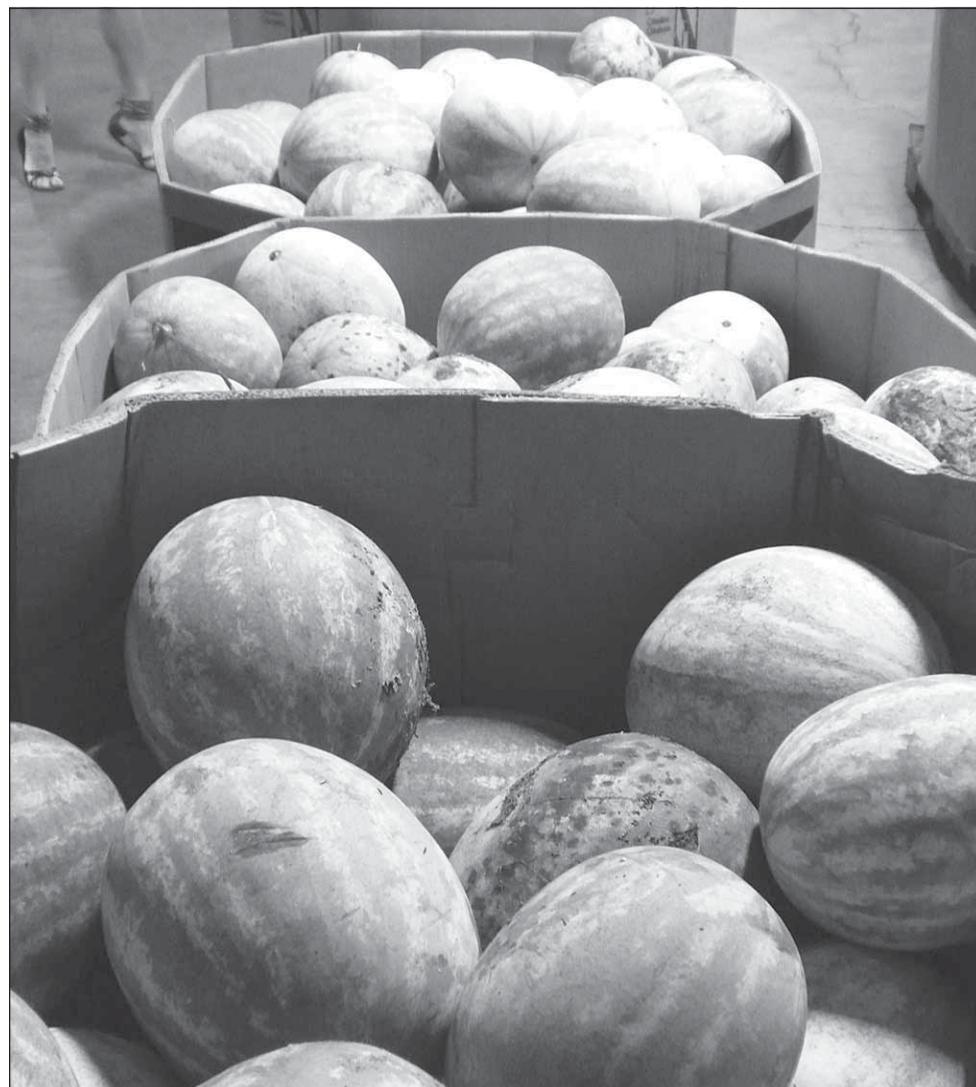
To learn more about these organizations, visit www.ricedepot.org or www.endhunger.org.



Laura Rhea, director of Arkansas Rice Depot, shows off a bag of rice, one of thousands the organization has received from Harvest of Hope.



Audrey Bryant, 4, enjoys a slice of one of the watermelons delivered to Arkansas Rice Depot by the Society of St. Andrew. Audrey is the daughter of Lisa Bryant, the Rice Depot's development director.



Psychologists debate need for anti-corporal punishment bill

BY MAGGIE HYDE
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON—A proposed bill aims to put a stop to teacher-administered spanking, making corporal punishment illegal in all U.S. schools—including private religious ones—that receive any federal funding.

Religious school groups, usually quick to guard against government encroachment, have few worries about the bill because officials said many abandoned hitting as a punishment years ago.

“Whether you believe it’s right or wrong, it’s just too big of a liability or legal issue,” said Tom Cathey, a legislative analyst for the Association of Christian Schools International, an umbrella group for private Christian schools.

Introduced by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-N.Y.), the bill would ban schools from practicing any corporal penalties “as a form of punishment” or “for the purpose of modifying undesirable behavior.”

The bill would cover public schools and any private schools that receive federal money for free lunch programs or bus rides for their poorer students. The bill currently has 18 co-sponsors, all of them Democrats.

Currently, 20 states allow corporal punishment in public schools, according to the Department of Education. Where it is allowed, corporal punishment is more likely to be disproportionately applied to minority students (36 percent) and disabled students

(19 percent).

“Corporal punishment does not work and in fact leads to increased negative behavior and dropout rates,” said Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.) a co-sponsor of the bill. “Moreover, the fact that schools are applying school discipline policies in a discriminatory manner based on race, color, national origin, disability or gender constitutes a civil rights violation.”

A nun’s swift rap across the knuckles was once a hallmark of the Catholic educational system in America. But in recent decades, the practice has made more appearances in comedic routines than classrooms, a relic of a time gone by when most teachers belonged to religious orders.

“I think corporal punishment has not been an issue for a long, long time,” said Brian Gray, a spokesman for the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

Mr. Gray, who attended a Catholic school, said he was never hit by a teacher. “I never got touched by a ruler,” he said.

His association does not yet have a stance on the bill, but Mr. Gray said he was sure that it would affect Catholic schools because many benefit from federal money in some way. He did not see compliance as an issue, however.

Almost half of all Catholic schools in the U.S. receive government money in the form of the federal nutrition program, according to yearly NCEA statistics, and almost as many schools receive federal money to bus students

to and from school.

The bill does not ban the use of “reasonable restraint” should a student’s behavior put other students or school personnel at a risk of injury.

The proposed bill comes amid a growing debate among psychologists on whether spanking is an effective and safe punishment tool.

Psychologists don’t all agree that spanking is always harmful to children,” said Kim Mills, a spokeswoman for the American Psychological Association (APA). “Some psychologists have a belief that certain levels of gentle punishment may be effective.”

APA’s official stance is that corporal punishment should not be allowed in schools, day-care centers or other institutions.

Juli Slattery, a family psychologist at Colorado Springs, Colo.-based Focus on the Family, suggests tempered spanking on young children as one of many disciplinary tools available to parents. The bill, she said, is indicative of American society’s collective disagreement on how to punish its children.

“You can’t get a consensus, she said. “It was much more agreed upon in our parents’ generation.”

The responsibility for discipline, Dr. Slattery said, should ultimately rest with parents or guardians, not schools. But she does worry that bills like Ms. McCarthy’s encourage a child’s disregard for consequences. “I think it’s a step in downplaying discipline,” she said.



COURTESY PHOTO

United Methodist youth in the Missouri Conference served lunch at a Salvation Army center during a weeklong mission camp.

Missouri Conference youth hold summer mission camp

BY FRED KOENIG
Special Contributor

Summer means service for hundreds of United Methodist youth in the Missouri Conference.

In early July, about 100 youth came together in Jefferson City for a weeklong camp, working on projects in the surrounding community. They were among 1,150 youth and adult sponsors participating in such camps across the state.

Having that many extra hands around can be a big boost to organizations in need. The youth helped restore a Habitat for Humanity home, painted the house next door and did foundation work on another home across town. “We really appreciate having the youth come here this summer and help us out,” said Ron Hansen, a Habitat volunteer and a member of Wesley United Methodist Church in Jefferson City.

Just over the hill from the Habitat houses, youth helped at a day-care center for children in low-income families. They played with the kids, read books, made bracelets and dug holes in the sand. “You name it, they’ve done it,” Mark Walker, youth director at Ozark UMC, said when the week was over.

Mr. Walker also planned to take the group to another work camp in Colorado later this summer. “This gets the kids out of the house away from the television and puts them in service to communities. It teaches them to be mission-minded,” he said. He added that the conference’s council on youth ministries (CCYM) was well-organized. “It makes it easy for folks like us to just pick the date and go.”

John Birkhead, director of student ministries at Green Trails UMC in St. Louis, had a work team sorting and

folding clothes at the Rainbow House in Columbia. The Green Trails church sends youth to two work camps each summer. “We’ve doubled the number of youth we have participating in mission trips,” he said. “The Bible says to be in mission to Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. We start incoming sixth graders with a two-day mission in St. Louis and build on that.”

Mr. Birkhead said he appreciates the worship experiences led at the camps by CCYM student volunteers. “The youth can really relate to them,” he said.

Thomas Ziervogel from Green Trails UMC spent a morning at the Cedar Creek Therapeutic Riding Center. He pulled weeds, something he doesn’t do at home. “It was tiring, but we got a lot accomplished,” he said.

A group of six youth were across town working on landscape maintenance at the Agape House. The house is a place for families to stay while they visit relatives in prison. The youth were impressed by the facility. “It’s really cozy,” said Crystal Sharp. “It would feel like going to your grandma’s house.”

This was the first mission trip for Monica Ortiz of Avondale UMC in Kansas City, who attended with her son, Mateo Estrada. She said the youth enjoyed fellowship and worship, and learned a lot from their work experiences. In the middle of the week, her group served lunch at the Salvation Army center in Jefferson City.

“[The kids] were really pumped for this,” said Ms. Ortiz. “They did all of the shopping, cooking, serving and cleanup themselves.”

Mr. Koenig is editor of publications for the Missouri Conference.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS PHOTO

Corporal punishment—often considered a relic of times gone by—is no longer practiced in most schools in the country.

PEOPLE OF FAITH

Stephen Copley, the Arkansas Conference Advocate for the Poor, was recently invited to the White House for a conference on Economic Opportunities and Security for Vulnerable Communities: Building Partnerships to Fight Poverty. The invitation came from the National Council of Churches. The meeting's purpose was to increase the level of awareness around programs and policies designed to increase economic opportunity and improve working conditions for vulnerable Americans and to strengthen, broaden and further connect networks of organizations working on these issues, and to share best practices and facilitate dialogue around how to increase access and enrollment to benefits and services among disadvantaged populations.



Copley



Fifth and sixth grade students from First United Methodist Church, Fort Smith dropped off 15 flood buckets at the West District office. The youth collected the buckets during their vacation Bible school.



Heber Springs Commissions New Stephen Ministers

Four new Stephen Ministers were commissioned recently at Heber Springs United Methodist Church. Each completed over 50 hours of training and join a team of 15 individuals qualified to minister to those with spiritual or emotional needs or in crisis situations. Pictured are Ira Ashley, Ellen Bankston, Jo Claire Pulliam, and Margarette Smith.



Faith Funds

Common Ground for Extraordinary People

Camp Aldersgate in Little Rock enriches the lives of hundreds of children and youth who have special medical needs through summer camps and year-round respite weekends. One-on-one helpers allow campers to enjoy activities like a ropes course, accessible swimming, fishing, archery and a tree house.

"A series of United Methodist Foundation grants has meant a change of life for our camp," said Executive Director Sarah Wacaster. "The first grant in 2000 funded a master plan which helped us develop new ways of thinking about our facilities and allowed us to expand our potential."

Since then, the Foundation has provided funds for a challenge grant for the Restricted Fund for Programs mandated by the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation's construction of infrastructure for the camp. And recently UMFA helped fund strategic planning for a new decade.

"As grant recipients, we have a family relationship with the staff at the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas. They make it easy to maintain communication and explain our needs," said Wacaster. "Because of UMFA donors, Camp Aldersgate is more fully prepared to meet the needs of our campers and their families."



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REPORTER

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Freedom behind bars

Helping inmates find new life | 3B



Rising from the rubble

Volunteer teams help with rebuilding in Haiti | 4B



Institutional inertia

Debunking the sanctity of UMC's order | 7B

Section B

August 6, 2010

WESLEYAN INFLUENCE



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AU UNITED METHODIST CHAPLAINCY

The United Methodist-Protestant Community at American University is an ecumenical fellowship seeking to create a place where students can grow in their faith, serve those in need, work for justice and share the gospel.

No matter what they're called, campus ministries nurture students



During the school year, United Methodist ecumenical worship services are held every Sunday at American University.

BY MALLORY MCCALL
Staff Writer

Katie Newsome was on her way to the student center at Southern Methodist University when she came across a display table for the Wesley Foundation. She stopped to visit and was invited to a back-to-school cook-out later that week.

Now a junior, she is the president of SMU's Wesley Foundation, sings in the worship band, serves on the discipleship division of the leadership team and leads a women's small group.

"I was open to being a part of any

Christian campus ministry, but I was especially drawn to the Wesley Foundation because it had the same affiliation as my home church," she said.

But for Ms. Newsome to stumble across a group of students wearing Wesley Foundation shirts at a United Methodist-affiliated school like SMU is a bit of an anomaly. The idea behind the Wesley Foundation ministry was to offer the church's presence on a secular college or university campus.

While most United Methodist-affiliated institutions offer a Wesleyan influence through chapel programs and classes, some United Methodist might think that in an increasingly

secular age, even denominationally owned schools should have a Wesley Foundation of their own.

And some grassroots efforts, while they may not be official Wesley Foundations, have indeed helped provide a stronger spiritual support for college students at United Methodist colleges and universities.

Wesleyan ministries

Technically, the Wesley Foundation at SMU is called "United Methodist Campus Ministry at SMU," said the Rev. Andy Roberts, the director of SMU Wesley. "Several years ago, they

■ See 'Students' page 8B

Q&A:

Anti-alcohol movement's rise and fall

By all accounts, Prohibition was a colossal mistake, creating more organized crime than it did sobriety between 1920 and 1933. Behind the Constitutional amendment that enacted Prohibition was a diverse group of Americans, including the Ku Klux Klan, women's suffragists, the left-wing Industrial Workers of the World (the "Wobblies") and leaders of the Methodist church.



Daniel Okrent

Daniel Okrent has created a definitive history in *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (Scribner), and Methodists figure prominently in the tale. Mr. Okrent recently spoke with staff writer Mary Jacobs.

How important were Methodists in the temperance movement?

The organization that made Prohibition happen was the Anti-Saloon League, and the people who dominated the Anti-Saloon League from the beginning were Methodists. Its entire board of directors was made of Methodist and Baptist ministers, and they used their network of churches to raise money, to organize people and bring them into the political arena. Many were sincere; they felt the world was going to change for the better because of Prohibition. But there were other reasons why people in the churches supported Prohibition, like anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant feelings.

Protestants that did not support Prohibition were the Lutherans—many were German, so beer was part of their culture—and the Episcopalians, who are closer to Catholics. What about Methodists and Baptists would make them care more? I don't know the answer to that.

■ See 'Alcohol' page 2B

FAITH WATCH

Pastor says city leader was 'deeply troubled'

Jayne Peters, the Coppell, Texas, mayor who evidently committed suicide after shooting her 19-year-old daughter to death on July 13, had been in financial trouble since her husband died from cancer two years ago, according her pastor. "Jayne was a deeply troubled and, finally, desperate soul," the Rev. Dennis Wilkinson, senior pastor of First United Methodist Church in the Dallas suburb, said during a funeral service for the two.

Ground zero mosque sparks political debate

Rep. Peter King, the ranking Republican on the House Homeland Security Committee, said on July 12 he favors an investigation into the funding of a proposed New York mosque near the site of the 2001 Islamic terrorist attacks. "I think the 9/11 families have a right to know where the funding comes from," Mr. King told the Associated Press. Mr. King and former Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin differed from New York mayor Michael Bloomberg, who said it would be un-American to investigate the funding.

Lutheran bishop steps down over abuse case

Maria Jepsen, the world's first woman to be elected a Lutheran bishop, resigned her post in Hamburg, Germany on July 16 after allegations she failed to properly investigate cases of child sexual abuse. Dr. Jepsen had said she only became aware in March that a priest in the town of Ahrensburg abused as many as 20 children in the 1980s; media reports, however, said she knew of the cases as early as 1999.

FCC indecency rule overturned by court

The 2nd U.S. Court of Appeals on July 13 overturned a 2004 Federal Communications Commission (FCC) policy intended to crack down on unscripted cursing and indecency on television. The court said the policy did not specify what comprised offensive material, ruling that it was "unconstitutionally vague" and a violation of the First Amendment.

Conference aims to spark revival of church heritage

BY TIM GHIANNI
Special Contributor

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—United Methodists can experience revival if they rediscover their heritage, say denominational leaders organizing a Wesleyan Leadership Conference here, Oct. 14-16 at West End United Methodist Church.

The denomination became Methodist in name only by the 19th century, when it sought to become 'respectable,' says Steve Manskar, director of Wesleyan leadership for the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD).

"Congregations began to jettison some of the characteristics that set them apart as Methodists," he said. In an effort to attract more people to the church, the Methodist movement's earlier focuses on lay pastoral leadership and class meetings were de-emphasized.

"It worked," he said, "because from the middle of the 19th century into the early 20th century, the Methodist Church was the largest, most influential Protestant denomination in the United States."

But the result is that the denomination transformed itself "from a missional movement to an attractional church," Dr. Manskar said.

The Wesleyan Leadership Conference, he said, seeks to help the church reclaim some of the Wesleyan missional distinctives it needs, especially to reach a post-Christian, post-modern world.

Scott Kisker, whose book *Mainline or Methodist?: Rediscovering Our Evangelistic Mission* (Discipleship Resources) is the foundation for the conference, will help lead the discussion.

Dr. Kisker, professor of church history at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., says he

hopes the conference will be a step in "rediscovering the identity... what it means to be a Methodist in a way that can reinvigorate our ministry in ways that are biblically more faithful and evangelistically more fruitful and that we would know Jesus better."

Dr. Kisker advocates a return to the "spiritual vitality" sparked by class meetings, field preaching and band meetings.

Class meetings brought lay people together once a week "to inquire after one another's souls... with the expectation of helping each other to grow spiritually," he said. Field preaching was a way to engage non-churchgoers with the gospel.

And band meetings, he added, were groups that met "to confess their sins to each other so that they might be healed of whatever brokenness was in them and become more holy, not through polishing the image on the outside but becoming more deeply aware of the grace of God working on the inside and our own need for grace, quite frankly."

The conference is aimed at lay leaders as well as clergy.

Keynote speakers will include Dr. Kisker and Taylor Burton-Edwards, GBOD's director of worship resources, with group discussions and workshops by GBOD staffers: the Rev. Vance Ross, deputy general secretary, and Sandy Jackson, director of connectional laity development. "It's the laity from which this is going to happen and emerge," Dr. Manskar said. That's the way it happened in early Methodism. They were the ones who were responsible for forming people as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ."

For information, visit www.gbod.org.

Mr. Ghianni is a Nashville-based freelance writer.

■ ALCOHOL Continued from page 1B

But I think the xenophobic aspect was very strong. This was the final thing that enabled the ratification of the Prohibition amendment. You needed 36 states to approve it, and this was happening just as the U.S. was entering World War I. The great enemy was Germany—and the brewers were seen by the Prohibitionists as tools of the Kaiser.

Given that Jesus turns water into wine in the Bible, how did Methodists become so vehemently anti-alcohol?

Interestingly, there was a new translation of the Bible in 1924 that changed the wedding at Cana and various other passages, so that references to wine were deleted. This was by a professor of theology at Yale who denied it was due to Prohibition sentiment.

As to why the theology of Prohibition became central, I don't know. What I do know is the reaction against the saloon in the middle of the 19th century, particularly among women, was so intense that it combined with this notion of proper moral behavior. And the drunkenness that women were subjected to... So maybe the church leaders are saying, "We have a real social problem here, so how do we tie this into our theology?"

There were very powerful forces against Prohibition. If you follow the money, it doesn't seem like anybody stood to profit financially. How did a grassroots group manage to defeat those?

There's a phrase that historians use to define who supported Prohibition—Baptists and bootleggers. Methodists were only left out because it isn't alliterative. They were the ones who had the most to gain. Baptists, to impose a moral standard; bootleggers, because it gave them this huge business.

What did Methodists and Protestants in general think they'd

accomplish by prohibiting alcohol consumption?

Billy Sunday preached that with Prohibition, "We will turn our jails into corncribs, prisons won't have to exist any more, people are going to be clean and proud and live upright lives." If we take his words at face value, and I think we can, he sincerely believed it would make the world better.

So what were some of the unintended consequences of Prohibition?

Prohibition denied the government revenue and enriched bootleggers. It fostered a lack of faith in the rule of law because Prohibition laws were so openly defied. So people thought, how seriously do we have to take any law? It also helped foster the creation of the national crime syndicate.

Given that Methodists still aim to positively influence morality in

society today, are there any lessons learned from Prohibition?

Prohibitionists discredited the anti-alcohol case by exaggerating it or misrepresenting it. So one lesson is: Don't exaggerate; have your facts right. So much of the Prohibitionists' efforts of persuasion against alcohol was alarmist and exaggerated. They promoted so-called "scientific" warnings, such as, "You'll scar your esophagus forever with one glass of alcohol."

In the Prohibition movement, there were two factions. One group felt you could enforce this simply by law. Others thought you needed to have education, to persuade. Unfortunately, the first party won. But, as we've seen so many times, you cannot legislate against human appetites. It doesn't work. It never has.

Were there any positives that came out of Prohibition?

Yes. Americans were hard drinkers. In 1830, the year when Americans drank the most, it was 7.5 gallons of pure alcohol a year. That's the equivalent of 90 fifths of 80 proof liquor for every man, woman and child over the age of 15. That was the average consumption. So Prohibition created an open and public issue about the dangers and consequences of drink. And after Prohibition, Americans were actually drinking less than they did before Prohibition. And we still do.

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UM CONNECTIONS

Claremont seminary appoints Wogaman

The Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, professor emeritus of Christian ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary, will be interim vice president for academic affairs and dean at Claremont School of Theology starting Sept. 1.

He succeeds the Rev. Susan Nelson, who has stepped down for health reasons. Dr. Wogaman was senior pastor of the historic



Philip Wogaman

Foundry United Methodist Church in Washington, D.C., from 1992 to 2002, where he also served as spiritual counselor to President Bill Clinton. He has also been interim president of Iliff School of Theology in Denver and interim pastor of St. Luke UMC in Omaha, Neb. Claremont, affiliated with the United Methodist Church, recently launched the University Project to help educate Muslim, Jewish and Christian clerics.

UMC raises \$2 million for anti-malaria drive

Through Imagine No Malaria, the United Methodist Church has committed \$2 million to distribute long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito nets in Sierra Leone, where malaria is a leading cause of death. The November 2010 distribution of 2.5 to 3 million nets will provide almost every household with three nets per family. The goal is to eliminate deaths from malaria by 2015.

UM Native Americans honored at conference

Jessie Mitchell, a Lumbee of Robeson County, N.C., and Anne Marshall, a full-blood Muscogee Creek from Holdenville, Okla., were honored at the 22nd Annual Southeastern Jurisdictional Native American Summer Conference at Lake Junaluska, N.C. The women were recognized for their leadership in the United Methodist Church and the Southeastern Jurisdictional Agency for Native American Ministries (SE-JANAM), the advocate for 23 Native American congregations and four ministries on reservations.

Kairos brings hope to prison inmates

BY NEIL BROWN
Special Contributor

MARION, N.C.—“I intended to kill him but he just wouldn’t die,” was the matter-of-fact answer I got from “Allen,” the inmate to my immediate right, when I asked him about why he shot a cop at age 12.

The names have been changed to protect the privacy of the guilty.

That eye-opening answer and others like it were common as maximum-security inmates revealed their past lives during a Kairos prison ministry event May 20-23 at the Marion (N.C.) Correctional Institution.

Based on the Walk to Emmaus model—a Thursday evening followed by 13-hour sessions on Friday and Saturday—the Kairos event ends with an eight-hour day on Sunday. Like Emmaus, there are a series of talks, chapel visits and opportunities for forgiveness and reconciliation.

Unlike Emmaus, where the participants are called pilgrims and are usually Christians who desire a closer walk with Christ, the prison version accommodates 42 inmates who are called participants and are generally unbelievers—with some Muslims, Wiccans, atheists and agnostics.

Many also carry a burden of guilt and unforgiveness toward witnesses and prosecutors who put them behind bars.

I became involved after attending an Emmaus event where a leader asked for volunteers for an upcoming Kairos event. It takes one volunteer team member for each inmate participant.

Team members receive 36 hours of training to understand the dynamics of prison life and to learn the rules of the state prison system. We would be entering a maximum-security facility housing the worst-of-the-worst—including those convicted of murder, rape and child molesting.

Inside team training

Inmates who live with other serious criminals face a prison culture of illicit drugs, alcohol, homosexual acts and violence. Inmates trust no one; many haven’t had a visitor in decades.

They feel like caged animals. Eight hundred and six inmates are locked away in 5-by-8-foot steel and concrete cells, with 36 cells to a cellblock. Each cell contains two bunks, a toilet, sink and small writing table—all stainless steel.

Many inmates have jobs in the kitchen, as janitors or working on

grounds maintenance, paying 40 cents to a dollar a day. Others are enrolled in GED or community college classes.

Those with violent tendencies or who are unwilling to follow the rules are locked up 23 hours a day.

Volunteers pray over the 4,000 dozen cookies they bake for inmates. A bag of a dozen cookies is handed out to every inmate and employee every day of the three-day event.

Participating churches raise funds and provide other expressions of God’s unconditional love—placemats decorated by Sunday school children, posters signed by members of a congregation and a handwritten letter to each participant. They make sure nothing going into the prison could be remade into a “shank” (a cutting or stabbing device) or contraband.

An all-male team of volunteers is assembled to go into the prison. Teams include a leader, assistant leader and clergy for each table of six inmates. Tables are named after male Bible characters and are called “families” to encourage the bonding of team members with inmates. Team members come from Baptist, United Methodist, Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian and non-denominational churches.

An outside team of men and women is also assembled. At a local Baptist church, home-cooked meals are prepared and cookies are processed for delivery to the prison. Runners deliver the meals and supplies periodically to the prison.

Many inmates haven’t had a home-cooked meal in years and appreciate the hot food, cookies and abundant snacks. “Table servants” serve meals and attend to the needs of inmates and team members—living proof of God’s unconditional love.

Getting acquainted

On Thursday evening, participants are teamed up with a “sponsor.” They sit together munching cookies and answering questions about their hometown and leisure interests. Inmates are often nervous and wary, not knowing what to expect.

At 7:45 a.m. Friday, table assignments are made. I am the table/family leader of the “Family of Luke” with Duane, a Presbyterian as assistant, and Anthony, a non-denominational pastor as our clergy. Between talks, we banter back and forth, getting to know one another. Some inmates matter-of-factly reveal their sordid past. Others—who we’re told later may be sexual offenders—smile, but reveal little.

To my right is “Allen,” who joined a gang on the streets of Chicago at the age of 4, shot a cop at 12 and is serving time for murder of a rival gang

member. He hints he was involved in other killings but was never implicated. He confesses that he has only one childhood friend left alive; he and the friend survived because they have been incarcerated.

Next to Allen sits “Charles,” a short white guy with a beard and shaved head. Charles grew up in a normal family, went to church every Sunday but got into the wrong crowd, dealing and using drugs. Charles is the intellectual at this table, friendly and talkative.

To my left is “Kenneth,” a white man in his 40s from a broken home, whose alcoholic father was violent and whose mother often disappeared. After running away from home at age 9, Kenneth became a drug dealer. By age 12, his pockets bulging with cash, he started trying the drugs he’d been selling. At age 13, while under the influence of drugs, he stuck a gun in someone’s face and robbed him. Kenneth is on his third prison term.

‘Though we began by shaking hands with strangers; by the end, participants embrace us as they start to “get it.”’

Next to Kenneth sits “Raul,” a native of Haiti, brought up in extreme poverty yet smart enough to be granted a full scholarship to the University of Miami. He became envious of a fellow student who seemed to have everything; Raul didn’t know it was all purchased with drug-dealing cash. Raul decided to also become a drug dealer, and was nabbed on a drug run to North Carolina. He was worried about his family in Haiti following the earthquake. He’d not heard from them and hadn’t had a visitor in his 10-year stay behind bars. He wept uncontrollably at the table, knowing that we love and care enough to obey Matthew 25:36: “I was in prison and you visited me.”

Across the table is “Mark,” a handsome young man who shot and killed his unfaithful wife and then attempted suicide. A month ago, his stomach had healed enough that he could go off a colostomy bag. Mark later decided to give Jesus a try, since his Wiccan tradition has done nothing for him.

Next to Mark is “Stanley,” a young black man whom we suspect is a sexual offender. Stanley says little about his history and we don’t ask. The motto of Kairos is “Listen, listen, love, love.” We never inquire about an inmate’s criminal history or sentence, but if information is

volunteered, we listen.

Transformation by the Holy Spirit is evident: Though we began by shaking hands with strangers, by the end of the second day participants embrace us as they start to “get it.” By Saturday evening, many participants weep with joy and proclaim Christ as Lord.

Holy Spirit at work

Even veteran team members are speechless as the Holy Spirit works in overdrive. We are overcome with emotion as hugs, tears and “high fives” become commonplace. The participants have “the glow,” an inmate term that describes a Kairos participant’s unexplainable demeanor.

Yet there is a spiritual battle going on as well. Every day we are in the prison, there is a “Code Four” (an act of violence)—more Code Fours in three days than in all of this year. Six inmates were taken to the hospital on Thursday alone.

Sunday morning begins with one of our inmate helpers having his throat slit with a box cutter wielded by a jealous inmate while making his way from the cellblock to the gym for our sessions. He is airlifted to a trauma center where he is stitched up.

“Terry” survives, but the entire prison goes on lock-down. The chaplain is sure our event will be cancelled. We form a prayer circle, begging God for a miracle. Two minutes later the administration allows our event to continue, a testimony to the value placed on Kairos.

Our event ends Sunday afternoon with the closing ceremony attended by our outside team and Kairos community friends. Participants are encouraged to step to the microphone and tell of their experience. Tears flow as Jesus is praised and lives are transformed before our very eyes. There’s not a dry eye in the place.

We serve an awesome God who forgives even the most heinous of acts and restores dignity and peace to the most hardened of criminals. We look forward to seeing our new brothers at an upcoming reunion visit, confident that God’s mercy reigns.

Mr. Brown is a men’s ministry specialist and president of the Marion District United Methodist Men. He lives in Spruce Pine, N.C.



Neil Brown



UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTOS BY MIKE DUBOSE
ABOVE: Curious children watch a demonstration of water purification treatments by UMCOR and partner agencies in Gressier, Haiti. **LEFT:** Displaced families make temporary homes at the College Methodiste de Freres compound, weeks after the Jan. 12 quake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

COMMITMENT TO HAITI

Volunteer teams aid in quake recovery

BY LINDA BLOOM
United Methodist News Service

The Rev. Tom Vencuss was in a good mood as he stood on the porch of the Methodist Guest House in Port-au-Prince the afternoon of Jan. 12.

He and his wife, the Rev. Wendy Vencuss, had just returned from a meeting of United Methodist mission partners and representatives of the Methodist Church of Haiti. "The general feeling was just so upbeat at four o'clock on that Tuesday," he recalled. "We were to sign a covenant agreement the next day . . . to pledge ourselves to work together."

Shortly afterward, a massive earthquake struck Haiti. Mr. Vencuss, who is also a medic, spent the rest of the day attending to the wounded and rounding up people to take shelter at the guesthouse.

Now, nearly six months later, Mr. Vencuss is fulfilling the earlier pledge. He has taken a leave of absence from his duties at Wethersfield (Conn.) United Methodist Church—where he and his wife are co-pastors—and is leading teams to work cooperatively with Haitians on earthquake recovery.

The guesthouse is still sheltering those afraid to return to their homes—the large outdoor basketball court is filled with tents. But it also has become a staging ground for teams being dispersed to different parts of Haiti.

Volunteer-In-Mission teams are part of the United Methodist Church's multi-faceted approach to assist Haitians in earthquake recovery. A three-person volunteer staff—the Rev. Mike Willis of Vestal, N.Y., and Doug Nagel of Baton Rouge, La., in Haiti, and Susan J. Meister of

Galesburg, Ill.—is coordinating their involvement.

Leading the way

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), in partnership with Haitian Methodists, has been leading the denomination's efforts. By June 30, United Methodists had raised more than \$40 million for Haiti.

Priorities for the Haiti Response Plan were refined during a three-day June workshop involving more than 25 leaders of the Methodist Church of Haiti and representatives from UMCOR, the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, United Church of Canada and Methodist Church of Great Britain.

United Methodist congregations have been sending work teams to Haiti for more than two decades. What makes the earthquake recovery project unusual, said Gregory Forrester, mission coordinator for the denomination's Northeastern Jurisdiction, is that teams will be rotated through project sites designated by the Methodist Church of Haiti and many Haitians are being hired to support the work teams.

When Mr. Forrester, who has visited Haiti annually over the past 15 years, returned in February with two other jurisdictional coordinators, they found that supplies were available, "but no one could buy them."

To address the lack of a functioning economy in Haiti, the proposal for volunteer teams—adopted by UMCOR directors in April—recommended, at minimum, a two-to-one ratio of hired Haitians to team members for a work site.

When Mr. Forrester brought a team for a May 10-17 work experience, he said, 40 people were

on the payroll.

"We bought all our food local," he said. "We hired for laundry. We had people providing security for us. We actually fed all the laborers who were on the job site with us and hired cooks as well."

Near the epicenter

His team went to Mellier, a village three miles from the earthquake's epicenter, where the rebuilding effort will include a school, church and homes. Haitian church members had distributed food rations from UMCOR in the village a couple of weeks after the earthquake.

"Everybody in that community was affected," Mr. Forrester said. "Every single house damaged. There were no jobs; there was no infrastructure left."

Sandy Binotto, a member of First Romney (W.Va.) United Methodist Church, was a member of Mr. Forrester's team.

"You stop and wonder if you are really making a difference when the task is so large," she wrote afterward. "In your heart you say, 'Yes' because one kind smile, handshake or song makes it all worthwhile."

"If we all join together to lift one block of fallen concrete or cut one piece of twisted rebar, then yes, in time, it will get done. We must not give up. New structures will rise from rubble."

Clearing rubble is one of the current tasks for volunteer teams, said Melissa Crutchfield, the UMCOR executive in charge of international disasters.

Temporary structures are being built for churches and schools. "Right now, the only thing you can use is a tent or temporary structure,

which should last a couple of years. They are pretty solid structures," she said. "But the government is trying to be very deliberate about building codes moving forward. They don't want permanent structures built until they can develop earthquake proof, hurricane proof, top-of-line engineering feats."

Commitment to Haiti

Tom and Wendy Vencuss began working in Haiti eight years ago and helped re-establish the New York Conference task force on Haiti, now called Mountains of Hope for Haiti. The program's focus is in Furcy, where a medical clinic was built and partnerships established with the local church and school.

When Mr. Vencuss returned there in March, he found minor earthquake damage, except for one building, but learned that many survivors had come to the clinic for medical attention.

He and a team left July 1 for a nine-day mission to make repairs in Furcy and hold two clinic days with doctors organized by the Methodist Church of Haiti. New York area teams also will work in other parts of Haiti, based on where the need is, over the coming months.

"The New York Conference has committed to one team a month," he said. "The middle of July, we've got another group going down. I'll be going down with teams in August and September."

And despite the underlying sadness and pain that has followed the earthquake, Mr. Vencuss is upbeat once again. "The Haitian people are just incredibly resilient and resourceful," he said.

Volunteers interested in scheduling a trip to Haiti can contact Susan Meister by e-mail at haitivolunteers@yahoo.com.



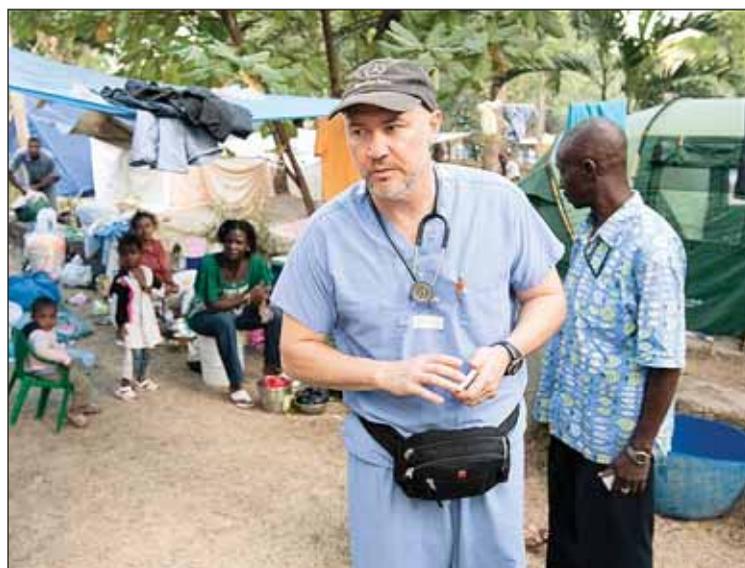
ABOVE: Children attend school under a tarp at the Carrefour Methodist church in Haiti. **LEFT:** A volunteer team of United Methodists, led by Greg Forrester (top left), and a Haitian interpreter worked May 10-17 in Mellier, Haiti.

UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE PHOTOS BY JIM JONES



How to help:

Donations to support the work in Haiti can be made online at www.umcorhaiti.org or by checks payable to UMCOR and mailed to UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087. Please indicate Haiti Emergency, UMCOR Advance #418325, on the memo line.



UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTOS BY MIKE DUBOSE

LEFT: A girl plays between rows of makeshift homes at a temporary camp in the soccer stadium at Leogane, Haiti. **RIGHT:** Dr. Troy Silvernale, a United Methodist from Grand Rapids, Mich., moves through a makeshift camp earlier this year at the Collège Méthodiste de Frères compound in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Volunteers booking for 2012 teams

So many United Methodist Volunteer In Mission teams are signing up for work in Haiti that a request already has been made for 2012.

Through its Haiti Response Plan, the church is now rotating teams into the country to assist with earthquake recovery. "I've got weeks that are too full," said Susan Meister, the U.S.-based coordinator. "The response has just been tremendous."

Space remains for additional teams this year. So far, 107 teams, including ecumenical teams, have been scheduled for 2010.

In April, directors of the United Methodist Committee on Relief approved a \$565,000 grant to support the pilot phase of a volunteer team project sponsored with the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. The next month, jurisdictional coordinators for United Methodist Volunteers In Mission led three work teams to Haiti composed of people who would eventually lead their own teams.

Ms. Meister is coordinating with the Rev. Mike Willis, the volunteer management coordinator based at the Methodist Guest House in Port-au-Prince.

Leaders of the teams have Volunteers In Mission training, along with previous experience in Haiti, Ms. Meister said. No children under the age of 16 are allowed on the teams and youth ages 16 or 17 must be accompanied by a parent.

"The teams that have come back say it's physically exhausting and emotionally grueling," she said.

Most teams will spend seven to nine days in Haiti. The size of each team is limited to 10 people, who must all arrive and depart at the same time.

Teams typically arrive in Haiti on a Monday, stay at the guesthouse overnight, are driven to a remote work location for a few days, return for an overnight at the guesthouse and fly home the next day.

Besides paying their own expenses, teams contribute \$3,500 each, to which matching funds are added and sent to Haiti to pay for workers and supplies.

"One of the major goals of this grant was to employ Haitians at a ratio of 2 to 1," she said. "We take that very seriously."

Ms. Meister said it's not easy: Volunteers will witness a high level of hunger and poverty, face language and transportation issues, endure oppressive heat and manage with a lack of infrastructure.

Some team placements are available for the rest of 2010. January and February of 2011 are closed; 31 teams are scheduled with several more pending. Twenty-five teams await confirmation through July 2011.

For information, visit www.umvimhaiti.org.

—Linda Bloom,
United Methodist News Service

Praying for and with our college campuses

BY ASHLEE ALLEY AND
CREIGHTON ALEXANDER
Special Contributors

More than 17 million American students head to college and university campuses each fall. Millions more around the world will join them.

These students are being shaped into the next generation of teachers, accountants, parents, doctors, CEOs, journalists and ministers, among others. Shouldn't it be our prayer that as they become these people, they are being shaped by Christ?

We invite you to join us this fall as we pray for the next generation of Christian leaders heading off to college and university campuses. Starting Aug. 23, we are calling the Church to prayer for our college campuses for 40 days.

We have a two-fold purpose: to call the Church to pray for college students and to help college students learn to pray.

The "40" comes from Isaiah 40 to "prepare the way of the Lord." This chapter of Scripture is one where we see God calling his people to hope from despair, to understanding from futility and to strength from weariness.

This is our prayer for the generation of college students who populate campuses around the world—that they would come to trust in the one true God and be strengthened to run the race before them.

The prayers have been written by campus ministers, college students, bishops, authors, pastors and other leaders. Collectively, they express a heart for God to inspire, challenge and transform the lives of college campuses and individual students.

As you pray the prayers offered by these fellow Christians, may you see how God is calling you to minister to those future Christian leaders who may not yet profess the name of Christ.

As we seek to call forth prayer from the Church, we're following the words of Psalm 71:24, proclaiming God's righteousness all day long and offering three opportunities for prayer: morning, noon and evening prayers.

The morning prayers are written by pastors and leaders who support the work of campus ministry; the noon prayers come from campus ministers who have often prayed these prayers on their own; the evening prayers come from college students themselves, revealing the passion they have for ministering to others in their generation.

People can participate in several ways:

- Daily e-mails provide the prayer for the day in the morning, at noon and in the evening;
- A downloadable prayer guide to pray by yourself or to share with your family, church or prayer group;
- Twitter reminders (follow us @CollegeUnion) that give a link to the prayers online;
- Text messages that give you a link to the prayers online. Sign up by texting "pray40" to 41411; standard text-messaging rates apply.
- Check in regularly at www.Pray40.com and help spread the word.

'Shouldn't it be our prayer that they are being shaped by Christ?'

Those who minister to college students, including campus ministers and Wesley Foundation directors, will be encouraged to connect by:

- Joining the prayer effort themselves and inviting their students, board members and partnering churches to do the same;
- Signing up for a 24-hour period of continuous prayer within their ministry;
- Teaching about prayer in their ministries this fall or using recorded teachings on prayer that we are providing free;
- Considering signing up to have students pray as a part of the Living Prayer Center, a ministry of The Upper Room.

The prayer effort is a partnership between College Union, The Upper Room, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Foundation for Evangelism and United Methodist Communications.

Ms. Alley, campus minister at Southwestern College, and Mr. Alexander, director of campus ministry for the Missouri Conference, are Pray 40 coordinators.



Ashlee Alley



Creighton Alexander

GEN-X RISING

Sheep and shepherds in ministry

BY ANDREW C. THOMPSON
UMR Columnist

One warm autumn evening a few years ago, my phone rang. I had been lying on the couch, half-doing while a Red Sox game played on the television.

I looked at the display of the incoming call. It was my district superintendent—in early September. Now I was serving my first pastoral appointment, but I knew enough to realize that a D.S. calling in September probably meant trouble.

The conversation that followed confirmed the worst of what flashed through my mind: An associate pastor's position had opened up unexpectedly, and the bishop had tapped me to fill it.

He had considered letting the position lie vacant until annual conference the following year, but it was a large church and the senior pastor was already overloaded. As a campus minister, I could be moved without creating the "domino effect" so familiar to Methodist clergy who get caught up in mid-year moves.

All of a sudden, the itineracy became very real for me.

I left a campus ministry appointment where I was finally building momentum after three years and where I had many friends, and moved to a town and a church where I knew practically no one.

I gotta be honest. It was tough at first. But it was also what I accepted when I entered a Methodist ministry.

That experience helped me begin to think about what it really means for those of us called to be Christ's shepherds to give the *whole* of our lives to ministry in the church. It helped me think about what it means to live a life that is not my own.

Contentious system

As I see it, the itinerant system is seen as contentious for two reasons: one practical and one cultural.

The practical bone of contention has to do with fear and mistrust on the part of pastors; namely that they and their families will get caught up in the gears of a bureaucratic machine, and be sent to a ministry setting not because it fits their gifts and graces but because an episcopal cabinet is trying to fill slots.

I see that as a real challenge, for bishops and their superintendents as well as for elders under appointment. And I also don't see any magic pill we can swallow to make it disappear.

Clergy need to continually remind themselves that they are yokefellows in the gospel with every other member of their annual conference as well as with their bishop. Bishops and cabinets should look upon the fear of their pastors with understanding, realizing that an ecclesiastical polity led by human beings (even ones guided by the Holy Spirit) is liable to error, and some preachers have been on the receiving end of those errors.

We all need to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recognizing that we have been fitted together as stones in the same spiritual house that Christ is building.

A recent reading of the 1588 speech given by Queen Elizabeth I before the struggle against the Spanish Armada reminded me that strong leadership depends on those being led having the sense that their leaders stand *with* them rather than simply over them.

Bishops and superintendents have the opportunity to address and model the connectional nature of our covenant together. The connection in Wesley's day was, after all, rooted in the common fellowship of the *preachers*.

The second contentious aspect of itineracy is cultural. Our culture teaches that we should be self-made, constructing our lives according to our own felt desires. We live in a world that tells us to "Have It Your Way," which is modernity's motto—as well as Burger King's!

It's wrong, of course. Those of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death (Romans 6). The lives we live now are possible only in his resurrected life. And the stories we inhabit are, finally, his story.

But modernity's false promises haunt us. And the reason many of us fear being sent as Jesus sends his disciples is that we've bought into the myth that the life we live should be of our own choosing. For those who follow Jesus, I simply don't think that can ever be the case.

Guaranteed appointment

There's a lot of anxiety among Methodist clergy over possible changes to the so-called "guaranteed appointment."

For the record, I think the guaran-

teed appointment is a bad idea with no biblical or Wesleyan basis. I know why it was instituted, and the good intentions with which that happened. But like so many lamentable parts of our *Book of Discipline*, it attempts to make a rule out of something that depends on character and virtue.

That "something" is our covenant relationships in the annual conference. And while character-building takes longer than rule-making, it is by far the more worthwhile activity.

Trees that produce no fruit are useless. And shepherds who cannot do the work of shepherding should not be entrusted with sheep. These convictions seem as necessary to the vitality of the church as anything I know related to leadership.

But fruits can and must be judged in different ways, depending on the setting in ministry. A church in the inner city, a church in a small rural town, and a church in a thriving suburb all call for different approaches—both in ministry and in the evaluation of it. Were bishops to reassure us of that, it might allay some of the anxiety we see.

Even so, those who continually say they "don't trust the system" might ask themselves why on earth they'd want to be a part of a system they fundamentally distrust in the first place.

In the end, the debate over the guaranteed appointment is symptomatic of our wider struggle with itineracy. That makes me hesitant to consider it apart from core Christian virtues of patience, trust, repentance and love.

We have several layers of shepherds and sheep in the UMC, and we need to realize that at every level, flocks maintain health and grow only when they realize that they're all in together. And yes, it is a quality of such flocks that the shepherds are competent for the tasks they've been given.

By the way, that mid-year appointment turned out very well. The appointment was made with a serious consideration of the church's needs and my gifts for ministry. And I experienced the Holy Spirit at the very center of the whole process. I took that as a sign of providence.

And I continue to think that God has got work for the People called Methodists to do.

The Rev. Thompson is an elder in the Arkansas Conference. He maintains a blog at www.genxrising.com.

WESLEYAN WISDOM

Methodism's 'order' exists to serve the church

BY DONALD W. HAYNES
UMR Columnist

To paraphrase an insightful turn of phrase from Russell Richey, professor of church history at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, in his book *Methodist Connectionalism: Historical Perspectives* (United Methodist General Board of Higher Education, 2009), "Over its machinery, Methodism has both gloried and agonized."

Tom Frank, professor of religious leadership and administration at Candler, in his book *Polity, Practice, and the Mission of The United Methodist Church* (Abingdon, 2006), writes:

"Wesley argued that no specific

church order was prescribed in the New Testament and that Anglican order was only for the well-being (bene-esse) of the church, not of its essence (esse). For Wesley, polity grew out of mission and the focus was to remain on the reformed and holy life, not on ecclesiastical quibbles."

Sadly, from its earliest days, Methodism has allowed ecclesiastical quibbles to become the priority at every level, from the local charge to the General Conference.

In a recent column, I called for a new paradigm of polity, which I think is in keeping with Wesley's letter to John Smith in 1746. "What is the end of ecclesiastical order?" he wrote. "Is it not to bring souls from the power of Satan to God and to build them up in his fear and love? Order, then is so far valuable as it answers these ends; and if it answers them not, it is nothing worth."

Scholars note that Francis Asbury had more to do with instructing American Methodism's polity than did John Wesley. We owe much of who we are to Asbury's organizational genius, yet certain aspects of his authoritarian, almost despotic style of leadership either allowed or failed to prevent some sad schisms.

It was Asbury who defied Wesley in allowing the term "bishop" to be used rather than Wesley's preferred "general superintendent."

It was Asbury who insisted on English in Methodist worship, forcing his dear friend Philip Otterbein to go a separate way to minister to German-speaking Methodists.

It was Asbury who, on the one hand, ordained Richard Allen, but in

so doing systematized racism. He also felt that for the sake of evangelism in the South, slavery had to be tolerated for the time being.

It was Asbury who refused to allow an appeal of one's appointment, prompting James O'Kelly to walk out of the 1792 General Conference and take one-seventh of Methodist membership with him.

It was Asbury who refused to allow the election of presiding elders by their peers.

And it was Asbury whose style of episcopal authority was emulated by Bishop Joshua Soule and Bishop William McKendree when they suppressed all efforts at reform in the General Conferences of 1820 and 1824, causing the formation of the Methodist Protestant Church. The "reformers" had asked for lay representation at all conferences and election of presiding elders.

The model of Bishop Asbury has survived all the seismic shifts of polity. Since 1939, the Methodist and United Methodist bishops have not had the power of the antecedent Methodist Episcopal churches, but the power of appointment, per se, lives on.

The Episcopal and Lutheran Churches have bishops, but only the Methodist churches invest their bishops with the authority to appoint pastors. Has not the time come for us to retain the stature and respect for our episcopal leaders but move to a negotiated appointive process?

Looking forward

Dr. Richey has an incisive statement at the end of his chapter on itinerancy: "Reformers often wish to turn back the clock and recover the vitalities of an earlier day. . . . More needful than hindsight is a compelling vision for the future. . . . History can inform, but cannot provide the vision."

From 1774-1794, the *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences* required that traveling preachers move every six months. Bishop Asbury was convinced he must "keep everything in motion." The quarterly term evolved into annual terms, and by 1866, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was the first to recommend a four-year norm for pastoral tenure.

But the fact remained, "Methodist preachers moved a lot." The bottom line is that pastors are still sent and churches still have to accept whomever the bishop appoints.

Today, the *Book of Discipline* is clear as to the limitation of the local Staff-Parish Relations Committee: "Consultation is not committee selec-

tion or call of a pastor. The role of the committee on pastor-parish relations is advisory." The authority of the bishop is equally clear: "Clergy shall be appointed by the bishop who is empowered to make and fix all appointments in the episcopal area of which the annual conference is a part."

Our system hinders a sense of ownership on the part of both the "sent" pastor and the "receiving" charge. The eviscerated role of the local committee in moving an ineffective pastor leads to deep frustration and may be a significant factor in some of our losses to other denominations. Local church laity need a "place at the table." Have we overstated the sanctity of our system?

The late Bishop Nolan B. Harmon wrote, "It was the preaching of countless circuit riders, the testimony and work of innumerable class leaders, the evangelistic fervor of a growing church and the irresistible witness of men and women that they had been redeemed from sin and found life sweet and purposeful that made Methodism great.

"It was in church on Sunday, in class meeting by candlelight, in the fervor of a camp meeting, in the work of exultant people singing—sometimes shouting—that Methodism found its best expression. Its organization has played indeed a great part in its success, but perhaps not as much as the constitutional historian sometimes thinks."

Dr. Richey has unearthed the 1884 address of M.D.C. Crawford to the "Conference of Presiding Elders in New York City." By then, Dr. Richey says, "Methodist was mainstreets, managed, and mission minded." It was big business, and its operational flow chart looked like it!

Spirit walled in

Crawford concluded with this: "We have received from our fathers . . . a sacred trust which we are to study and guard and administer with intelligence and zeal. It will not answer to attempt to do over again the things they have done. We cannot bring back or repeat the past. The Church life of today must be distinctive of today. We must meet and grapple with the living problems of the present. But we shall triumph. God has not forsaken us. To him be all the glory!"

Dr. Richey sadly notes that it is to 1884, the centennial year of Methodism in America, and not to 1968 that we should look for explanations for the inertia that led to failures in evangelism and mission, to leadership bent toward institutional management.

As a result, he says, "there are 7 or 8 million United Methodists cooped up in these (institutional, corporately structured) walls who need and want out. In our congregations can be found effective, loyal, and committed leaders. Energy, vision, and dynamism abound. We have tired out our people with too much structure,

too much business, too much regulation. The Wesleyan spirit is walled in, but is very much alive."

As a beginning, let us be brave enough to trust a new paradigm:

- More bishops so they can be less bureaucratic, more pastoral and have more ongoing dialogue with their parish lay leadership and their clergy;
- Appointments following a negotiated, consultative process in which local church laity have a voice;
- A "cabinet" of selected clergy and laity whom the bishop uses for advice in appointment-making (eliminating the expensive position of District Superintendent);
- Local church contractual relationships with persons who have skills and training as needed for conflict management, church growth, etc.;
- Appointments made at any time during the calendar year, and made for four years, not one;
- Use of more local pastors, part-time and full-time;
- The tearful, economically driven demise of the Equitable Salary Fund and guaranteed appointment.

You may have heard the last seven words of the church as this: "We've never done it that way before." I prefer the old proverb, "Necessity is the mother of invention."

Dr. Haynes is a retired member of the Western North Carolina Conference and current interim pastor of Kallam Grove Christian Church. E-mail: dhaynes11@triad.rr.com.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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■ STUDENTS *Continued from page 1B*

started calling it the Wesley Foundation because they thought the name might be more recognizable to other students,” he added.

The same is true at Wesleyan College in Macon, Ga., another United Methodist-affiliated school that has a Wesley Foundation.

Eight years ago, the Rev. Michael McCord, now director of campus ministry resources and training for the denomination’s General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, started the Wesley Foundation of Macon to serve three schools: Wesleyan College (an all-women’s college), Mercer College (a Baptist-affiliated school) and Macon State College (a predominantly commuter college).

Wesleyan College already had a Wesleyan Christian Fellowship, and United Methodist students didn’t want to confuse anyone by naming their ministry Wesley Fellowship. To distinguish between the two ministries they created a Wesley Foundation.

Bishop James C. Baker founded the first Wesley Foundation at the University of Illinois in 1913 as a place for worship, a school for religious education, a home away from home, a laboratory for training lay leaders in church activities, and a recruiting station for the ministry, including missionary work at home and abroad.

The name Wesley Foundation honors John Wesley, the founder of Methodism and the first campus minister at Oxford University, and represents an open movement—an ecumenical movement available to all students.

“The heart of campus ministry is to raise up leaders and to provide an opportunity for students to encounter Christ’s transformational power,” says Mr. McCord. “But how that looks and feels on a campus is very different from campus to campus.”

Similar ministries

At Hendrix College, a United Methodist-affiliated school in Conway, Ark., students won’t find a Wesley

Foundation or any specific United Methodist campus ministry.

While a Wesley Foundation represents the voice of United Methodist students on a secular campus, at a United Methodist institution, the school itself is the voice of the church, said the Rev. Wayne Clark, chaplain at Hendrix College. The programs that the chaplain’s office offers to nurture religious life on campus are similar to—if not more than—the things a Wesley Foundation does, he added.

“Wesley Foundation is such a brand name,” said Mr. Clark. “We may not have the name, but we certainly have all the components that make up a Wesley Foundation.”

Hendrix’s Miller Center for Vocation, Ethics and Calling and the chaplain’s office organize, fund and oversee retreats, worship services, mission trips, service projects and discussion groups that help shape students theologically.

And while there is no specific United Methodist campus ministry at Hendrix, there is an active group of United Methodist students.

The United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF) Leadership Scholars is a select group of about 50 students who provide significant leadership in local church, district and conference youth ministries of the United Methodist Church, and who demonstrate Christian leadership on the Hendrix campus.

UMYF student teams visit United Methodist churches in Arkansas to lead Sunday worship, perform dramatic presentations, share Christian music and host special programs for children and youth.

Where’d they go?

“There is a trend, I think, of many conferences realizing the need to be present on campuses, but that’s matched with the struggle of funding,” says Mr. McCord. “How do you birth those things in the budget crisis we have?”

American University, another



COURTESY PHOTOS

Students gather for fellowship and fun at an '80s skate party at Emory University's Wesley Fellowship.

United Methodist-affiliated school in Washington, D.C., used to have both a university chaplain and a United Methodist chaplain on its payroll. The Rev. Mark Schaefer, campus minister, said there was no need for a Wesley Foundation because a United Methodist chaplain offered students a Wesleyan perspective.

But in the late 1970s to early '80s, budget cuts eliminated the United Methodist chaplain's position at AU, leaving the campus ministry in the hands of the university chaplain and a pastoral intern from the neighboring Wesley Seminary.

With the chaplain busy managing the university's overall religious life and the intern only working part-time, the United Methodist ministry fell through the cracks.

Dr. Schaefer speculates this trend was happening at other institutions as well. Some even began to question if denominational ministries on campus were necessary, since church-affiliated institutions had active university chaplains and neighboring churches, he said.

Ecumenical partnerships

At AU, however, Dr. Schaefer took matters into his own hands. As the pastoral intern in the chaplain's office, he was concerned that there had not been a full-time United Methodist presence at AU for over 30 years. With the help and support of the university chaplain, he lobbied the Baltimore-Washington Conference. In 2002, the conference created a campus ministry at AU and appointed Dr. Schaefer to it.

“We were basically able to shame the church into putting one [a UM ministry] here,” he said. “We argued that if we [the United Methodist Church] are paying for one in Mary-

land at a state school, why shouldn't we have one at AU?”

The Protestant campus ministry, headed by rotating part-time pastors, was renamed the United Methodist Protestant Community. Attendance at the full-time campus ministry has now doubled, and the leadership team has tripled in size.

“I think we've also helped reassert the affiliation of the school,” Dr. Schaefer said. “I think far more students know AU is United Methodist, largely because of our presence and us reminding them every opportunity we could.”

At Syracuse University in New York, the United Methodist campus ministry is wrapped into the Protestant Campus Ministry—an ecumenical organization that includes United Methodist, American Baptist, United

Church of Christ and Presbyterian affiliates.

But most of its funding comes from the United Methodist Church, says the Rev. Tiffany Steinwert, the dean of Hendricks Chapel at the university. The Protestant Campus Ministry is the only United Methodist campus ministry in the state, she says.

“A lot of times folks just think we are MYF [United Methodist Youth Fellowship] for college kids, and we are so very much more than that,” said Dr. Schaefer.

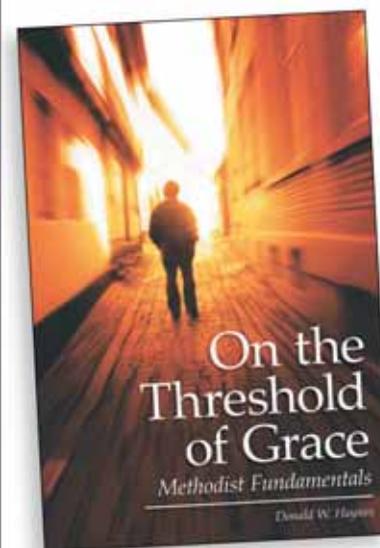
“We are creating real, intentional community with these students and then handing them out to the broader church. Then it becomes the church's responsibility to actually allow them to lead and serve.”

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