

## SPECIAL ISSUE

*Kairos* moment at  
Annual Conference

# 2A

New way to honor  
award recipients

# 3A

Giving that  
changes lives

# 4A

On-site sculptor's  
work to benefit  
Congo Wells Project

# 5A

## Major decisions dominate Conference agenda

### Votes on Imagine Ministry, delegations in Hot Springs June 5-8



BY AMY FORBUS  
Editor

Two years of study by a dedicated team of lay and clergy. A call to prayer. Meetings held across the state. A Bible study asking participants to consider what the church in Arkansas in 2011 can learn from the early church's story in the book of Acts. A Facebook Group for discussion.

And now, four motions presented for approval at the 2011 Annual Conference, held June 5-8 in Hot Springs.

The Imagine Ministry (IM) team is proposing changes to the vision and mission statements of the Arkansas Conference, a move from nine districts to five, a simplified organizational structure and a transition team to manage the implementation.

"The heart of the IM proposals is to enhance support for each local church," IM team member the Rev. Susan Ledbetter wrote in a conversation on the Facebook Group.

The online discussion has included supporters and critics of the plan, as well as those who have yet to make up their minds about the vote on the IM proposals.

One proposed change generating conversation is the new district leadership structure that would follow the reduction of districts. In the IM plan, district superintendents' primary task would be to "direct district leadership to articulate and implement a missional strategy for the congregations, institutions and communities of the geographic area" (page 24 of the IM report, available online at [arumc.org/ac2011](http://arumc.org/ac2011)).

[See DECISIONS, page 6A]



## AN OCCASIONAL WORD from the Bishop

BY CHARLES CRUTCHFIELD

Dear Friends:

I am looking forward to Annual Conference this year even more than most. In a unique junction of events, we will be making significant decisions about the future of our Conference and the future of the Church.

One of the first acts of the Conference will be to begin the balloting for laity and clergy delegates for the General and Jurisdictional Conferences to be held in 2012.

The delegates to General Conference will be focusing on where and how the church embraces the future. They will work with recommendations in the Call to Action report, which focuses on the importance of the vitality of local

congregations here in the U.S. and around the world.

The Council of Bishops is unanimous in endorsing the Call to Action as a framework for movement into the future. It will impact some of how we "do church" here in Arkansas.

Of course, the delegation we elect to go to the Jurisdictional Conference in Oklahoma City will have the additional responsibility of choosing three new bishops for the church. Four bishops in our jurisdiction will be retiring: Max Whitfield (Northwest Texas-New Mexico Area); Bill Hutchinson (Louisiana Area); Ann Sherer-Simpson (Nebraska Area); and yours truly (Arkansas Area).

Only three new bishops will be elected because we are combining

the Kansas and Nebraska Areas into one episcopal area. Retirements occur on the last day of August, 2012.

All I can say is that the new bishop in Arkansas will be the most fortunate in the South Central Jurisdiction.

We will also consider the proposals of the Imagine Ministry Team at annual conference. As you are aware, I certainly favor the adoption of the proposals. I know they are not without risk. They will push us into some unexplored areas and out of our comfort zones.

Not all the answers will be readily available to all the questions. In fact, one thing we should all know by now is that the mark of leadership is often not in asserting the solutions and answers, but in asking the right questions.

The one thing I do know is that change is inevitable. I would much rather be taking some risks and seeking to define my future myself, rather than letting status quo or circumstance dictate change. It should be rather exhilarating to engage in the journey of discovery to which Imagine Ministry invites us.

So, Annual Conference should be exciting.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Faithfully,

*Charles M. Crutchfield*

Charles Crutchfield



# Recognizing moments given to us by God

BY WILLIAM O. (BUD) REEVES  
Special Contributor

I will never forget the first sermon I heard as a brand new seminary student at Duke Divinity School 32 years ago. I don't remember who the preacher was, but he made the distinction between the two Greek words for time: *chronos* and *kairos*.

Chronos refers to the mechanical progression of time, minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day. Kairos is time measured in terms of significance, moments given to us by God that are pregnant with meaning and that make a difference in our lives.

The preacher suggested that our seminary years should be viewed not as chronos, time spent working on a degree, but as kairos, a period of years when God could form us in a deep way for the rest of our ministry. So it proved to be.

We are blessed with kairos moments throughout our lives which, if we pay attention, can provide depth and meaning to the rest of our days. I draw strength and joy remembering my commitment to Christ as my Savior, my ordination, my wedding day, the births of my children and particular pastoral moments.

In April, I became a grandfather for the first time. A few days after Walker was born, I happened to be the only grandparent in the house. His mother and father were busy with things, and I got to hold him for an hour while he slept. I watched him breathe and pucker his lips occasionally. It was highly entertaining! It was kairos time.

As I experienced that moment of grace, I found myself reflecting on my sleeping grandson. What kind of world had we (his parents mostly) brought him into? What kind of world will he know by the time he is an adult?

Then I thought, *What kind of relationship with the church will he*

*have? Will the United Methodist Church be a viable option for his experience of faith?*

I don't know the answers to those questions. But I know that if the Church in general and the United Methodist Church in particular is going to be relevant to my grandson's generation, we have to take decisive steps now to prepare the way. This is our kairos moment.

I have been working with the Imagine Ministry process for nearly two years. Our proposals are coming before the Annual Conference in June. It is not a perfect or complete plan, because there is much to work out and much we do not know about the future. But it is decisive, and it is a step in the right direction.

The image we have used of late has been a flashlight illuminating the path ahead of us. We know where we want to go: "Congregations and surrounding communities transformed by the Holy Spirit to demonstrate holy living, justice, and love of neighbor."

We cannot see every step between here and there. But the light illumines the next steps on the path.

It is also like trying to swim across a river. We can see the bank on the other side. We can envision the future. Before us is the rushing torrent.

The water is icy, and the current is strong. But we will never reach the other side if we don't jump in.

It's not safe, but it's the only way across. Discussing things further will not get us any closer. And once we hit the water, we will have to constantly

adjust our trajectory, swimming against the tug of the current, if we want to make our destination and not get swept away.

In memory of the saints who sacrificed to give us our spiritual heritage, in love for a world that is lost and broken without the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in hope for our grandchildren's faith, we must jump in.

This is our kairos moment.

*The Rev. Dr. Reeves serves as pastor of First UMC Hot Springs. He can be reached at [brobud@fumchs.com](mailto:brobud@fumchs.com).*



**Bud Reeves**

**'I found myself**

**reflecting on my**

**sleeping grandson....**

**What kind of world**

**will he know by the**

**time he is an adult?'**

## EDITOR'S CORNER

BY AMY FORBUS

# Thoughts on conferences past, present and future

I'm pretty sure I was 10 years old the first time I participated in an Annual Conference. I served as one of the acolytes for the ordination service of the Little Rock Annual Conference, held in my home church, First UMC Hot Springs.

I remember it was on short notice; someone else must have had an unexpected schedule conflict. My willingness to wear a white alb and carry a taper down the aisle got me a front-row seat, squeezed onto the end of the ordinands' pew.

Some kids would've considered it an incredibly boring or even torturous experience, but I thought it was pretty cool. I suppose that perception may have foreshadowed my years working in jobs that put me in the category of "professional church nerd"—a title not everyone would welcome, but an accurate one for me.

Another 15 years or so went by before I participated in an Annual Conference again, but this time it turned into an eight-year run. As a member of a church in Denton County, I attended the North Texas Conference as an at-large representative from the Dallas-Denton District.

My involvement in Annual Conference led to several years of serving on the district committee on ministry, and to my participation on the Conference strategic planning team, which faced a task similar to the Imagine Ministry process we're seeing here in Arkansas.

It also led to my election as a lay delegate to the 2004 Jurisdictional Conference and the 2008 General and Jurisdictional Conferences. I gained a clearer picture of the United Methodist connectional system as I saw more of it at work first-hand. It's a human structure, but there is room for the Holy Spirit to work if we allow it.

Four years have passed since the last delegations were chosen, and it's once again time for every Annual Conference and Central Conference in the United Methodist connection to elect delegates to the 2012

General Conference.

The delegate profile booklet, available for download at [arumc.org/ac2011](http://arumc.org/ac2011), contains all the information submitted by those laity and clergy who have indicated a willingness to be considered for election to the Arkansas delegation. If you'll be a voting member of Annual Conference this year, be sure to read through each person's profile, taking time to reflect and pray.

And if you aren't a voting member of Annual Conference, I'm sure the delegates would appreciate your prayers, too. Preparing for and carrying out the work expected of delegates can prove challenging. I received in 2007 and 2008 a stack of notes, many from people I did not know, telling me they were holding me in prayer before and during General Conference. Their prayers made a difference.

It might sound exciting to attend General Conference, and it really is. The experience of gathering with United Methodists from around the world is truly amazing. It's worth going for the singing alone!

But it can be incredibly draining, too. At the 2008 General Conference, I found myself getting by with half the amount of rest I would have preferred. Many delegates began to view five hours of uninterrupted sleep as a luxury.



Remember that your support of the delegates doesn't end when the voting concludes. They will need your prayers throughout the coming year, and a measure of grace when they return, exhausted, from Tampa.

Unlike the 11-day marathon of General Conference, our Annual Conference takes up about three days, though it's spread across four. Most of us won't have to deal with sleep deprivation. We will find time to catch up with old friends and get acquainted with new ones. We will break bread together, at restaurants and at banquet tables and at Holy Communion.

We will discuss mission efforts, finances, proposals coming from various committees and the Imagine Ministry team. We will celebrate ministry done well. We will greet newly ordained clergy. We will examine numbers, those growing and those declining, and the kind that represent people as well as budgets.

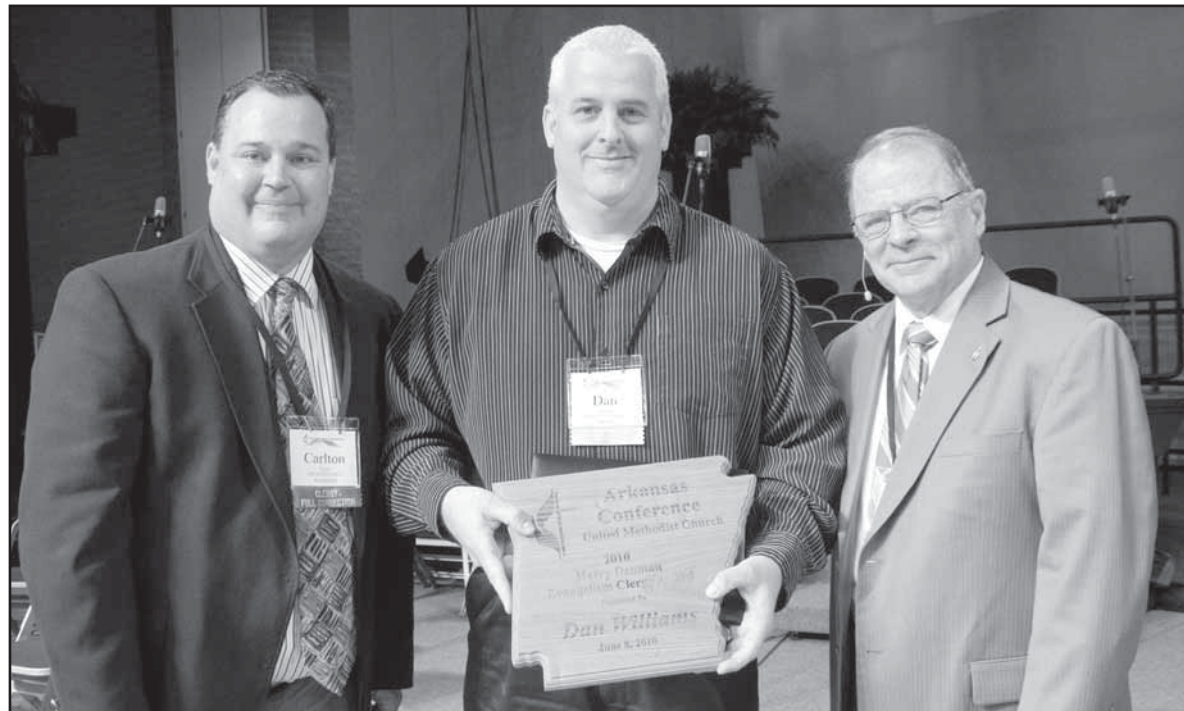
In all these actions, may we conduct ourselves in a manner consistent with the grace and forbearance of "holy conferencing."

*To contact me, send an e-mail to [aforbus@arumc.org](mailto:aforbus@arumc.org), or write me at 800 Daisy Bates Drive, Little Rock, AR 72202.*

 <p>Volume 158 • No. 3 May 20, 2011 Martha S. Taylor • Director of Communications Amy Forbus • Editor Patrick W. Shownes • Communications Coordinator <a href="http://www.arumc.org">www.arumc.org</a></p> <p>The <i>Arkansas United Methodist</i> is the newspaper of record for the Arkansas Conference of The United Methodist Church. It is published once monthly, on the first Fridays of each month, and four special issues during the year for a total of 16 issues per year.</p> <p><b>Send correspondence &amp; subscription updates to:</b> Arkansas United Methodist, 800 Daisy Bates Drive, Little Rock, AR 72202; or e-mail to <a href="mailto:Patrick.Shownes@arumc.org">Patrick.Shownes@arumc.org</a>.</p> <p><b>POSTMASTER:</b> Send address changes to: The United Methodist Reporter, PO Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275.</p> <p>The <i>United Methodist Reporter</i> (USPS 954-500) is published weekly by UMR Communications, 1221 Profit Drive, Dallas, TX 75247. Periodicals Postage Paid at Dallas.</p>									
 <p>Arkansas Conference Communications 800 Daisy Bates Drive Little Rock, AR 72202-3770 <a href="http://www.arumc.org">www.arumc.org</a> 501-324-8000</p> <p><b>Subscriptions</b> - \$15.00, 1 Year - \$25.00, 2 Years - Free, Online For more information, visit <a href="http://www.arumc.org/aum">www.arumc.org/aum</a> or call 501-324-8006.</p> <p><b>Advertising</b> is welcomed. For a rate sheet or more information, contact Martha Taylor at 501-324-8005 or <a href="mailto:mtaylor@arumc.org">mtaylor@arumc.org</a>. While all advertising is reviewed before acceptance, it should not be considered endorsed by this newspaper or the Church.</p>	<p><b>Submission Deadlines</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Issue Date</th><th>Submission Deadline</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>July 1</td><td>June 16</td></tr> <tr> <td>Aug. 5</td><td>July 18</td></tr> <tr> <td>Sept. 2</td><td>Aug. 18</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Issue Date	Submission Deadline	July 1	June 16	Aug. 5	July 18	Sept. 2	Aug. 18
Issue Date	Submission Deadline								
July 1	June 16								
Aug. 5	July 18								
Sept. 2	Aug. 18								



# New luncheon set to honor award-winning churches, individuals



Dan Williams, center, senior pastor of Midland Heights United Methodist Church, receives a 2010 Harry Denman Evangelism Award from 2009 recipient Carlton Cross, left, and Bishop Charles Crutchfield. The 2011 awards will be presented at a special Celebration of Ministry Awards luncheon on June 7.

AUM FILE PHOTO

A quick look at the Pre-Conference Journal posted online will tell any observer that Annual Conference is filled with all kinds of activities.

And every four years, the agenda gets more harried, with balloting for delegations to General and Jurisdictional Conferences worked into the business sessions. This is one of those years.

But even amid a jam-packed schedule, our most fruitful ministry efforts need to be recognized. By honoring and affirming individuals and ministries that have helped build the Kingdom, we encourage those ministries to flourish while inspiring others to reach out in new ways.

Without adequate time to recognize the honorees, though, we risk glossing over these awards and we all miss out on the potential for inspiration.

So this year, organizers of Annual Conference are introducing a special way to highlight the achievements of award recipients. The new Celebration of Ministry Awards Luncheon will provide a dedicated time to honor individuals and congregations receiving special recognition from the Conference and various organizations within it.

Held at 12:10 p.m. on Tuesday, June 7, the luncheon will honor recipients of Church of the Year, the Denman Evangelism Award and more.

"We're hoping this becomes an event which shines the spotlight on these faithful ministries and brings a focus to the rich diversity of our church," says the Rev. Phil Hathcock, director of Conference ministries and assistant to the Bishop.

Presentations during the 2011 Celebration of Ministry Awards luncheon will include:

- The Denman Evangelism Award
- Church with the most professions of faith
- Church with the largest growth in worship

attendance

- Church with the most baptisms
- Churches paying 100 percent of apportionment support
- Recognition of confirmation classes
- Recognition of new churches
- New eChristianEd certifications
- New church secretary certifications
- The Widow's Mite Award
- District Churches of the Year
- Conference Church of the Year
- Recognition of the Committee on the Status and Role of Women
- Scholarships from the Committee of Higher Education and Ministry
- Recognition of the Lina McCord Scholar
- The Jay Lawhon Volunteer in Mission Award
- The Micah Mission Award
- Peace with Justice Grant recipients
- The Jim Beal Barnabas Award
- The Interfaith Award
- Hendrix Youth Award
- Recognition of new Certified Lay Speakers
- The Holy Healthy Church Award

Tickets for the luncheon must be purchased by May 27 to guarantee adequate seating and meals. They are available for purchase as part of online registration for Annual Conference.

To purchase luncheon tickets without registering for Annual Conference, visit [arumc.org/ac2011](http://arumc.org/ac2011) and click "Online Registration." On pages 1 and 3, fill in the required fields marked with an asterisk; on page 4, check the box next to the luncheon and indicate the number of tickets; on page 6, select "Visitor" and complete the payment process.

## Help for churches, clergy during 'moving season'

Free May 26 webinar geared toward churches receiving a new pastor

According to denominational data, 22 percent of United Methodist congregations received a new pastor in the 2008-2009 appointment year. Here in Arkansas, more than 100 churches and pastors will face a transition following the 2011 Annual Conference.

How does a church navigate this kind of change? While the specific answers may vary from congregation to congregation, the need to address the issue remains a constant.

"Good-by and Hello: When the Pastor Changes," a free webinar offered by the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church, can provide some guidance for staff-parish relations committees and church council members. The course will identify issues common to all congregations, and include suggestions for building a good future together with a new pastor.

"Good-by and Hello" will convene on Thursday, May 26, at 6:30 p.m. Central time. Space is limited, so register in advance at [gbod.org/committee\\_resources](http://gbod.org/committee_resources).

The cost to provide this webinar is covered by gifts to World Service Ministries.

### Good-by and Hello: When the Pastor Changes

Thursday, May 26, 2011  
6:30 to 7:30 p.m. CDT

Register now at [gbod.org/committee\\_resources](http://gbod.org/committee_resources) to save your space in the webinar. (Look in the right-hand column labeled "Webinar Training Calendar.")

## Children's sermon ideas for pastors in transition at 'Little People, Big Word'

The Rev. Danyelle Ditmer this summer will move from Arkansas to the Indiana Conference. In preparation, she has written outlines for children's sermons addressing the topics of saying farewell to a pastor who is moving and greeting a new one.

Ditmer has posted these free guides on a page of the blog where she shares lectionary-based children's sermons, [littlepeoplebigword.com](http://littlepeoplebigword.com). To view the sermon suggestions for a pastor's last Sunday at one church and first Sunday at another, visit [littlepeoplebigword.com/special-resources](http://littlepeoplebigword.com/special-resources).

## Deadline extended for Vol of the Year nominations

Nominations for the 2011 Jay Lawhon Volunteers in Mission award may be submitted until June 1, an extension past the May 20 deadline.

The award honors individuals who have engaged in exceptional service to their communities and the world. It is named for Jay Lawhon (1919-2003), an Arkansan and United Methodist who established the World Christian Relief Fund, a non-denominational charity.

The award will be presented at this year's Celebration of Ministry Awards Luncheon, scheduled for noon on Tuesday, June 7, in Ballroom D of the Hot Springs Convention Center.

Download the nomination form at [arumc.org/ac2011](http://arumc.org/ac2011), and submit it to Don Weeks at [dweeks@arumc.org](mailto:dweeks@arumc.org) or send to Weeks' attention at the Arkansas Conference office, 800 Daisy Bates Drive, Little Rock, AR 72202.



# Make a difference—locally and globally



The band from FaithSpring UMC in Little Rock plays May 1 at Methodist Family Health's Get Up and Give celebration. FaithSpring launched in the fall of 2009 and currently has an average weekly worship attendance of 225 people.

PHOTO BY ALYSSA ANDERSON

## 'Catch the Vision' offering goes toward starting new churches in Arkansas

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

—Matthew 28:19-20 (NRSV)

One of the special offerings at Annual Conference goes directly toward following this commandment from Christ. Funds received through the Catch the Vision offering go exclusively toward starting new United Methodist congregations in Arkansas.

In the past five years, United Methodists have started 19 new churches across the state. These new faith communities are yielding great benefits for the Kingdom—more than 500 professions of faith, 350 baptisms and 40 reaffirmations of faith.

The Arkansas Conference has identified additional sites for more potential new church starts. A gift to the Catch the Vision special offering will provide the resources needed to move forward in reaching the more than half a million Arkansans who have no involvement in a community of faith.

Together, and with God's help, we can make a difference in the lives of our neighbors by creating new places for people to learn about finding new life in Christ.

*Be a part of new churches making new disciples.*

If you cannot give in person at Annual Conference, you still may participate in the Catch the Vision offering:

- Go to [arumc.org](http://arumc.org) and click "Donate Now" in the Quick Links column on the right-hand side of the page.
- Click the "Catch the Vision" button and follow the instructions for giving via PayPal.



Public health workers and community volunteers train to distribute mosquito nets in Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

UMNS PHOTO BY MIKE DUBOSE

Every 45 seconds, a child in Africa dies of malaria. Millions of lives, needlessly lost each year. A continent. Entire nations...slipping away. Slipping through life's precious net. Unless you hear the buzzing inside you. The bite of malaria doesn't have to kill. But only if you stop it.

Imagine No Malaria is more than just a campaign against a disease that kills children and destroys families. It's a movement, to make real change in the world. Join us as we work with families in Africa to end millions of needless deaths from this disease.

—ImagineNoMalaria.org

**I**magine No Malaria is a ministry of the people of the United Methodist Church. Its goal: to eliminate death and suffering from malaria in Africa by 2015. Statistics show that the organization's work makes a difference: Within the past year, the death rate for children in Africa dropped from one death every 30 seconds to one every 45 seconds.

But that's still too many children dying.

Building on the success of the popular Nothing But Nets campaign, Imagine No Malaria takes the effort to the next level. (Imagine No Malaria team members describe the organization as "Nets Plus.")

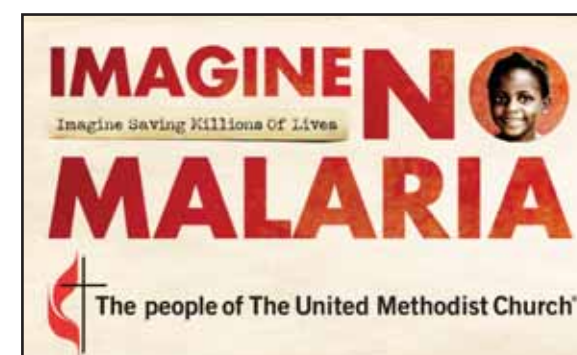
The four aspects of the comprehensive effort, as listed on [imagineenomalaria.org](http://imagineenomalaria.org):

**Prevention:** It's about improving the ways people fight the disease locally. Using bed nets. Access to diagnostic tests and medicine. Draining standing water. Improving sanitation. Every person can take steps to prevent malaria deaths, from protective measures to taking swift action when malaria symptoms begin.

**Treatment:** Improving infrastructure. There are literally hundreds of churches, schools, hospitals and clinics operated by the United Methodist Church in Africa, but what good are they if medicines to treat malaria aren't available? We'll make sure these facilities have the diagnostic tests and treatment needed to save lives.

**Education:** It's about outreach to those who need it most. Last year alone, we trained thousands of local people in African communities to teach their communities about avoiding malaria. In Sierra Leone, these workers went door-to-door to deliver bed nets, install them in homes and teach people how to properly use and care for the nets.

**Communications:** And finally, financial support helps upgrade communications networks throughout the continent. Building new radio stations and providing hand-crank and solar-powered radios will ensure great numbers of people are reached with life-saving information about malaria.



*Help wipe out a killer.*

One of the special offerings during Annual Conference will benefit Imagine No Malaria. But even if you don't make it to Annual Conference, you still can give. Here's how:

- **Online:** Visit [imagineenomalaria.org/donate](http://imagineenomalaria.org/donate) to make a gift via credit card or by automatic deduction from your checking account. You have the option of listing your local church so that the church and the Arkansas Conference will get Advance credit.
- **On your phone:** Text MALARIA to 27722 and a \$10 donation to Imagine No Malaria will be added to your next cell phone bill.
- **In the mail:** Make your check payable to Advance GCFA, and write "Imagine No Malaria #3021190" in the memo line. Mail the check to Advance GCFA, P.O. Box 9068, GPO New York, NY 10087-9068.
- **In the offering plate:** Make your check payable to your local United Methodist church. Write "Imagine No Malaria #3021190" on the check. Drop your gift in the church offering plate or give it to your church treasurer.



# Conference's special offerings help ministries in Arkansas, worldwide



LEFT: United Methodist missionary Gaston Ntambo is the pilot for Wings of the Morning, a ministry providing free transportation for medical emergencies.  
UMNS PHOTO BY CAREY MOOTS

## Wings of the Morning offers hope to Congo's sick

Tucked into a corner of the Lubumbashi International Airport, among the decaying relics of military planes and abandoned freighters, is the United Methodist Church's hangar.

On a Sunday afternoon, one of the tiny planes in the hangar has a pair of human legs protruding from its side. Gaston Ntambo has folded his tall frame under the control panel and, with a flashlight in his mouth, is installing a long-awaited repaired part.

A United Methodist missionary, Ntambo is the pilot for Wings of the Morning, an aviation ministry supported by the church. Founded in 1960, the ministry is often the one hope the sick, wounded and dying in remote areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo have for reaching lifesaving medical treatment.

Ntambo lands on short, remote airstrips that are little more than grassy trails between trees. No lights. No control tower. He often must make a pass over the landing strip to clear it of animals and people from nearby villages.

But that's OK. He is used to

putting his life in God's hands.

For the last 14 years, he has flown accident-free while war raged in his home country. The violence has left close to 4 million people dead from starvation or disease in the remote areas where Ntambo regularly goes.

"God has really been on our side," says the modest, soft-spoken man.

"Most of the time the region that I fly is about the size of Texas with a population of over 6 million people and no roads. Very difficult to move from point A to point B—it's almost impossible," he says.

The danger and hardships through which he travels are all worth that one moment when he knows he got someone to a doctor in time.

"The best part of my life is when I'm coming down with a patient and I'm close to landing to where I know they'll get help and they're still alive. That in itself is priceless."

Wings of the Morning at one point had four pilots. The ongoing war forced the other pilots, one by one, to flee the country. Ntambo was left with two small planes that

require expensive aviation gasoline.

"But God is the richest person I know; my faith tells me something big is about to happen."

The ministry needs a Turboprop Cessna, a larger plane that uses jet fuel readily available in the Congo. A larger plane would mean he could carry medicine, more patients and, eventually, doctors to the people who need them.

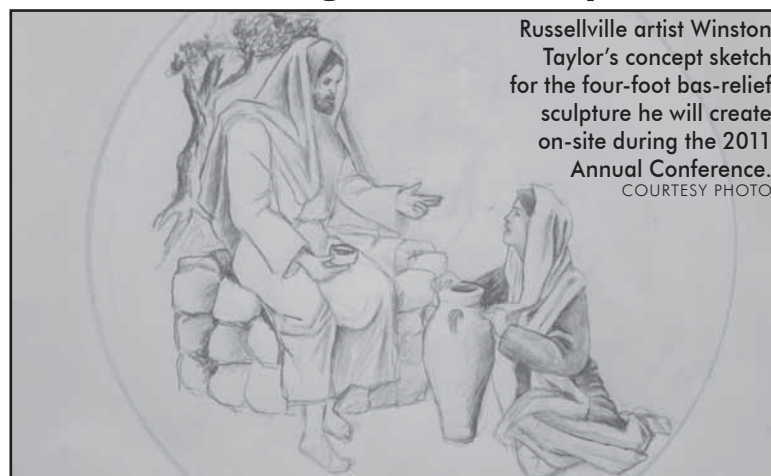
Ntambo says Wings of the Morning may be the only free program in the world that takes people out of the bush and brings them to the city. It costs about \$1,000 to make the roundtrip.

"I believe when you fly someone for free you don't have to tell them how much it costs; they just know it," he says. "When you land in the city, they go home with a message that only Christ can do that for them.

"Whether they believe or not, we leave it up to them. At the end of the day, we have so many people who have become United Methodists."

—Excerpts from a United Methodist News Service story by Kathy L. Gilbert

## Sculptor at work during Conference to benefit Congo Wells Project



Russellville artist Winston Taylor's concept sketch for the four-foot bas-relief sculpture he will create on-site during the 2011 Annual Conference.  
COURTESY PHOTO

The display area at Annual Conference this year will include something different: an artist at work.

Winston Taylor, a nationally-known ceramic artist and potter who is a member of First United Methodist Church of Russellville, will be on site creating *Woman at the Well*, a four-foot bas-relief clay sculpture.

The silent auction of the piece, which began online May 16 at [arumc.org/AC2011](http://arumc.org/AC2011), will benefit the Congo Wells Project of the Arkansas Conference, providing clean water to villages in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The winner will be announced June 8 at Annual Conference.

*Woman at the Well* will be fashioned in the same style as *Christ Teaching*, an eight-foot sculpture he donated to First UMC Russellville in 2006.

"That was a rewarding experience in many ways," he says of creating a work of art for the church where he has been a member for 21 years. After finishing *Christ Teaching*, he began to look for another opportunity to sculpt for a church.

The artist says the idea for the benefit auction was born last year at Annual Conference, through a conversation with Conference communications director Martha Taylor (no relation). Winston shared his wish to create another sculpture for a church and his long-time interest in the story of the woman at the well from John 4:1-26.

As it happened, the two were standing near the display table for the Congo Wells Project, and Martha introduced him to the mission. His attraction to the story of the woman at the well and the need for wells in the Congo together sparked the idea for creating a work of art to raise money for the cause.



Create voice that resonates in the home, school and community. All of your church communications should have a consistent look and feel, so that people come to know who you are, and what you are about. Regularly scheduled communication boosts participation and connects your church directly with children, youth and families in your area. Let the creative team at UMR Communications help you

**CONNECT. effectively.**

Contact Cherrie Graham 800-947-0207 x142 | [cgraham@umr.org](mailto:cgraham@umr.org)

## Give life-saving transportation.

Wings of the Morning will benefit from a special offering during the Arkansas Annual Conference. But even if you don't make it to Annual Conference, you still can give. Here's how:

- **Online:** Visit [advancinghope.org](http://advancinghope.org) to make a gift via credit card or by automatic deduction from your checking account. Search for "08597A." You have the option of listing your local church so that the church and the Arkansas Conference will get Advance credit.
- **In the mail:** Make your check payable to Advance GCFA, and write "Wings of the Morning #08597A" in the memo line. Mail the check to Advance GCFA, P.O. Box 9068, GPO New York, NY 10087-9068.
- **In the offering plate:** Make your check payable to your local United Methodist church. Write "Wings of the Morning #08597A" on the check. Drop your gift in the church offering plate or give it to your church treasurer.

# Decisions dominate Conference agenda (continued from page 1A)

Under this new structure, Circuit Elders and Congregational Coaches would step in at the district level, assisting congregations seeking to understand the context of their respective mission fields. Some detractors have interpreted these new roles as constraining to their ministries; Ledbetter says the IM team actually expects the circuit elders and coaches to provide support for churches to grow their ministries.

“The vision of IM is to equip laity and clergy for new ministries a

congregation chooses to pursue, hence the Center for Technology and the networks of personal and social holiness,” she wrote. “The IM proposals in no way seek to ‘shut down’ any ministries a local church already finds valuable to their meeting their ministry goals.”

In the same online conversation, the Rev. Bud Reeves, also an IM team member, highlighted the hope that the new district structure will encourage more sharing among United Methodist congregations.

“The other side of that is that churches that are doing well and exploring innovative ministries can be a resource and inspiration for other congregations,” Reeves wrote. “It can be a two-way street, a win-win situation.... We’re all in this together.”

In a May 5 post in the online discussion, the Rev. Beth Purdue stated that she had not yet made up her mind about the IM proposals. “But no matter what is decided at Annual Conference,” she wrote, “it’s like I tell the people I counsel so often: ‘Few decisions in life are permanent.’ Like everything else we do, we, I hope, will take what works and move forward with it, and leave behind what doesn’t.”

## Balloting

Another voting process will command significant attention on the floor of the Conference: election of the Arkansas delegations to the 2012 General and Jurisdictional Conferences.

Each delegation will consist of six clergy and six laity. In addition, clergy and laity each will elect three reserve delegates to Jurisdictional Conference. The Jurisdictional Conference delegation members serve as reserves to General Conference. Clergy are elected by clergy, and laity by laity.

There has been one significant change in the election process since 2007, when the last delegations were elected for these quadrennial meetings. A Feb. 14 ruling of the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church clarified changes passed in 2008 that expanded which clergy may vote in delegation elections:

- “Full clergy members.
- “Associate members.
- “Provisional members who have been judged by the annual conference to have completed the educational requirements and have been elected to provisional

membership.

“Local pastors who have met two criteria: they have, by either of two options as determined by the annual conference, completed the constitutionally specified level of education; and they have been appointed by the bishop and served for two consecutive years, during which time no withdrawal of the appointed status has occurred.”

To clarify the ruling as it applies to Arkansas clergy, the Delegate Profile Booklet posted at [arumc.org/ac2011](http://arumc.org/ac2011) contains the list of clergy who may vote in Arkansas delegation balloting, as well as the separate list of those clergy eligible for election.

Delegates to General Conference will spend April 24 through May 4, 2012, in Tampa, Fla., reviewing and voting on legislation and petitions submitted by individuals, groups, churches, Conferences and denominational boards and agencies. Only General Conference has the authority to speak on behalf of the denomination.

The South Central Jurisdictional Conference is scheduled for July 18-21, 2012, in Oklahoma City, Okla. The primary responsibility of the Jurisdictional Conference is to elect bishops to replace those who will retire on August 31, 2012. The five U.S. Jurisdictions hold their Conferences concurrently.

In 2012, the South Central Jurisdictional Conference will elect three new bishops to replace four retiring bishops—including Arkansas Area Bishop Charles Crutchfield. The upcoming consolidation of the Kansas and Nebraska episcopal areas negates the need for a fourth new bishop.

## Special guests

Annual Conference worship will feature Bishop Hope Morgan Ward as guest preacher for the Sunday and Monday night services.

Before her election and appointment to the Mississippi Area, Bishop Ward served as superintendent of the Raleigh District in the North Carolina Annual Conference. She previously served as North Carolina Conference director of Connectional Ministries and as a local church pastor.

The Sunday night Service of Commemoration and Holy Communion will be held in Horner Hall, on the Austin Hotel end of the Hot Springs Convention Center. The service honors the memory of clergy and clergy spouses who have died within the past twelve months.

Monday night’s worship service, also held in the worship space set up in Horner Hall, will center on



**Bishop Hope Morgan Ward**

baptismal renewal. The service will include multi-sensory experiences for reflection and celebration of Christian calling as worshippers remember their baptisms.

Tuesday night’s celebration of ordination and commissioning will take place in Summit Arena. Bishop Charles Crutchfield will preach.

All three evening worship services begin at 7:30 p.m.

Another guest will be present during part of Annual Conference to provide information on a ministry benefiting from one of our special offerings.

The Rev. Clayton Childers, assistant general secretary for leadership formation at the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society in Washington, D.C., will speak at the Board of Church and Society Breakfast at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, June 7.

Childers will speak on how United Methodists are coming together through the Imagine No Malaria movement (see page 4A for details on this ministry). The breakfast will be held at Grand Avenue United Methodist Church.

## Motions for the consideration of the 2011 Session of the Annual Conference from the Imagine Ministry Team

### Motion One:

The Arkansas Annual Conference adopts the Vision and Mission Statements and the four Core Measurements as presented by the Imagine Ministry Team. (See pages 14-15 of the Imagine Ministry Report to the Annual Conference.)

### Motion Two:

The Arkansas Annual Conference, by the Annual Conference session of 2012, is redistricted into five districts, being served by five District Superintendents.

(Pursuant to the instructions of ¶415.4 of the 2008 *Book of Discipline*)

### Motion Three:

The Arkansas Annual Conference, by the Annual Conference session of 2012, will simplify its organizational structure following the mandates of the Book of Discipline and the missional direction of the Vision and Mission Statements and the four Core Measures.

### Motion Four:

A team will be appointed by the Arkansas Conference Bishop to arrange for the orderly transition to the new conference and district organization, which will provide a budget proposal for conference staffing. This budget will take effect January 1, 2012, and will not exceed the amount budgeted for conference staffing for 2011.

To read the rationale for each motion, see pages 17 and 18 of the Imagine Ministry Report to the Annual Conference, available online at [arumc.org/ac2011](http://arumc.org/ac2011).

Pastorasperson.com

Supporting  
Today’s Pastors

Check Us Out Online  
or Visit Our Booth at Conference

## Overworked? Overwhelmed?

**The Laurence Schmidt Center** can help ...

1501 N. University Ave., #570  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72207 - [www.veralloyd.org](http://www.veralloyd.org)

Rev. Rebecca Spooner LPC  
501-664-7777



## Sacred space

In addition to the dedicated times for sharing worship in community, the Sacred Space room will once again be set aside for times of personal prayer, reflection and meditation.

Sacred Space will be open Sunday, June 5 from 6 to 10 p.m.; Monday, June 6 and Tuesday, June 7 from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.; and Wednesday, June 8 from 8 to 10 a.m.



# Bring food, phones for mission collections

In addition to the monetary special offerings listed on pages 4A and 5A of this issue, Annual Conference participants have the opportunity to participate in two special collections: canned food and cell phones.

The canned food drive benefits two local mission efforts supported by Hot Springs area churches: Jackson House, a non-profit that helps its clients with food, bills and provides lunches for those in need; and the The Methodist Store, a clothing resale and food pantry ministry supported by Grand Avenue UMC.

The other collection will reach around the world to tens of thousands of military personnel deployed overseas. Cell Phones for Soldiers has a goal of providing troops with 750,000 communication tools in 2011.

Keeping in touch with loved ones meets an emotional need for soldiers, but can create a financial need at the same time. For example, a phone call from Afghanistan may cost more than \$3.99 a minute.

Cell Phones for Soldiers ([cellphonesforsoldiers.com](http://cellphonesforsoldiers.com)) accepts monetary donations and gently-used cell phones to help provide regular contact between deployed soldiers and their families.

Look for the Cell Phones for Soldiers collection box at the Professional Association United Methodist Church Secretaries (PAUMCS) display table.



Do you have an old cell phone sitting in a drawer at home? Bring it to Annual Conference and donate it to a good cause. Cell Phones for Soldiers will turn your used cell phone into an opportunity for someone deployed overseas to speak with his or her loved ones.

STOCK XCHANGE PHOTO BY MICHAEL MARD AHL

## Youth continue coordinating recycling efforts at Conference

A few years ago, one of the youth attending Annual Conference noticed that much of the paper distributed at the event wound up in the convention center's trash cans.

According to Rod Hocott, Conference minister of youth and young adults, the youth simply discussed the absence of recycling options and decided not to stick with

the status quo when it came to what landed in the trash. "Thus, paper recycling at Annual Conference was born," he said.

The youth have continued to spearhead the effort in subsequent years.

Bins for recycling paper will once again have a place at Annual Conference—ten places, to be exact. Look for cardboard bins, six of them on the floor of Summit Arena, and four in Horner Hall, the worship area set aside for the Sunday and Monday night services.

Arkansas Waste Management provides the bins free of charge, and the youth delegates will monitor the bins' contents and empty the bins as needed.

Conference attendees may recycle any paper they receive and do not wish to keep, including newsprint, office paper, brochures and more. Please avoid throwing plastic foam in the bins—some things really do belong in the trash cans.

Plastic water bottles and soft-drink bottles will be collected for recycling, as well. To participate in that effort, simply leave your disposable bottle at your seat at the end of each day.

The youth encourage Conference attendees to consider an alternative, though: Reduce the need to recycle water bottles by bringing a reusable bottle to Annual Conference.

### ARTANDICON

Original artwork by Reverend Cornelia DeLee

**30% off any one item for Annual Conference members**

Portion of proceeds donated to Grass Root Ministries of Miami Valley, Inc., a ministry partner of the United Methodist Angel House, an orphanage in Tanzania (Advance # 3020452) and First United Methodist of Hot Springs outreach programs.

## Presenting at Annual Conference? Mind your deadline!

A committee chair steps forward to present a report at Annual Conference. Related images, data, video and more appear on the projection screens, helping the speaker tell the story of ministry.

How does it happen? Successful presentation visuals require a lot of advance coordination and planning.

Anyone giving a report at the 2011 Annual Conference who intends to use PowerPoint slides or material from a DVD or CD must give all files to Conference communications coordinator Patrick Shownes by Wednesday, June 1.

**No materials will be accepted after the June 1 deadline.** Setting up multimedia support for an event the size of our Annual Conference is a monumental task. After June 1, the Conference communications team will be focused on that setup process, working with the materials that have been submitted.

If you have questions about submitting your materials, contact Shownes at 501-324-8006 or [pshownes@arumc.org](mailto:pshownes@arumc.org).

If your presentation materials cannot be e-mailed, send to Shownes' attention at Arkansas Conference UMC, 800 Daisy Bates Drive, Little Rock, AR 72202-3770, in time for them to arrive by June 1.

114 years ago an industry was born.

The idea was simple:  
Insure churches against fire.



Today, Church Mutual provides property and liability insurance to twice as many churches as any other company in America.

[www.churchmutual.com](http://www.churchmutual.com)  
Church Mutual Insurance Company  
3000 Schuster Lane, Merrill, Wisconsin

Where will *you* go?

Women and men from more than 20 different denominations are choosing **Phillips Theological Seminary** for their theological education.

PTS emphasizes denominational formation in an ecumenical context.



Contact Linda Ford 918-270-6463  
901 N Mingo Rd, Tulsa, OK 74116  
[www.ptstulsa.edu](http://www.ptstulsa.edu)

**Recycle  
Reuse  
Replenish**



Be sure to recycle your copy of the *Arkansas United Methodist* when you're through reading it (or share it with a friend).

**Evangelist Wayne Bell is now scheduling revival services for 2011-2012.**

[www.WayneBellEvangelisticAssociationInc.com](http://www.WayneBellEvangelisticAssociationInc.com)

# Holy Healthy 5K promotes wellness among AC participants

For the fourth consecutive year, the Arkansas Conference Holy Healthy Task Force is sponsoring a 5K Walk/Run in conjunction with Annual Conference.

The five-kilometer (2.3-mile) course begins and ends at the entrance to Summit Arena, Hot

Springs Convention Center.

At press time, 72 participants had registered for this year's event, which is set for 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday, June 7. The first annual walk/run included more than 200 participants, but there's still time to surpass that number in 2011.

Participants who do not register online may sign up at the Holy Healthy UMC registration table June 5 or 6.

Those still wishing to register online may do so by visiting the Online Registration link at [arumc.org/ac2011](http://arumc.org/ac2011). To register only for the

walk/run and not for all of Annual Conference, fill in only the required fields of the form, check the applicable box for the walk/run on page 5, then proceed to checkout.

The \$10 registration fee includes a t-shirt to wear during the event.

Why has getting up and moving around become an emphasis of Annual Conference?

Some answers appear at [holyhealthyumc.com](http://holyhealthyumc.com), including the following facts:

- According to a 2003 Pulpit and Pew survey, over 76% of Protestant ministers are either overweight or obese (compared to 61% of the general population)? Or that 40% of pastors indicate that they are at times depressed, or worn out "some or most of the time?" The reasons for this trend are debatable. The results, however, are frighteningly clear.
- Two major studies found that Protestant clergy had the highest overall work-related

stress of religious professionals, and (even more frighteningly), the highest death rates from heart disease of any occupation. Can this be God's will for his servants?

More recent studies show the extent of the negative effects the human body experiences from sitting for extended periods of time. Researchers now recommend that people with desk jobs stand up and move around a minimum of once per hour—wise counsel for Annual Conference attendees, as well.

According to a recent University of South Carolina study of adult men, those who reported more than 23 hours a week of sedentary activity had a 64 percent greater risk of dying from heart disease than those who reported less than 11 hours a week of sedentary activity. And the risk still applied to those who made workouts a part of their routine, indicating that a once-a-day burst of exercise cannot offset the effects of remaining seated for hours on end.

## The Confessing Movement of Arkansas

Invites you to BREAKFAST during Annual Conference

**Monday, June 7, 2010 at 6:45 A.M.**

Union Baptist Church, 219 Gulpha St.  
(behind convention center & rear parking lot)

**Reverend Dr. Chris Bounds**  
**Guest Speaker**

*"Theological Reflections on Unity, 'Amicable Separation,' and Redemptive Discipline in The United Methodist Church"*

Chris Bounds is Professor of Theology at Indiana Wesleyan University, where he has taught since 2002. Before coming to Indiana Wesleyan, he served for eight years as an ordained Elder in The Arkansas Conference of The United Methodist Church.

He earned a B. A. degree in Bible and Greek from Asbury University, an M. Div. degree with an emphasis in doctrinal studies from Asbury Theological Seminary, and an M. Phil. and Ph. D. degrees in Theological and Religious Studies from Drew University with a focus in systematic theology.

Chris has published articles in popular and scholarly venues including *The Asbury Theological Journal*, *Catalyst: Contemporary Evangelical Perspectives for United Methodist Seminarians East-West Church and Ministry Report*, *Expository Times*, *Good News Magazine*, *Religious Studies Review*, *Studia Patristica*, *The Wesleyan Theological Journal*, and *Wesley and Methodist Studies*. He has also contributed chapters or articles to popular and academic books.

He presently serves on the Board of Trustees at Asbury University, the Board of Directors for Good News: A Forum for Scriptural Christianity, the Board of Trustees for One Mission Society (OMS International) and as a fellow for Third Millennium Faith.

Chris regularly preaches and lectures on university and college campuses, as well as speaks at local church and denominational forums in The United States and in other countries. As a pastor and theologian, he has a passionate commitment to theological and spiritual renewal in the Church. He and his wife Tamara have been married for 16 years and have two children, a daughter – Maris and a son – Morgan.



ABOVE: United Methodists participate in the third annual Holy Healthy 5K Run/Walk at the 2010 Annual Conference.

BELOW: Janice Sudbrink, a parish nurse and deacon at Fort Smith First United Methodist Church, pours water for the participants in the third annual Holy Healthy 5K Run/Walk during last year's Annual Conference.

AUM FILE PHOTOS



**Tickets for the Confessing Movement Breakfast are \$12 each.**  
**Call or email Carolyn Elias at (501) 525-2944 or**  
**[CarolynEli@msn.com](mailto:CarolynEli@msn.com) by Friday, June 3 to purchase tickets.**

A very limited number of tickets will be available at Annual Conference.



# REPORTER

THE UNITED METHODIST

umportal.org



## Freedom Ride remembered

Retired UM pastor recalls bus journey for integration | 6B



## Aging Well

Seniors and seminarian form uncommon bond | 7B



## Making a statement

Church uses billboard in support of gays | 8B

Section B

May 20, 2011



UMR PHOTO BY MALLORY MCCALL

National United Methodist Campers is a family RV camping organization created in 1975 by United Methodists in Connecticut who wanted to camp and foster community in a Christian environment.

## Methodist campers mix service and camaraderie

BY MALLORY MCCALL  
Staff Writer

MINEOLA, Texas—Who says road trips and campouts are only for Boy Scouts and Wesley Foundations? Nearly 150 retired United Methodists—clergy and lay—in 70 rigs from across the country gathered April 28-May 1 in the small, East Texas town of Mineola for the 2011 National United Methodist Campers annual rally.

These mobile missionaries can easily be spotted by their cross-and-flame bumper stickers and license plates. They're proud of their faith, fun-loving and generous with their time and talents.

The organization has 15 chapters in nine states, and once a year they all

meet for a week of good old-fashioned church camp fun.

"We're really the best kept secret in the UMC, and I don't know why," said Donna Dean Hutcherson, the organization's national president. She hands out brochures to every church she visits and to other campers she meets on the road, but says few people actually follow up.

"We're young at heart and are really a lot of fun," she added.

### Open membership

And she's right. There's a lot of gray hair in the group, but that doesn't keep the crew from singing, laughing, joking, playing games and swapping ministry and travel tales. Or from worrying about the ministry's future.

The camping ministry was origi-

nally founded in 1975 in Plainville, Conn. as the National Camping Methodists (NCM)—an entertainment club for Methodists who liked camping, sightseeing and fellowshiping. The original bylaws of NCM restricted membership to "members of a Methodist Church," but Methodists eventually realized other Christians would also enjoy the Christ-centered atmosphere of their camping club, and in 1978 the bylaws were changed to permit anyone of the Christian faith to become a member.

Then in 2001 the name of the organization was changed to National United Methodist Campers (NUMC) in compliance with the denomination's General Board of Discipleship (GBOD).

The National United Methodist

Campers share the GBOD's focus of faith formation, said the Rev. Kevin Witt, director of the GBOD's camp and retreat ministries.

"The [GBOD] tries to make sure people have the opportunity to grow closer to God and develop a deeper discipleship through their experiences, and that's something the United Methodist Campers hold in high priority—both in terms of faith formation and missions."

"We are more than a social club," said Ed Cauley, the assistant wagon master of the Central Texas chapter.

"NUMC provides a second family," added Jerry Dixon, president of the Central Texas Chapter. "We all have a common interest, but you can just sit back, relax and have a good time and

■ See 'Campers' page 4B

## SMU goes gaga over Dalai Lama

BY MARY JACOBS  
Staff Writer

DALLAS—With his warmth, wit and irresistible giggle, the Dalai Lama charmed his audience on May 9 at Southern Methodist University's McFarlin Auditorium in Dallas.

The Nobel laureate and spiritual leader of Tibet was on campus to receive an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from the University, and to deliver a lecture as part of the Hart Global Leaders Forum. He spoke before an audience of 2,300, including local high school students, SMU faculty, students and staff, and the general public.

"I feel great honor accepting this honorary degree," he said. "There is a genuine warm feeling here and it gives me inspiration."

His talk met with several standing ovations. Among those who listened with admiration was the Rev. William B. Lawrence, dean of SMU's Perkins School of Theology.

"We Methodists can learn a lot from this Buddhist voice," Dr. Lawrence said.

■ See 'Dalai Lama' page 2B



PHOTO COURTESY  
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

The Dalai Lama received an honorary degree from SMU.



## FAITH WATCH

**Religious freedom on wane in Egypt**

With its military-led government struggling to quell violence between Muslims and Christians, Egypt has been added to a watchdog group's list of the worst countries for protecting religious freedom. The bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Liberty noted that Egypt had failed to protect religious groups, including Coptic Christians, before and after President Hosni Mubarak stepped down on Feb. 11.

**Presbyterians vote to allow gay clergy**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has removed a celibacy requirement for unmarried clergy, effectively allowing the ordaining of gays. The denomination's national assembly endorsed the change last year, but ratification was required by a majority of presbyteries. The deciding vote came May 10, from the presbytery based in Minneapolis and St. Paul. The move comes after decades of debate. In a statement, top church executives said "some will rejoice while others will weep."

**Bloggers descend on Vatican City**

One hundred and fifty bloggers from around the world, not all of them Catholic, came to Vatican City on May 2 for a meeting with the pontifical councils for culture and social communications. The meeting broke down some barriers between bloggers and the Catholic Church hierarchy, and underscored that blogs can help the Vatican understand better the feelings of people in the pews, Catholic News Service reported.

**Church plans to save blues studio**

First Presbyterian Church of Dallas plans to buy and restore the art deco building where legendary blues guitarist Robert Johnson recorded in 1937. The building is near the Stewpot, the church's downtown ministry to the homeless. *The Dallas Observer* reported that the city's Landmark Commission approved a plan submitted by the church.

## ■ DALAI LAMA Continued from page 1B

The Dalai Lama seemed to delight in surprising the crowd. Arriving on the stage, he pulled an SMU baseball cap from his robes and popped it atop his head, waving to the crowds. He praised American democracy in one breath and called himself a Marxist in another.

He also urged attendees to embrace compassion and forgiveness, and not to think of those as necessarily "religious" values but as human values.

"We are the same human beings," he told the audience. "We may have different faiths, different languages, even different cultures, but these are secondary. When we come from our mothers' wombs, there are no differences. Emotionally, we are the same."

The Dalai Lama described how, in March 2011, he announced that he would retire as head of state for the Tibetan government-in-exile while retaining spiritual leadership of Tibet. As a vocal advocate of democracy, he said, the move was overdue.

"I'm very happy that our small community has implemented democracy," he said. "Now I feel less hypocritical."

The Dalai Lama extended greetings to his "very dear and close friend," former President George W. Bush, and his wife Laura Bush, who was in the audience. He also noted that the world belongs to humanity, not to kings, and the United States belongs to its citizens, and looking directly at Mrs. Bush, he added, "not this party or that party," he said, giggling.

When asked by an SMU student about reconciling the potential for "cultural imperialism" as the United States aims to serve as an ambassador for democracy, he said: "If you think democracy is an American possession, it is not." Monks in Tibetan monasteries govern themselves according to democratic principles, he added, and both India and Taiwan have thrived under democratic rule while maintaining their distinctive



PHOTO COURTESY SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

The Dalai Lama donned an SMU Mustang cap during his appearance at SMU on May 9.

cultures. "This is universal," he said. "Democracy is not Western."

Another student asked how he became Dalai Lama. (He was recognized at the age of 2 as the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama, and assumed power at the age of 15.) He described how a "search party" came to his village when he was a child, carrying articles owned by the previous Dalai Lama. He correctly identified the articles, he said, and seemed to recognize the visitors.

"Whether it was because of something mysterious, or just luck, I don't know," he said, again giggling.

Mark Chancey, associate professor in SMU's department of religious studies, said the Dalai Lama's humility reflects his Buddhist spirituality.

"At the heart of Buddhism is a sense of what really matters and what doesn't matter," Dr. Chancey said. "Most of us are preoccupied with things that ultimately do not matter. When you have the clarity of mind and the perspective to know that attachment to the wrong things can never bring peace, and you're able to reconcile that within your own self, it allows you to be genuine in a way that many people never quite attain."

Dr. Lawrence said he admired the Dalai Lama's response to the Chinese government's harsh treatment of Tibet. In the lecture, the Dalai Lama praised the Chinese as "practical, cultured, hardworking, wonderful people" but added that "common sense is missing" in China's policy toward Tibet.

"He has found a way to respond both with vigor and with peace," Dr. Lawrence said. "One of the things we can learn from him is how to carry on dialogue about important religious matters with political forces that do not have our best interests at heart."

Andrew Conwell, an SMU senior marketing major and member of Lake Highlands UMC in Dallas, said that

students began lining up at 6 a.m. on the day that tickets were distributed for the event.

"Everyone knows who the Dalai Lama is, and hosting him at SMU was definitely an honor," he said. "I liked how the Dalai Lama was very positive about America. Many world leaders are quick to criticize our government."

The Rev.

Stephen Rankin, chaplain and minister to the university, said the Dalai Lama's visit generated a good deal of anticipation at a very busy time on campus, and that his largely extemporaneous talk was most compelling when he addressed the young people in the audience.

"He basically said, the 21st century is before us, what are you going to make of this century?" Dr. Rankin said. "He highlighted the fact that, we have to grapple with some very serious issues and we need to do it well."

"The students were clearly thrilled to see him and were moved by his humility," said Dr. Chancey, who shepherded the visiting high school students who came for the Hart Global Leaders Forum. "I don't think many people will forget this day."

**'He highlighted the fact that, we have to grapple with some very serious issues and we need to do it well.'**

—Rev. Stephen Rankin

## THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER

www.umportal.org

news@umr.org

Sam Hodges, Managing Editor

Bill Fentum, Associate Editor

Mary Jacobs, Staff Writer

Mallory McCall, Staff Writer

Cherrie Graham, Advertising Manager

Dale Bryant, Senior Designer

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER (USPS954-500) is published weekly by UMR Communications Inc., 1221 Profit Drive, Dallas, Texas 75247-3919. Periodicals postage paid at Dallas, Texas and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER, PO Box 660275, Dallas Texas 75266-0275.

THE UNITED METHODIST REPORTER has provided denominational news coverage since its beginning as the Texas Methodist newspaper in 1847. The Reporter has no official ties to the United Methodist General Conference or to any of the denomination's general boards or agencies. This newspaper aims to provide readers with a broad spectrum of information and viewpoints consistent with the diversity of Christians.

All material published in this newspaper is copyrighted by UMR Communications Inc. unless otherwise noted. Reprint of material from this newspaper must be authorized in advance by the Editor, and fees are assessed in some cases. To request reprints, e-mail news@umr.org, or fax a request to (214) 630-0079. Telephone requests are not accepted.

Send Correspondence and Address Changes (include mailing label) To: P.O. Box 660275, Dallas, TX 75266-0275 Telephone: (214) 630-6495. Subscriptions are \$26 for 52 issues per year. Click on "subscriptions" at www.umportal.org, e-mail circulation@umr.org or send a check to UMR Communications, Attn: Circulation, 1221 Profit Dr., Dallas, TX 75247.





## UM CONNECTIONS

**Retired bishop to fill Nashville interim post**

Retired United Methodist Bishop Ben R. Chamness was elected May 5 by the denomination's Council of Bishops to serve as interim bishop of the Nashville (Tenn.) Area, which encompasses the Memphis and Tennessee conferences. Bishop Chamness will serve from September 2011 through August 2012, when a new bishop takes office. He's stepping in for Bishop Richard J. Wills Jr., who is retiring a year early because of back problems.



**Bishop Ben Chamness**

**Candler receives grant for model curriculum**

Emory University's Candler School of Theology has been awarded a \$325,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation to create an international model curriculum for accredited North American seminaries. It includes faculty and student exchanges, seminars, curricular innovation and shared practical experience opportunities. The grant funds a four-year program that begins this summer. The first phase will involve laying the groundwork for long-term partnerships with seminaries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

**UM web event draws worldwide viewership**

The United Methodist Church's April 6 Leadership Summit webcast drew more than 4,000 web connections, according to United Methodist News Service. Of those connections, 243 were sites of multiple viewers, including 30 sites in central conferences outside the United States. The event also prompted more than 1,700 tweets from viewers under the hashtag #umclead. The three-hour summit marked the first chance for many United Methodists to hear how denominational leaders plan to carry out the recommendations in the Call to Action steering team's report on increasing vital congregations.

# Court voids N.Y. policy on gay clergy marriage

BY LINDA BLOOM  
United Methodist News Service

DETROIT—A policy adopted but not yet implemented by United Methodists in New York and Connecticut that essentially would have allowed clergy to marry someone of the same sex has been declared “null, void and of no effect” by the denomination's top court.

The United Methodist Judicial Council has ruled that the New York Annual Conference resolution and policy allowing clergy “to marry at their own discretion” is “neither valid nor constitutional.”

Meeting April 27-29 in Detroit, the council upheld the church's current prohibition against same-sex marriage and pastors who are “self-avowed practicing homosexuals,” found in Paragraph 2702 of the United Methodist *Book of Discipline*.

While an annual conference can adopt rules and regulations for its own governance, the council wrote in Decision 1185, the conference “may not legally negate, ignore or violate provisions of the *Discipline* with which they disagree even when the disagreement is based upon conscientious objections to those provisions.”

The rationale for the New York policy, adopted in 2010, is that same-sex marriage is legal in Connecticut; that such unions performed legally elsewhere “are legally recognized by state agencies in New York”; and that the church's Articles of Religion—doctrinal standards found in Paragraph 103 of the *Book of Discipline*—state that it is “lawful” for clergy “to marry at their own discretion.”

Contending that the Articles of Religion take precedence over other church laws outside the church's constitution, the New York Conference declared that “we believe that any . . . provision (in the *Discipline*) denying marriage to some clergy is unconstitutional and contrary to the Articles of Religion. . . .” In particular, Paragraph 103 would take precedence over Paragraph 2702, the conference said.

**‘Declaratory decision’**

Before enacting the policy, however, the New York Conference resolution asked the Judicial Council to make a “declaratory decision” about its validity. Council members initially considered the New York petition at its October 2010 meeting, but deferred a decision to the April meeting. Implementation of the policy was stayed pending the court's decision.

Because the petition appeared on both the October and April dockets, supporters and an opponent of the policy appeared before the council

during oral hearings at both meetings.

During the oral hearing in October, J. Ann Craig and Nehemiah Luckett—New York lay members who identified themselves as gay—argued that Article XXI of Paragraph 103, declares marriage is “a moral structure available to all.”

At the April oral hearing in Detroit, Kevin Nelson, a New York lay member who identified himself as “a straight person who supports full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons,” argued that when John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, wrote the Articles of Religion, he did not define marriage as heterosexual.

Both Ms. Craig and Mr. Nelson noted that Wesley was well aware that issues of class, race and status could be used by society as an attempt to block marriage. “Although John Wesley may not have considered marriage for same-gender couples in Article XXI, the discretion of clergy to marry whom they choose can be understood on the face of it as a challenge to arbitrary social categories and prejudices,” Ms. Craig said at the October hearing.

**Opposing the policy**

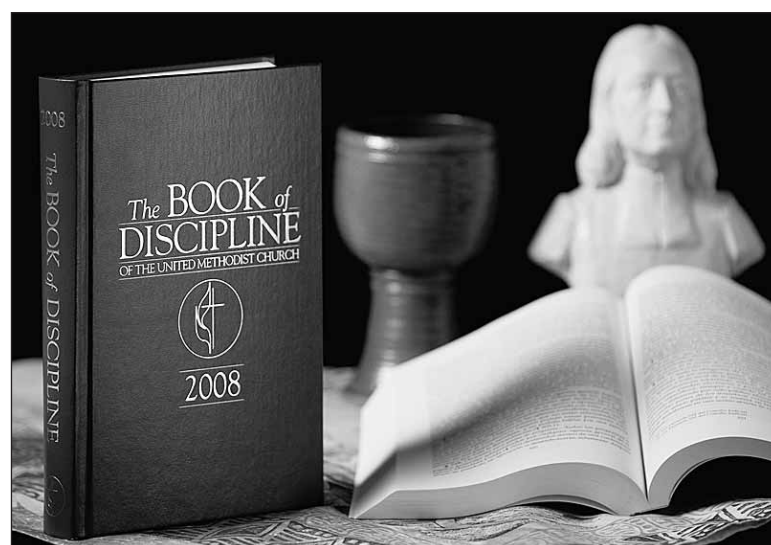
The Rev. Thomas Lambrecht, a Wisconsin pastor representing Good News, an unofficial United Methodist evangelical caucus, spoke in opposition of the policy at both the October and April hearings. In April, he called the New York petition one “in a string” of actions over the years by various annual conferences to urge the Judicial Council to circumvent General Conference, the church's top legislative body, and change the denomination's stance on homosexuality.

The *Book of Discipline* already has defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman, and an annual conference “does not have the right to legislate on the duties of clergy,” Mr. Lambrecht added. Nor can it unilaterally change the definition of marriage in Article XXI to include same-gender marriage without General Conference action, he said.

Supporters of the New York Conference policy mainly use experience and cultural tolerance as the basis for their support, he contended. “Such arguments may be somewhat persuasive in a legislative arena, but they show how weak the legal standing of this policy is,” he told council members.

In its ruling, the Judicial Council found that Paragraph 2702.1 does not “revoke, change or alter” the Articles of Religion or establish new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to established doctrinal standards.

The New York Conference policy, however, is in conflict with the *Discipline* and “could arguably be advanced



UMNS PHOTO BY MIKE DUBOSE

**The United Methodist Judicial Council has ruled that a New York Annual Conference resolution and policy allowing same-sex marriage for clergy “is neither valid nor constitutional.”**

as some safe haven from the complaint process for those clergy who choose to enter into a same-sex marriage at their discretion. . . .” the court said. A conference has no authority to offer such immunity by adopting a policy “that is clearly contrary to the *Discipline*.”

Judicial Council does not consider state recognition of same-sex marriage to be a factor in this case. “The church has a long tradition of maintaining its standards apart from those recognized or permitted by any civil authority,” the decision said. “The church's definition of marriage as contained in the *Discipline* is clear and unequivocal and is limited to the union of one man and one woman.”

In a concurring opinion, four council members—the Rev. Katherine Austin Mahle, the Rev. F. Belton Joyner

Jr., Angela Brown and the Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe—wrote that the council's decision does not comment “on the appropriateness of the disciplinary language related to marriage being between one man and one woman. We only say that there is no constitutional block to such language.”

The Articles of Religion came about when Wesley “revised, redefined, and adapted” the 39 Articles of the Church of England to fit the context of the newly formed Methodist church in the United States.

“It is possible to change and interpret the Articles of Religion in light of the Christian mission for our times,” through votes requiring specific majority approvals by General Conference and the denomination's annual conferences, the opinion noted.

## CEO POSITION UMR COMMUNICATIONS

**ABOUT US:**

UMR helps churches connect effectively. UMR shares a common commitment to Christian ministry with the United Methodist Church, operates in accordance with the denomination's Social Principles and also works in partnership with representatives from many faith groups. UMR's mission is to share God's story by publishing quality religion news and providing print and digital resources for communication and education. The UMR corporate office is located at 1221 Profit Drive in Dallas, Texas.

**CEO DESCRIPTION AND QUALIFICATIONS:**

The primary responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer is to provide visionary leadership, operational guidance and enhanced denominational relationships for UMR Communications. Candidates must have a broad understanding of and appreciation for the United Methodist Church and its structure at all levels. Searches and recommendations will be made without regard to ethnicity, race, color or gender.

To find out more, visit [www.umportal.org](http://www.umportal.org). To apply for this position, please submit a resume and a brief statement of interest to [ceosearch@umr.org](mailto:ceosearch@umr.org) or mail to UMR Communications, Attn: Search Committee, 1221 Profit Dr., Dallas, Texas 75247. For questions, please e-mail: [ceosearch@umr.org](mailto:ceosearch@umr.org)

**UMR**  
Communications Inc.

**UMR**  
Digital Printing

**THE UNITED METHODIST**  
**REPORTER**

**UM**  
**PORTAL**





There were about 70 RVs from seven states at this year's National United Methodist Campers (NUMC) rally in Mineola, Texas.



UMR PHOTOS BY MALLORY MCCALL

**ABOVE:** This year the NUMC chapters collected nearly 400 pounds of pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House's Pull Tab Program, which brings in an average of \$8,000 a year. **BELOW:** Members of Bayou State Chapter 15 (Louisiana) play table games and enjoy each other's company during free time at the national rally.



## ■ CAMPERS Continued from page 1B

worship the Lord, and that's a wonderful thing.”

Each chapter usually camps out for a few days at least once a month, sharing devotionals and camaraderie, working on local service projects and visiting other United Methodist churches. For many campers, the national rally is the highlight of their year because it draws the largest crowd from across the country.

“It's like a family reunion,” said Ms. Hutcherson.

The rally location is decided by the national president, and then the state chapter(s) help host the event—decorating, planning dinners, arranging tours and leading worship. One of the stops on this year's tour was Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

“I look forward to it every year. This is my vacation,” said Teresa Tribble, vice president of the West Missouri Chapter.

Ray Marcy, one of the national vice presidents, says the rallies are not only a pleasure but a necessity.

“If we don't have our rallies, we'll fold,” he said.

Others share Mr. Marcy's concern. The organization's membership has steadily fallen over the past few years, and much like passionate United Methodists elsewhere, the active members are worried about what will become of their ministry.

## Hard to recruit

Four years ago, there were 403 due-paying members but now there are 337, and this year the Georgia chapter was forced to close when its membership fell below five, leaving the four remaining members as members-at-large.

(Members are counted by unit. For example, a husband and wife would be counted as one member.) The Sonshine Chapter from Central Florida recruited the most new members this year, adding six to their roster.

It's no secret the active campers are proud of their ministry. They hand out brochures to campers they meet along the way, visit different United Methodist churches whenever they camp out at a new location and invite local ministers to potluck lunches at the campground, yet the ministry remains in decline.

“The average retirement age is going up,” said Harold Darling, president of the Spaceland Texas Chapter. “And this is affecting our membership.”

According to the Social Security Administration, the full retirement age for people born in 1960 or later is 67. Older people are staying in the workforce—they aren't retiring and packing up their RVs, he said.

“Realistically, it's hard to recruit because a lot of those who are retiring are not going to buy RVs with the price of fuel these days,” said Clair Jones from the Southern Tier New York Chapter.

Traveling from Florida (where Mr. Jones and his wife spent the winter) to Chandler, Ariz. at roughly seven miles per hour cost them over \$1,100. He admits it's not cheap, but it's still cheaper than flying, getting a hotel and eating out.

“I can't afford it, but I'm going to keep doing it because there's going come a time when I can't do it anymore physically,” added Mr. Jones.

Mr. Darling thinks the high fuel prices are often just used as an excuse.

“I will afford it,” he said. “I will build my budget so that I can camp and travel. I will do that, and we are programmed to do this until we turn 80.”

It's also hard to attract young families because they have busy work schedules and kids usually have sporting events and other obligations on the weekends, said Ms. Hutcherson.

Bill Jemison from Lake Charles, La. points out another recruiting obstacle. “Many preachers don't want us missing church on Sundays,” he said. “They don't want their attendance to drop.”

Some chapters avoid this conflict by planning Monday-Thursday or Wednesday-Saturday campouts, but others travel over the weekend and enjoy attending different United Methodist churches near their camping destination.

“But the more we worry about membership, the more we lose track of what it is we do well—which is fellowship and community service,” said Mr. Darling.

## Making a difference

Along with bringing people together in both chapter and national camping experiences, the organization has become known for its mission projects. Each chapter supports at least one mission project of choice.

Since last April, the campers have given over \$8,500 and 3,200 hours to missions, and at this year's national rally, the campers collected enough offering to give \$500 to three projects chosen by the host chapter—the Asbury Child Enrichment Center, a day care and preschool for low-income par-





**NOMADS (Nomads on a Mission Active in Divine Service) and NUMC often work with the denomination's Volunteers in Mission, helping with disaster relief, community outreach and renovation and construction projects.**

ents who are working or are in school in Longview, Texas; Newgate Mission, a ministry to families of incarcerated persons and homeless persons; and the Wesley Foundation at Kilgore College.

Over the years other chapters have been involved in Volunteers in Mission, constructing new buildings at United Methodist conference camps and making financial donations to the Personal Energy Transportation Project, which provides hand-cranked wheelchair devices for disabled people in underdeveloped countries.

These United Methodist campers are not the only retired United Methodists serving and building community while on the road. The United Methodist NOMADS—Nomads on a Mission Active in Divine Service—is a similar ministry of the General Board of Global Ministries that also attracts (usually retired) camping enthusiasts. With about 1,150 members, NOMADS individually register for mission projects at different United Methodist agencies across the country—including churches, children's homes, conference camps and UM-affiliated schools.

Whereas NUMC is organized by location chapters, NOMADS is organized by project. Members sign up online for a project that fits their travel schedule and requires a specific skill they have. The projects usually last three weeks and range from facility repairs to disaster relief. Some NOMADS live full-time in their campers and travel from one project to the next, while some may only participate in one or two projects a year.

Roxie and Jim Waters from Fort Worth, Texas belong to NOMADS and NUMC.

"I love both the ministries," said Ms. Waters.

She likes the familiar faces and fellowship time she gets with the NUMC chapter as much as she liked spending three weeks getting her hands dirty with people she had never met before.

"Both [ministries] offer great community and a fun way to do church and serve people," she said.

To learn more about the National United Methodist Campers, visit [www.umcampers.org/](http://www.umcampers.org/), and to learn more about NOMADS, visit [www.nomadsumc.org/](http://www.nomadsumc.org/).

[mmccall@umr.org](mailto:mmccall@umr.org)



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NOMADS

**ABOVE: NOMADS building a cabin in Lawson, Mo. BELOW: Some NOMADS have professional experience in maintenance and repair, and are Methodists. But neither is a qualification for membership.**



## SUPPORT CHURCH GROWTH AND EARN INTEREST

1-Year Term	2.0%
2-Year Term	3.0%
3-Year Term	3.25%
4-Year Term	3.5%
Flex Demand	1.5%
IRAs	3.5%

*Flex Demand and IRAs may not be available in certain states.*

## THE UNITED METHODIST DEVELOPMENT FUND

*Notes of The Fund are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Securities Investor Protection Corporation (SIPC), or any other federally or state-regulated institution.*



United Methodist individuals, churches, and agencies can invest in UMDF for as little as \$100. The Fund's sole purpose is to promote the mission of The United Methodist Church by providing first-mortgage loans to churches. This is neither an offer to sell nor a solicitation to buy our securities. We will only offer and sell our securities in states where authorized. All offerings are made by the Offering Circular. The Offering Circular contains a list of risk factors that you should consider prior to an investment decision.

For an Offering Circular or more information, call or write to us at:  
**475 Riverside Drive, Room 310  
New York, NY 10115**

**For an Offering Circular and application:**

Telephone: 1-800-862-8633  
Email: [umdf@gbgm-umc.org](mailto:umdf@gbgm-umc.org)  
Website: [www.gbgm-umc.org/umdf](http://www.gbgm-umc.org/umdf)

## GRACE UNDER PRESSURE

NEGOTIATING THE HEART OF THE METHODIST TRADITIONS

BY JOERG RIEGER

"In a globe crumbling under ego-quakes, *Grace under Pressure* leads us to transform the expansion of empires into a graceful Reign of God. . . . I wholeheartedly recommend this excellent and inspirational book to all committed Christians!"

—Andrew Sung Park, professor of Theology and Christian Ethics at United Theological Seminary

To order, contact Cokesbury  
1-800-672-1789 • [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com)  
ISBN 978-0-938162-77-3 • \$12.95





# United Methodist minister recalls Freedom Ride

BY RALPH LORD ROY  
*Special Contributor*

**Editor's Note:** This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Freedom Rides, a movement of civil rights activists who traveled on interstate buses through the southern United States in 1961 to challenge newly illegal segregation. The Rev. Roy, a retired United Methodist elder in the New York Conference, looks back on his participation in one of the rides.

One day, 50 years ago, the phone rang and my friend the Rev. Mac Warner, executive director of the Manhattan Division of the Protestant Council, was on the line. "I'm sure you've been following the Freedom Rides," he began. "The Congress of Racial Equality [CORE] is planning a clergy one. Would you join us?"

I quickly replied that I would, thought a minute, then added that I'd get back to him as soon as I'd talked it over with my wife and my congregation's official board. Margaret and I had been married just over a year and, after expressing her fears, she reluctantly agreed to my participation, in large part because we shared the same commitment to racial justice. The leaders in the church were enthusiastic in their support.

Why was I so ready to go on a Freedom Ride? Two factors played a central role in my decision. One was my Christian faith. I had recently preached on those words from Amos in which God expressed disdain for pious ritual unless "justice roll down like waters and righteousness as a mighty stream." Even more important were the example and teachings of Christ who championed the outcasts and pariahs of society.

Then, there was patriotism. My love of country runs deep, and I wanted our nation to live up to that pledge to the flag which we all learned as children: "... with liberty and justice for all." How could America so loudly champion democracy around the world while practicing it so imperfectly here at home?

At the time, in May 1961, newspaper headlines told of violence against Freedom Riders. Two months earlier, James Farmer, director of CORE, son of a Methodist minister and himself a former seminarian, had asked for volunteers to participate in interracial bus trips to test compliance with a Supreme Court ruling that segregation on interstate transportation was un-

constitutional. The first two buses had been attacked in Alabama.

Soon after Mac's phone call, 14 ministers and four rabbis gathered in Washington where we were trained in non-violence. We were expected to be courteous at all times, never contentious or loud, never inciting arrest but willing to go to jail if that were required. We were shown how to respond to physical assault with confidence, courage and calmness. Each day a different officer of the day would be in charge, so that should a crisis arise we would look to him for instructions. After we were divided into interracial teams and assigned to test waiting rooms, restrooms and eating facilities, we boarded a Greyhound bus and traveled along the East Coast to Florida.

## Mixed reception

In some cities, among them Raleigh and Savannah, an occasional frown was the only negative reaction we observed as we successfully integrated bus stations for the first time. At other stops, we were less successful.

Just north of Sumter, S.C., we faced intense hostility when we tried to have lunch at a private motor court. An angry crowd taunted us and the proprietor blocked our way. "We been segregated," he announced, as he stood in the doorway to the restaurant, "and that's the way we gonna stay!" With that the local sheriff appeared and ordered us to move along. The Rider-in-charge that day decided against a face-off and directed us back on the bus.

At a rest stop in northern Florida we were admitted to a diner, but when the waitresses refused to take orders from the African-American clergy, none of us ordered.

On June 15 we reached the Tallahassee airport, the final destination of this four-day bus trip, where we had booked a 3:25 flight to New York. The door to the airport's restaurant had been locked just as we arrived at the terminal, with diners still eating inside. We were informed that one day each month—that particular day, regrettably—the restaurant was closed for a thorough cleaning until 4:30, an hour after our plane was scheduled to leave.

We each wrestled with a tough decision: to catch our flight or wait until the restaurant was "cleaned." Ten of us, eight ministers and two rabbis, opted to stay, always with valid plane tickets to avoid the charge of loitering. As we waited through the evening, we were informed that a crowd had gathered outside the terminal, including Ku Klux Klan members from South Georgia. When the airport closed at midnight we went to a black church



Participants in a June 1961 clergy Freedom Ride included (front row, left to right) Rabbi Martin Freedman; the Rev. W.P. Collier Jr., AME; the Rev. Ralph Lord Roy, Methodist; the Rev. Arthur L. Hardge, AME Zion; (back row) the Rev. A. MacRaven Warner, Disciples of Christ; the Rev. Robert Stone, Presbyterian; the Rev. Petty D. McKinney, AME Zion; the Rev. Wayne C. Hartmire, Presbyterian; and Rabbi Israel Dresner. Missing from the photo is the Rev. Robert McAfee Brown, a Presbyterian minister and theologian.

nearby, held evening devotions, then slept on the pews as a police detail was stationed outside to protect us from possible attack.

We were not surprised when the restaurant was still closed the next morning, nor when we were arrested and carted off to the county jail, charged with "unlawful assembly." A police officer was encouraging. As he fingerprinted me he whispered, "Sorry, Reverend, we shouldn't be doing this." Four of us were Methodists: the three African Americans (one AME, two AME Zion) and me.

The jail was segregated, of course, though we could communicate with our black colleagues by shouting through the wall that divided us. Our cell block was overcrowded, with one shower, one sink and one toilet. Most of our cellmates were young men charged with theft, assault, arson or other crimes. Some were surly, viewing us as traitors to our race, and we relied upon our pastoral experience to establish rapport with as many as possible. Following a 24-hour fast, our supper was a piece of gingerbread and a cup of cold, weak coffee. We were exhausted, and after a brief time of prayer together we slept surprisingly well on the prison floor.

When we appeared before a judge, we all pleaded "not guilty" and were freed on bail, to be tried a week later. As expected, we were convicted and sentenced to 60 days in jail or a \$500 fine. Our case went through the lower

courts where we had rightly assumed that the judgment against us would be upheld. Along the way, the restaurant manager had changed his story. The restaurant had closed, he testified, "to repair certain refrigeration equipment."

## Hard decision

It came as a shock, however, when the Supreme Court, citing a technicality, refused to hear our case and remanded it to the Florida courts. Our options became paying the fine or returning to jail.

I faced a stressful dilemma. By then, it was 1964 and our bishop had recently appointed me to two struggling churches in a racially-tense, gang-infested Brooklyn neighborhood where I had just initiated an intensive summer-long, daily program for children and youth. With no other staff except neighborhood volunteers, I decided that my primary and immediate responsibility was to that program and reluctantly agreed to pay the \$500 fine. Upon hearing this, my bishop, Lloyd C. Wicke, kindly sent me his personal check for \$50.

Even today, a half-century later, I have qualms about that decision, though I still believe it was the correct one. The other nine Freedom Riders returned to Tallahassee and to jail. The white clergy cut grass while the black clergy stacked bricks. After four days, with considerable media attention, the judge asked that the Freedom Riders request mitigation of their sen-

tence. The clergy refused. The judge then shouted: "I put you in jail! I'm throwing you out of jail!" Immediately after their release they headed for the same airport restaurant, which had been integrated in 1962, and enjoyed breakfast together.

Of the 10 of us jailed in Tallahassee, three are now alive.

Much has changed, of course, over the past half-century. Prejudice still infects some individuals of all races. Yet, we have moved well beyond where our nation was in 1961. Who would have predicted then that today a biracial president would occupy the White House? Whether we agree or disagree with the policies of President Barack Obama, his election is convincing evidence that most Americans don't judge fellow Americans by the color of their skin.

It's important to note that those of us who journeyed into the tumultuous South 50 years ago—only to soon return to the security of our homes—deserve very little credit for progress made during the intervening years. Many factors contributed, but none more than the courage and resilience of those men and women who year after year "fought the good fight" with a deep faith in God and an unyielding resolve to make our country that "more perfect union" envisioned in the preamble to our Constitution.

The Rev. Roy is a retired United Methodist elder living in Southington, Conn. Email: [Ralphlroy@aol.com](mailto:Ralphlroy@aol.com).



# AGING WELL

## Weekly gathering in D.C. area crosses barriers of age, culture

BY MISSY BUCHANAN  
Special Contributor

It's Wednesday afternoon in Washington, D.C., and legislators are rushing through the halls of the U.S. Capitol, debating economic woes as they go.

Just across the Potomac River, the halls of the historic Chesterbrook United Methodist Church are coming alive, too. A group of older adults are arriving at the historic McLean, Va., church for a time of spiritual reflection, reminiscing and fellowship.

Church member Arlin Honaker, a widow of a United Methodist minister, first organized the group, believing that aging church members could benefit from the support and intimacy of a small group study. She began to look for resources that would specifically address the spiritual needs of older adults and soon discovered Richard Morgan's book, *Remembering Your Story: Creating Your Own Spiritual Autobiography*. Designed as a resource for a 10-week class, the book served as a springboard for discussing life stories and spiritual legacies.

By the time the group arrived at the end of the 10-week period, class members asked if they could continue to meet. They had grown close to each other as they worked to create their spiritual autobiographies. Ms. Honaker gladly obliged and even encouraged the participants to make scrapbooks and videos as a legacy for their descendants.

But there's another reason that the Wednesday afternoon class has become so popular with participants.

In addition to sharing their life stories and personal memories, the group of older adults has found unexpected joy in their relationship with Jiyeon Kim, a 25 year-old seminarian pastor from the Republic of Korea, who assists Ms. Honaker with the class.

At first glance, the relationship might seem an unlikely blend of ages and cultures: older adults facing the challenges of physical decline and a second-year student of Washington, D.C.'s Wesley Theological Seminary who is still learning about American culture and the nuances of the English language.



COURTESY PHOTO

**Seminary student Jiyeon Kim (at right) helps lead a mid-week class attended by Elaine Cherry and Margi Ball at Chesterbrook United Methodist Church in McLean, Va.**

The Rev. Kathleene Card, senior pastor at Chesterbrook UMC, believes it was a match made in heaven. "Jiyeon is a breath of fresh air!" she says almost gleefully, adding that the seminary intern is an especially good listener who shows great respect for her elders.

It's not so surprising that Ms. Kim reflects the Korean heritage in which she was raised. She was taught that seniors are to be held in high esteem. She visits Chesterbrook older adults in their homes and takes the time to get to know each one. Perhaps what is surprising is her assessment of a primary difference between the Korean church and Chesterbrook.

"In the Korean church, the senior is used to not being an active participant, but rather a passive viewer in worship," she writes in a recent column for the Chesterbrook newsletter. "Out of respect, seniors are deprived of a chance to serve in worship in the church."

Ms. Kim celebrates the culture at Chesterbrook where seniors actively serve in worship alongside children and youth. She thinks that's the way it should be.

"Harmonization beyond the boundaries of age helps to throw open the door of Chesterbrook UMC," she writes. "The kingdom of God can be here, in our place."

Although age-specific ministries have an important role in the life of the church, it is easy for congregations to become segregated by age, creating few opportunities for intergenerational interaction. But when the gen-

erations reach out to one another and learn to appreciate each other's unique gifts and perspectives, the church becomes more unified. Even negative stereotypes begin to fall away. It seems a lesson embraced by the Chesterbrook congregation.

Serving at Chesterbrook has given Ms. Kim an opportunity to utilize her youthful familiarity with technology. The older congregants are in awe of her computer savvy. After recording videos of each of the senior adults talking about their faith stories, Ms. Kim edited the interviews into a first-rate video that was shown at the church's charge conference, where the older adults looked on with great pride.

Ms. Card notes that Ms. Kim is getting valuable experience in every area of ministry, including baptisms, weddings and funerals. But it is her kind heart and authenticity that make her easily accepted and trusted by older adults.

On most Wednesday afternoons you can find Ms. Kim sitting among her elders in a classroom at Chesterbrook. Soon all eyes turn to this young woman whom the older adults have come to love and respect. It is her turn to share a story about her own faith journey.

**Ms. Buchanan, a member of FUMC Rockwall, Texas, is the author of several books, including *Don't Write My Obituary Just Yet: Inspiring Faith Stories for Older Adults* (Upper Room Books). Visit her Facebook page, Aging and Faith.**

# WESLEYAN WISDOM

## We all must remember: Our freedom isn't free

BY BISHOP WOODIE W. WHITE  
UMR Columnist

As we approach our nation's observance of Memorial Day—our national day to honor our war dead and those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom—I wander through a collection of often confusing, contradictory and challenging thoughts on freedom. Somewhere, I learned long ago that freedom is not free.

I believe many Americans are so accustomed to living in a free society that they become almost cavalier about it. To be sure, most take it for granted, seeing freedom almost as a given, like air and oxygen. Of course, it is not. It comes at great price! As cemeteries across the nation are visited during this special time, we are reminded of that price.

My ancestors, descendants and I, living in what is often touted as the freest country in the world, have not always been included in that free status. For hundreds of years, my ancestors were considered chattel, property, and were held enslaved. They were not included in the free status of the relatively young nation.

We had to push ourselves into the Constitution, which declared that all Americans had guaranteed rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The noble language of freedom and equality was so appealing to me as a boy that, early on, I appropriated it even when the words were not initially intended to apply to me. And there were those who made personal and systematic efforts to ensure that would not change.

Yet the values the words represented were so noble and all-embracing that those who read them could easily see themselves as benefactors of such largesse. In fact, the values were seen as not nation-given but God-given; the nation was to recognize, assure and protect those values for all its citizens.

I remember too well the contradictions of freedom that made it all the more appealing. A nation begrudgingly offering freedom to its citizens of color or, most often, denying it. Even those who fought in wars to defend freedom were not assured it in



PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

their own country. It is still a struggle.

Yet there is rightness to liberty, especially when it is genuinely embraced as our Pledge of Allegiance states, "... with liberty and justice for all." I know how valuable freedom is, and I do not take it for granted. Even with the imperfections that come with living out our freedom, it still has given us a nation that is the envy of many around the world. They continue to come to these shores to be a part of it. I hope they will join in its perfection.

I wish it were possible to have such a nation without the fighting of wars, the sacrifice of lives, the destruction of God's good earth. History has shown that it all but seems inevitable. There are those who would destroy others if given an opportunity to deny or abridge freedoms. To subjugate and oppress.

Our United Methodist *Book of Discipline* acknowledges that "... war is incompatible with the teachings and example of Christ" (§ 165.C) and longs for the peaceful settlement of national conflicts. However, the *Discipline* also acknowledges "... when peaceful alternatives have failed, the force of arms may regretfully be preferable to unchecked aggression, tyranny and genocide." (§ 164.I)

This Memorial Day, many families will remember the personal sacrifice made by sons and daughters, fathers and mothers, and other family members, in defense of the freedoms we enjoy and all too often take for granted. We owe them a great debt.

Freedom really isn't free. It comes at a high cost!

**Retired Bishop White is the denominational Endorsing Agent for Chaplain Ministries and bishop-in-residence at Candler School of Theology.**



Missy Buchanan



Bishop Woodie White



# West Ohio church's billboard supports gays

BY HEATHER HAHN  
United Methodist News Service

A small Toledo, Ohio, church has made a giant statement sure to stir debate with a billboard that declares: "Being Gay is a Gift from God."

The digital billboard, which flashes Central United Methodist Church's message among a rotation of ads, stands at a major intersection in the city, the *Toledo Blade* reports.

"What we're saying is that [sexual orientation] is part of who God made us to be . . . and we need to celebrate that," said Dan Rutt, a member of the church's lead team. "It's like being a man or a woman, our race or ethnicity, or whether we're left-handed or right-handed. All of these are things God created us to be, and we should live into those, and offer all of that back to God."

Still, church members acknowledge that the message is a controversial one within the United Methodist Church.

The *Book of Discipline*, the United Methodist law book, states that "the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching." The denomination bars self-avowed practicing gays and lesbians from ordained ministry and prohibits clergy from blessing same-sex unions.

## Diverse reactions

Lisa Streight, the spokesperson for the denomination's West Ohio Conference, said the church's decision to display publicly its support for gays has troubled many in the conference and been celebrated by others.

"Not all of our members who profess Christ as Lord and Savior see the issue of sexual orientation in the same way," she said in a statement. "We do expect, however, that all people will be treated as children of God in every church."

'We looked at one another and said, "Well, don't we always welcome everybody?"'

—Oretha Lawson

She said one of the denomination's strengths is the ability of United Methodists to express a diversity of perspectives in open discussion. She also stressed that no one congregation speaks for the entirety of the United Methodist Church.

Central United Methodist Church decided to take action after last year's

string of suicides by teens and young adults who were gay or perceived to be gay.

The billboard campaign launched April 25. The congregation, which has a weekly attendance of about 25 straight and gay members, has paid about \$1,500 to lease the billboard space for a month, Mr. Rutt said.

"A lot of times when people talk about homosexuality in the church, there is a kind of defensiveness and many people are willing to accept simple tolerance," Mr. Rutt said. "What we're really saying is we want equality."

The message coincides with a four-week sermon series of the same name. The Rev. Bill Barnard, the church's part-time pastor and a chaplain, said the series would culminate with a message that "being you is a gift from God."

"Our goal is not to offend," Mr. Barnard said. "But we know there are a lot of people who have been hurt and alienated by the church. We are trying to show there is another way to understand God's love."

## Renewed debate

Only General Conference, the denomination's top lawmaking body, can speak for the United Methodist Church.

Since 1972, the subject of homosexuality has sparked discussion at each quadrennial gathering of the lawmaking assembly. Delegates consistently have voted to keep the *Discipline*'s stance against homosexuality.

But the longtime debate recently has heated up again as the church nears the one-year countdown to 2012 General Conference.

Thirty-six retired bishops signed a statement in February urging the denomination to end its ban on gay clergy. United Methodists on both sides of the ordination dispute have issued strong responses. Bishops are not allowed to vote at General Conference, but when they speak, church members often listen.

"With most of the groups I talk to, both sides have a love for the church," said the Rev. Chet Harris, senior pastor of Dueber United Methodist Church in Canton, about a three-hour drive from Toledo in the East Ohio Conference.

Still, Dr. Harris and many other United Methodists are unequivocal in their belief that homosexual behavior is a sin condemned in both the Old and New Testaments.

"It's a sin among many sins, and I am not about to separate sins and have everybody hold up their hand for their individual sins on Sunday morning," said Dr. Harris, a former board member of Good News, an unofficial

evangelical renewal caucus in the denomination.

"The church has not done a good job at addressing the issue of sin among heterosexuals, and yet we try to lift up the sin of homosexuality. I think we have to approach it on an even plain so that we can begin to talk about the fact that we are all fallen, we are all sinners and we are all in need of a Savior."

## Church's history

Central United Methodist Church, founded in 1897, is no newcomer to the debate on homosexuality.

In 1984, the congregation became one of the first six churches to join what would become the Reconciling Ministries Network, an unofficial caucus that advocates for greater inclusion of gays and lesbians in the denomination.

Oretha Lawson, a member of Central United Methodist for more than 60 years, was on the church's board in 1984 when the pastor at the time first broached the idea of joining the network.

"We looked at one another and said, 'Well, don't we always welcome everybody?' And there was no question," Ms. Lawson said.

The Rev. Troy Plummer, executive director of the Reconciling Ministries Network, said he does not know of any other United Methodist churches that have promoted support for gays on a commercial billboard. He added that many like-minded congregations will



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TOLEDO BLADE/AMY E. VOIGT

From left, the Rev. Bill Barnard, Oretha Lawson and Dan Rutt gather under a billboard paid for by their church, Central United Methodist in Toledo, Ohio.

fly rainbow flags or prominently display rainbow stickers in a show of solidarity. Outside reaction typically runs the gamut from hearty "amens" to vandalism.

So far, Central United Methodist has not encountered vandals. However, since the billboard first went up, members have received reactions from across the spectrum through just about every form of communication imaginable.

Many quote Scripture to denounce the billboard. Mr. Barnard and other church members say they think many

of the biblical passages cited against homosexuality should be interpreted as condemnations of prostitution or abusive behavior.

Members have been particularly touched to hear from gays and lesbians in the Toledo area who said they never felt welcomed by Christian churches, and the sign is making them rethink whether they can find a church home.

On May 1, the first Sunday after the billboard lighted up, Central United Methodist Church had five visitors.

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING • CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING • CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

### EMPLOYMENT

#### NEW MEDIA ASSOCIATE

UMR Communications, parent company of the award-winning *United Methodist Reporter* seeks a New Media Associate who will upload stories and photos to the Web, spread the paper's content through Facebook and Twitter, and help generally with editorial production. Good writing/editing skills and a background in the UMC are definite pluses. Other job responsibilities will include:

- Train and provide customer support for UMPortal church clients.
- Work with IT manager and web developer on updating the portal; makes daily updates to umportal.org.
- Write occasional feature stories for the Reporter.
- Help process orders from the UMPortal Store (print subscriptions, book orders).
- Maintain the Reporter blog, monitor traffic and comments, write weekly blog post, coordinate with News staff to ensure regular postings.
- Maintain the Reporter Facebook page and Twitter feed.
- Search blogs for potential commentaries and secure reprint permission.
- Help proof Reporter pages.

SEE MORE CLASSIFIED ADS!  
CHECK OUT WWW.UMPORTAL.ORG

You can find more position listings, services, and exciting opportunities—available only on UMPortal.org.

- Prepare weekly sneak preview for Reporter clients.
- Represents UMR at selected Annual Conference gatherings as needed by the sales and marketing team.
- Leads workshops on social media and blogging for the annual UMR Communicators Conference.

Requirements include a Bachelor's degree and three-to-five years experience in journalism or related field. Excellent verbal and written communication skills. Demonstrated proficiency with social media platforms. Working knowledge of AP Stylebook. Able to meet deadlines and work as a team player, interfacing with news and sales staffs. Willingness to travel as needed.

Send resumes by June 1 to: newmedia@umr.org

### MISCELLANEOUS

#### MYSTERY DINNER FUND RAISERS

Raise FUNDS, have FUN, share FELLOWSHIP! Wesleyan Thespians Mystery Dinner Kits. Contact 781-837-6457 for more information.

#### YOU CAN HAVE YOUR OWN VERSION OF THE UNITED METHODIST PORTAL!

News from your local church, stories from the award-winning staff of the *United Methodist Reporter*, real-time information from Yahoo! News and Google—all in one home page. Visit [www.umportal.org](http://www.umportal.org) and see how easy it is to have a Portal page for your church. Request an online demonstration to learn how easy it is to bring a customized version of the UMPortal to your church, email: [portal@umr.org](mailto:portal@umr.org)

#### LUMICON DIGITAL PRODUCTIONS

Lumicon offers downloadable worship resources based on the Scriptures and rooted in current culture, features planning guides, graphics and video. Online library provides your church with range of resources, from Scripture commentary, drama and visual ideas to finished images and videos. Browse the search bank by topic, lectionary or verse at [www.lumicon.org](http://www.lumicon.org) or call toll-free 1-866-586-4266 for more information.

#### DISPLAY & BANNER ADVERTISING

The *United Methodist Reporter* and the UMPortal offer advertisers the ability to target unique messages regarding products, services and employment to church leaders and clergy, as well as individuals in the pews. Reach thousands of Christian households, agencies and organizations by advertising in UMR's products. Variety of display ad sizes and rates to fit any budget and objective. Contact: Cherrie Graham at 214-630-6495, x 142 or [cgraham@umr.org](mailto:cgraham@umr.org)

#### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Readership is approximately 225,000 readers each week Rates are per word or group of figures or initials (20 word minimum) **Newspaper Only—\$3.00** per word, two consecutive weeks. **Newspaper/Internet Bundle—\$4.00** per word includes two consecutive weeks in print and one month on Internet ([www.umportal.org](http://www.umportal.org)). **Internet Only—\$1.25** per word run for one month on [www.umportal.org](http://www.umportal.org). E-mail your classified ad to: [cgraham@umr.org](mailto:cgraham@umr.org) or enter it online on the Classifieds page at: [www.umportal.org](http://www.umportal.org).