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BY AMY FORBUS  
Editor

Until about four years ago, Dan and Virgie Brown didn't know that United Methodism included a modern-day tribe pursuing a nomadic life.

The Browns, along with other members of First UMC Rogers, were at a popular mission destination—Sager Brown Depot in Baldwin, La., to help prepare emergency supplies for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). A fellow worker from Tyler, Texas, told them about NOMADS: Nomads On a Mission Active in Divine Service.

The idea of combining recreational vehicle travel with service to others sparked their interest. They already owned an RV, and as recent retirees, they were seeking new ways to serve God.

NOMADS is a United Methodist organization, part of the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). It receives financial support from a variety of local churches and individual donors,



## NOMADS engages roving retirees in Christian service

as well as from its members.

When Howard and Carol Stoner retired in 1996 and became full-time RVers, they began seeking a way to do mission work. In 1999, while staying at a Branson, Mo., RV park, they spotted a truck with a magnetic

sign bearing the United Methodist cross and flame and the words "Mission Volunteers."

"We knew we had found what we were looking for," said Carol Stoner. They took their first NOMADS trip the following spring,

and more than 50 projects have followed. In addition, Carol has served in four different roles on the organization's national board of directors.

"I have done everything from  
[See NOMADS, page 6A]

## Q&A: Philander Smith College's new president



PHOTO COURTESY PHILANDER SMITH COLLEGE

This summer, Dr. Johnny Moore arrived at his alma mater, Philander Smith College, for a new assignment: the presidency.

A 1989 graduate of the college and a native of Old Washington, Moore has spent his career in higher education. He was a tenured professor and later vice-president of student affairs at Indian River State

College in Florida. His most recent role was as vice-president of student affairs at Tyler Junior College in Texas.

Now, he has returned to Little Rock to lead the United Methodist-related historically black institution with its current enrollment of about 700 students. He spoke recently with editor **Amy Forbus**; here are excerpts.

### What are your impressions of Philander Smith since your return to campus?

Since getting the job, I've been going back through and looking at old articles about the college. A group of us that graduated that spring of '89, the *Arkansas Gazette* interviewed us about our experience. They quoted me as saying—and I remember this—that usually college students have horrible experiences of the college they attended, and I had absolutely no bad experiences here. I was a first-generation college student, and I had wonderful experiences.

And I still have that same feeling about Philander Smith College. This institution changed my life. In fact, I was talking with one of the students the other day who reminded me a lot of myself—from a small town, shy, all these sorts of things—and I saw that the institution still has a way of bringing out the best in a student.

That's my impression of this place. It's very special. It has room

for a top 10 student, to challenge them, but it also has room for students who may not know where they are in terms of what they want to do. That was me. It helps shape and mold them, and when they leave here, they're able to perform with the best of the best. And that's the beauty of an institution this size.

### How does it feel to be on this side of the student/administration divide?

The thing about the academic environment—which is why I wanted to come back here—is to make an impact in the life of someone else. So that's what I see on this side, is the opportunity to impact the lives of so many young people.

It's priceless when you have a student come back, to give you a phone call and to thank you for making a difference in their lives. It makes you feel a little old, but it's so meaningful. And I'm still being helped; others are helping me. That's the thing that has really impressed

[See PRESIDENT, page 4A]

# The emerging role of the Wesley Scholar

BY A.W. (BILL) MARTIN  
Special Contributor

The Arkansas Conference has a new, unique position: the Wesley Scholar. The announcement of the post in early 2012 stated that the Wesley Scholar will “work with the Holiness of Heart and Life Network, the Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence in Leadership and with local congregations.” In June, the Conference approved a structure that included the Wesley Scholar as advisor to the Conference executive team and the extended cabinet.

The Rev. Andrew Thompson, the first person appointed as the Wesley Scholar, has made it clear that he is sailing into somewhat uncharted waters and that the understanding of the Wesley Scholar’s role will evolve over time. Here are a few comments that, I hope, will help in charting the voyage.

## Consider our context

It is of course obvious that a Wesley Scholar must be an expert on John Wesley. (And perhaps the focus on “Wesley” can grow to include the

hymns of Charles Wesley, which are now available online.)

A Wesley Scholar needs to use the writings of John Wesley judiciously and with common sense. Not

everything that John Wesley stated in his sermons, which our denomination views as “doctrinal standards,” can apply to the Christian life today.

For instance, in his sermon “A Caution Against Bigotry,” Wesley wrote, “The natural religion of the Creeks, Cherokees, Chickasaws, and all other Indian settlements bordering on our southern settlement... is to torture all their prisoners from morning till night, till at length they roast them to death; and upon the slightest undesigned provocation, to come behind and shoot any of their own countrymen.” Although Wesley

accompanied this comment with a sharp indictment of his fellow Englishmen, it remains an absolute disaster as any kind of guide for United Methodist work among indigenous persons today. Our denomination has rightly approved a large number of resolutions that reject Wesley’s understanding.

To adequately advise the mission-defining bodies of our Conference, the scholar needs a strong foundation in contemporary biblical studies, particularly in biblical ethics. It sometimes will not work simply to try applying John Wesley’s *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, another of our doctrinal standards, directly to contemporary problems.

For example, the Book of Revelation is an essential resource for Christians dealing with church-state relations in any time, yet Wesley’s notes on it are often of little value. Borrowed mainly from a great German scholar, Johann Bengel, they adopt an elaborate scheme of prophecy and world history that, among other problems, views the Pope as the evil beast of Revelation 13.

## A broad assignment

We must not limit the work of the Wesley Scholar to the Wesleyan tradition. Our Conference helped to avoid this risk when it required the executive team to “ensure our mission, vision, and core values are aligned and in focus with our United Methodist theology.” This requirement has at least three major implications:

First, a Wesley Scholar will take seriously the word “United” in the name of our denomination. The term points us directly to that part of our denominational heritage that comes from the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Alongside our “Wesleyan tradition,” the EUB traditions connect us to the other three wings of the Protestant Reformation besides the Anglican: Lutheran, Reformed and Anabaptist.

Second, a Wesley Scholar will meditate long and hard on the section in the *Book of Discipline* entitled “Our Theological Task,” particularly its

commentary on “The Present Challenge to Theology in the Church,” which affirms that “the contributions that United Methodists of varying ethnic, language, cultural, and national groups make to one another and to our Church as a whole.”

Third, a Wesley Scholar will remember, as the statement in the *Discipline* on “Our Doctrinal Heritage” affirms, that “faith and good works belong within an all-encompassing theology of grace.” To maintain an adequate balance between faith and good works, a Wesley Scholar must know the Social Principles of our denomination. This in turn implies understanding of the official resolutions of the Church, most of which attempt to apply the Social Principles to our world today in an impressive variety of specific ways.

Beyond concern for Wesleyan and United Methodist theology, the Wesley Scholar, according to the official description of the new Network of Discipleship and Mission, will focus on “vital ministry aimed at bringing the resources of the Christian tradition to bear on the practical work of the church.”

This focus suggests the need for a Wesley Scholar to be conversant, as John Wesley himself was, with the entire Christian tradition prior to Protestantism. Our “Resolution of Intent,” developed by Albert Outler, a Wesley scholar and observer at the Second Vatican Council, commits us to interpreting our Articles of Religion that are anti-Catholic and all of our other doctrinal standards “in consonance with our best ecumenical insights and judgment.”

The Wesley Scholar is to be knowledgeable about the Wesleys and Methodism, and about much, much more. This scholar should remember, and help all of us to remember, to quote a crucial component of “Our Theological Task,” that “denominational loyalty is always subsumed in our life in the church of Jesus Christ.”

*The Rev. Martin, a retired elder in the Arkansas Conference, is a professor of religion emeritus at UM-related Oklahoma City University.*



PHOTO BY MIKE RUTHERFORD

## Fire damages Wiggins UMC

A late-night Oct. 22 lightning strike sparked a fire at Wiggins Memorial United Methodist Church Fayetteville. The flames were contained in Heritage Hall, but extensive smoke damage throughout the facility left the congregation displaced for an unknown period of time.

The Wiggins congregation has received support from sister churches in the area. They will worship with Trinity UMC Fayetteville until the building rehabilitation is complete, and Central UMC Fayetteville will host the church’s Cub Scout troop until further notice. Other churches have offered clean-up assistance, which the aging congregation will need.

The Rev. Nan Nelson, pastor of Wiggins UMC, was attending class at Phillips Theological Seminary during the fire and its immediate aftermath. She expressed thankfulness for those who handled the chaos at the scene of the fire, including laity of the church and the Rev. Mackey Yokem, superintendent of the Northwest District.

Nelson also pointed to the power of social media, which enabled friends and colleagues to easily reach out to her and the congregation. She also cited serendipitous posts from Facebook friends, such as a particularly relevant morning meditation by Bishop Mueller, and an Oct. 25 post by Mount Sequoyah Retreat and Conference Center: “God will never leave you empty. He will replace everything you lost. If he asks you to put something down, it’s because he wants you to pick up something greater.”

“I feel that that is the message I’m receiving out of this fire,” Nelson said, noting that her eyes welled up with tears as she read the post from Mount Sequoyah. “It’s the message for Wiggins as we go forward.”

## An award-winning publication

The *Arkansas United Methodist* was among the organizations receiving honors at the 2012 meeting of the United Methodist Association of Communicators (UMAC), held October 17-20 in Arlington, Va. An award of merit in the opinion/editorial category went to Amy Forbus for “God showed up,” her Aug. 3 Editor’s Corner column.



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### Submission Deadlines

Issue Date	Submission Deadline
Dec. 7	Nov. 16
Jan. 4	Dec. 14
Feb. 1	Jan. 17

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## GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST: A word from the Bishop

BY GARY E. MUELLER

# Questions that matter

Sometimes I can't believe I've only been here two months. I've met thousands of people, driven thousands of miles and attended thousands (well, dozens) of meetings. I've laughed, cried and been stretched to grow as I've gotten to know you. I've heard your hopes, dreams and amazing accounts of what God is up to through local United Methodist Churches in Arkansas.

My take-away from these experiences is simple: God is up to something pretty special, and I am blessed beyond belief to be part of it as we carry out our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ whose lives are so transformed that they transform the world.

As I've reflected on my first days with you, I realize that I've heard more questions, from both lay persons and clergy, than I've heard during any other time of my life. Not surprisingly, I've tried to figure out what's behind them all. The common theme is that people are searching for answers about how they can be more faithful disciples who more faithfully carry out Jesus' mission.

This desire for answers has reminded me yet again of the power of questions. In fact, I believe it is more important to have the right questions than it is to have the right answers. The right questions cause you to think—and often struggle—with the most important issues in life. And they help you grow far more than you ever could if someone just provided you with the answers.

I recently compiled a list of important questions that have been helpful to me on my faith journey. I quickly realized, however, that the list was far too long and convoluted. So I asked myself another question: "Which three

questions matter most?" It was a challenging, but worthwhile, exercise. So here they are. I hope they lead you to meaningful conversation with yourself, others and God.

*How are you doing with Jesus?*

*Who are the neighbors Jesus is calling you to reach out to?*

*What are you going to do to share Jesus' love with them?*

I know these three questions are not particularly sophisticated or impressive. But that's the point. They're questions that matter. To God. To you. And to those for whom Jesus died.

Grace and peace,

Gary E. Mueller

## APPOINTMENTS

The following pastoral appointment changes have been officially announced since the 2012 Annual Conference gathering.

- First UMC Fordyce—William "Bill" Cato, effective Oct. 1.
- First UMC Paragould—Don Nolley, interim, effective Nov. 4.
- Graham Chapel UMC—Wayne Bell, effective Sept. 30.
- Hampton/Harrell/Faustina UMCs—Sara Gotschall, effective Sept. 15.
- Rondo/Pleasant Hill UMCs, Texarkana—Harry "Buddy" Hamner, effective Sept. 15.
- St. Paul Maumelle UMC—Nat Grady, effective Oct. 1.
- Wheatley/Salem UMCs—Monty Bell, interim, effective Oct. 1 through Dec. 31.

To see appointment changes as they become official, visit [arumc.org/appointments](http://arumc.org/appointments).

# Grace and love in community: an All Saints' Day reflection

BY TARA DEDMON FINNEY  
*Special Contributor*

Two years ago, I didn't know that Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day existed. Now, I spend Oct. 15 raising awareness and telling my story.

My life is divided into two parts, separated by one very important little boy: Aidan Thomas Finney.

On Sept. 4, 2011, life as I had known it changed forever. At 21 weeks gestation, I gave birth to Aidan. He never drew a breath or uttered a cry, but he has altered the world.

In the hours, days, months and now year since Aidan's birth, there has been a constant source of security for my husband and me. One place and the people who make it up have been so full of grace and love. Cabot United Methodist



Tara Dedmon Finney

Church not only supported us in the immediate aftermath, but also has allowed us to take healing steps at our own pace.

I grew up in Cabot UMC. I was an acolyte, served in the youth group from seventh through 12th grades and have since served in children's ministries. In all of my moves, that church has been "home." It is where I have always felt safe.

### Embraced and supported

While home has been Cabot UMC, the grace we have experienced since Aidan's birth has spread throughout Arkansas. When I delivered, hours away from home, we were allowed to witness the blessing of itinerant clergy in its purest form. I knew that there was no way either of our pastors could get to us and experience Aidan in the immediate moments. But one of Cabot UMC's previous pastors, the Rev. Stephen Coburn, now serves in that part of the state and took it upon himself to come. He prayed with us. He cared for us. He extended God's love.

When we got Aidan home, we

were embraced by the love of our church. We were given the gift of sharing our son with the Rev. Rick Meadows, the pastor who married us. It is a moment of blessing that we cherish.

Our current senior pastor, the Rev. Beth Waldrup, and associate pastor, the Rev. Ben Crismon, have been our security nets. They helped us plan the services that would allow others to have ways of remembering Aidan. They ensured that we were fed. They ensured that we survived the days ahead. The prayers, the tears and the hugs were all things that bolstered us and helped us know how truly loved we are.

There have been so many instances, too many really, where Cabot UMC has surrounded us and loved us through the darkness of grief—a grief that is all too often ignored or shoved away because of the delicacy of a newborn life. Thankfully, our church family embraced Aidan and the place he holds in our lives. Aidan was honored on All Saints' Day, along with the other members of our church family who had died. We

shared his story with hope and love.

When the days were hard, our church family surrounded us and carried us through, never questioning how quickly we would end the grieving process, but simply allowing us to navigate this new path we walk. They have chosen to travel it with us.

### Never alone

We are not alone. We have never been alone. Many families stepped forward and shared their own stories. With their bravery, we were able to realize that over time, we would learn to live in this new normal.

The Methodist theology of grace has allowed me to heal tremendously. Through the guidance of Pastor Beth, I know that God never left my side. I know that I didn't lose my son as a punishment. I know that my God did not look down and choose to break my heart. I know that God is traveling alongside us, just as our church is, and that he carries me when I can go no further.

Recently our journey reached

another milestone. We discovered that we are expecting our second child. While we have no guarantees with this pregnancy, we have chosen to stand on the power of hope and faith. With the encouragement and love from that same church family, we cherish each day we are given with this new life, and we love telling the world that Aidan is a big brother.

In the past year, we as Aidan's parents have sought to make a place for him in this world. His legacy is bound to outlive all of us.

In the past year, I have been described as brave, courageous and inspirational. While I made no decision to take on those qualities, I know that any good that I have done has been because of my love for Aidan, and the love that the church has shown for us as his parents.

*Finney is a member of Cabot UMC and a contributor to the online magazine Still Standing ([stillstandingmag.com](http://stillstandingmag.com)). Look for more information on perinatal bereavement in the Nov. 16 special issue of the Arkansas United Methodist.*

## President (continued from page 1A)

me most about being on the other side.

Now there's still a lot of work in making sure that we prepare our students, and we're doing that. When you look at the alumni who have graduated from this institution and have gone on not only to have done great things in the state of Arkansas, but have helped shape the world, it's amazing. This institution still to this very day is producing those types of individuals.

### It must be exciting to come back and be at the helm here.

Oh, yes, it is. On the day the board was going to make the formal announcement of me as president, I was staying in a downtown hotel and one of the board members picked me up. And so we're driving up Chester Street, and about 23 years of my life were going by. I got myself together, but it was one of those "Am I dreaming?" moments... an unbelievable feeling.

I remember my first convocation here as president, over in M.L. Harris Auditorium. I was sitting up there on the stage, and I was prepared, but having a reflection back of sitting there on the other side. I shared that with the students. I had no clue twenty-something years ago that I'd be there on the other side, talking to them.

And I told them, "Start thinking now of what you can do, about the possibilities." The way you do that is to turn the noise down in your life. I didn't do that—well, to some extent I did, I guess. But being a college

president just was not on the radar. It just was not there. Yet, here I am.

### Your mention of turning down the noise in your life brings to mind the role of faith on campus. How do you see that having an impact?

Well, as a freshman, I didn't particularly understand the connection. Of course, they had chapel then, and they still have that today. But now, to look back upon it all... For example, look at the principles of the United Methodist Church, and at the principles on which this institution was founded.

When people start looking at the Social Justice Initiative that we have in place... well, if you think about the principles of the United Methodists, that's what we're about, and that's always what we've been about. The administration saw the need to make sure it our mission was clearly defined. It has always been there, and I think it's a strong connection between United Methodism and the principles of this institution.

When you look at our mission statement, "To graduate academically accomplished students, grounded as advocates for social justice, determined to change the world for the better," think about the mission of the United Methodist Church—making disciples who transform the world. There's a connection. I think when our students peel back the layers and really understand that, they start making those connections.

That's where we as

administrators have to make sure they understand the connection between the church and what we do. That's what we were founded upon.

### Have you spent time on some goal-setting or vision-casting?

We'll be having a retreat with my cabinet, and that's going to set the foundation. We have a strategic plan in place, but it only goes through 2012. So the timing is good; we have to refresh our strategic plan. My hope is that we as a cabinet can set the foundation and goals, and then put together a strategic planning committee that will drill down and develop action plans to attain those goals that we set.

What I've been doing since July is meeting with students, faculty, staff, community leaders, alumni. The whole idea behind it is to get a holistic perspective of where this institution has been and where we need to go to continue the momentum, that trajectory of moving forward. Before you make substantial changes, you need to have a good feel for where you are. You have to assess the situation and then collectively make those substantial decisions.

So we are on schedule, and the goal is to have a new five-year strategic plan in place by the fall of 2013. We need to know as an institution, as a community, where we're going and how we're going to get there. That strategic plan is to help guide us along.

### Sounds like you've gotten off to a good start on that.

It's been a lot of fun, it really



Dr. Johnny Moore, left, visits with Bishop Gary and Wink Mueller at an Oct. 2 reception hosted by Philander Smith College to welcome the new episcopal family to Arkansas. The Bishop's office is located in the Kendall Center on the campus of Philander Smith College.

AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

has. As I said, it's just so meaningful to be back at the institution where it all started. And I didn't come back to this institution for it to be just an average institution. I came back in hopes of it becoming the best liberal arts college, period. Obviously there's a lot of work involved, but that's OK.

Philander Smith College has

been part of the fabric of this city and this state for over 135 years. This city and this state deserve one of the best liberal arts colleges in central Arkansas. I believe the stars are aligning for that to happen. And it's a lot of work yet to be done, but I think we can get there, and collectively, we can do it.

## Confirmation student begins mission of comfort for kids

During a confirmation class at Hawley Memorial UMC Pine Bluff, the Rev. Jackie Gregory asked Becky Rand, 14, to come up with a mission project to benefit the community. Becky recently had seen news reports of families who had lost everything due to fires. She decided as her mission project to collect teddy bears and other stuffed animals to donate to the American Red Cross to give to children whose homes had been destroyed by fire.

With the help of church members and friends from Hawley Memorial and Wesley UMCs, Becky collected nearly 200 stuffed animals. Gregory says this successful project begun by one of the church's young people will continue as an ongoing mission, with donations directed to a number of organizations.



Joyce Wimberly, left, of the Southeast Arkansas American Red Cross receives stuffed animal donations from Becky Rand and the Rev. Jackie Gregory of Hawley Memorial United Methodist Church.

COURTESY PHOTO

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Even ripples cause ripples

In the Oct. 5 issue, Tom McDonald wrote about the ripples created by actions of his late father, Rev. Charles P. McDonald. While in college, Charles learned to stand against prejudice. As a minister, he stood up for equal rights, teaching his sons that all people are equal. I never met him, but his son David was my co-worker at a state agency. We were both caring for elderly parents, and David had told me about his dad's civil rights activities.

When our agency's director came under fire for an improper hire and denied involvement, David and I refuted his claims. Rev. McDonald followed the media reports while under hospice care; David told me his dad hoped to live to see the matter resolved. After reading an article that contained statements I made, Rev. and Mrs. McDonald asked David to contact me and convey their gratitude for "doing the right thing." Rev. McDonald lived to see the agency director admit his mistake.

David and I share admiration for a man who lived with Christ-like character. Rev. McDonald may have created ripples compared to others' tidal waves, but those ripples touched my life. Incidentally, the McDonalds are white; I am black.

Pamela Ligon Harris  
Wesley Chapel UMC Little Rock

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All letters must be signed (name and city/church) and include the writer's telephone number or email address.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Letters longer than 200 words will not be considered for publication.

The Arkansas United Methodist will not print letters containing personal attacks.

The Arkansas United Methodist reserves the right to publish Letters to the Editor in print, on the web, or both.



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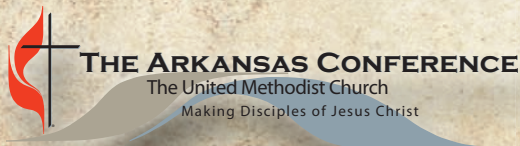
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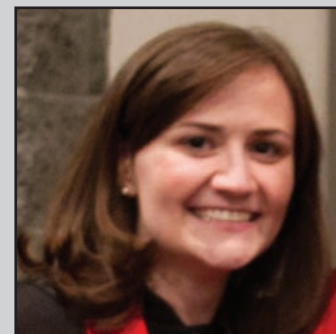
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# Three Arkansas clergy join Advancing Pastoral Leadership program

Of the 15 clergy selected for the Advancing Pastoral Leadership (APL) program of the Center for Clergy Excellence in the Texas Annual Conference, three are members of the Arkansas Conference: the Revs. Lynn Kilbourne, FUMC Conway; Nathan Kilbourne, Asbury UMC Little Rock; and Brittany Richardson Watson, Highland Valley UMC Little Rock.



**Lynn Kilbourne**

These pastors, nominated by the cabinet of the Arkansas Conference, received scholarships from the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (UMFA) to fund their participation.

"Brittany and Lynn are past United Methodist Foundation Seminary Scholars, receiving grants for their seminary education from our foundation and making a commitment to return to the Conference for service to local congregations," said Jim Argue Jr., president of UMFA. "And we claim Nathan too, since he came to the Arkansas Conference after his marriage to Lynn.



**Nathan Kilbourne**

"UMFA Grants Committee members are excited to support this program," he added. "Developing pastoral leadership is one of our strategic priorities."

"I believe the investment in these young leaders is a wise one," said the Rev. Dede Roberts, superintendent of the Central District. "The opportunity for intentional training will encourage excellence in their work and support the passion of their hearts to serve the church and glorify God."



**Brittany Richardson Watson**

APL is a five-year leadership development program funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. The 2012-13 class of participants will have the opportunity to learn from a variety of pastors and community leaders while developing their capacity for fruitful leadership. To encourage significant development, each individual completes a variety of assessments to ascertain gifts and challenges, and is paired with an executive coach and a clergy mentor.

The 2012 APL program began with an October retreat. It was the first of quarterly gatherings that APL participants attend for the first two years, followed by semi-annual gatherings for the next three years. "In a four-day period, we were challenged and encouraged to begin the journey to become the unique leaders God created us to be," Watson said of her experience on the retreat. "To know that I am not on this journey alone, but instead supported by my conference, my church, and my fellow Arkansas and Texas clergy, has already made an important impact on this process for me."

# Texarkana church's food bank recognized by Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance

Jill Whittington, left, Harvest Texarkana executive director, and Linda Crawford of Christ UMC Texarkana recently attended the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance's Hunger Action Month breakfast at the Governor's Mansion in Little Rock. Crawford received the Acting Out Against Hunger award on behalf of the Christ UMC Food Bank team.

Christ UMC's Food Bank began five years ago, when the church distributed groceries to 18 families. "We were literally working out of our car trunks and any empty closet shelf we could find in the church," Crawford said.

Thanks to grants and donations, the pantry now has its own addition to the church's gymnasium. It serves approximately 100 families when it opens its doors for distribution every three weeks. It also supplies food for the local domestic violence center and a homeless shelter. For the 2012-2013 school year, the pantry began providing food for the Genoa and Fouke elementary schools' backpack-based feeding programs. With all these points of outreach, the pantry's ministry touches an estimated 1,350 lives each month.

Christ UMC's partnership with the Harvest Texarkana regional food bank is just one of several community outreach ministries, says the Rev. David Kassos, the church's pastor. Fifteen years ago, with the Rev. John Darnell as its pastor, the church known as College Hill UMC relocated and relaunched as Christ UMC.

"They decided to start over with a new vision of serving Christ," Kassos said. In addition to the food bank, he points to the congregation's ministries in local prisons, events for children who have a parent in prison and support of ministries that help young mothers and abused women as evidence of that new vision bearing fruit.



COURTESY PHOTO/NELSON CHENAULT

## NOMADS (continued from page 1A)

make curtains to mix cement to set fence posts," she says. "When people say they don't know how to do anything, I always tell them that the good Lord is not looking at their abilities, but at their availability. There is always someone on a team that is willing to help you learn to do things."

Some recent health issues have prevented her from doing heavy manual labor, but it hasn't slowed down her ability to serve.

"I can organize just about anything I am faced with, including supply closets and messy offices," she says.

Jerrel Fielder learned about NOMADS at Mount Eagle Retreat Center near Clinton. He was building beds for the newly constructed Beal Lodge when some NOMADS arrived for a working reunion; they invited him to share in their fellowship and devotional time. He and his wife, Linda, liked the idea of continuing to serve while traveling. They ultimately became full-time RVers.

"We purchased a fifth-wheel trailer and worked our first project at Mount Eagle," he said, "and now, five years later, we have worked 35 projects in six different states." On 26 of those projects, the Fielders have served as the team leaders, and Jerrel is now chair of the NOMADS board of directors.

### Arkansas-based projects

Mount Eagle is one of several Arkansas sites registered as a NOMADS host agency, where members can do "drop-in" work or stay for longer projects. NOMADS built Mount Eagle's RV park, and gathers there for an annual work week that also serves as a fellowship time to help keep the Arkansas



Virgie Brown gathers tools for a work project.

COURTESY PHOTO

members connected with each other.

The Rev. Lu Harding, director of Mount Eagle, has a long list of NOMADS-completed projects.

"They have done trail work, painted the Casteel Warren Building inside and out, installed new carpet at Kaetzell Lodge and both cottages, done major cleaning of the lodges... they do it all," she said.

Harding recalled a time when NOMADS went above and beyond for her and the retreat center. In October 2005, a group was just leaving after a week of work when Harding's husband, John, suffered a major heart attack. As she rushed him to the hospital, the NOMADS stayed, taking care of the retreat center's operations for the next eight days.

"I never came back to Mount Eagle until I brought him home after a quadruple bypass surgery and the days of recovery in the hospital," she said. "I didn't worry one bit because I knew that the NOMADS had me covered, and could take care of our guests and our maintenance issues while John and I were gone.

"They are great folks who have become our friends, and they don't mind witnessing to their faith as well as sharing their skills," she added.

### Across state lines

In keeping with the spirit of their name, NOMADS wander beyond Arkansas. Many of the non-disaster relief projects involve helping churches with deferred maintenance, which can take the form of large or small jobs—and sometimes small jobs that grow large.

Jerrel Fielder recalled last winter's project in Jacksonville, Fla., where a team of five set out to make minor repairs to the sanctuary floor of a small church:

"When we pulled the carpet up, we discovered that the entire floor had been destroyed by termites," he said. In response to that unwelcome surprise, several of the congregation's members helped with the labor, and participated in the group's daily devotions, as well.

"We got to know them at a level that we rarely experience," he said. "We did get the floor repaired, and they were able to have services the Sunday after we left and not worry about the organ falling through the floor."

Cecil and Doris Jones, members of Piney Grove UMC Hot Springs, first heard about NOMADS in 2005 through the announcement of a

reunion printed in the *Arkansas United Methodist*. They called Carol Stoner, the contact person listed for the event. Stoner gave them an overview of NOMADS and invited them to the reunion.

"So off we went!" said Doris Jones. "What an experience... we asked people, 'Why are you a NOMAD?' and 'What do you do?' The answers that we received were so wonderful and inspiring. When we left, we said, 'We want to be NOMADS.'"

The Joneses' first project was at Hinton Rural Life Center in Hayesville, N.C., where they worked with five other couples from around the country. Now, they try to take part in at least two NOMADS projects a year, plus the national NOMADS Annual Meeting each fall and the Arkansas NOMADS yearly gathering at Mount Eagle.

### Meaningful life

NOMADS has added purpose to many a retirement—and in some cases, more purpose than any other form of service. For example, when the Browns found their NOMADS opportunities limited by the obligations of Dan's membership on the Rogers City Council, they discussed and prayed about the situation. Ultimately, he decided not to run for another term.

"I thought we could do both at the same time," he said. "However, we found ourselves missing NOMADS." Dan now serves in another elected office: as a representative on the national NOMADS board of directors.

"NOMADS is the best of all worlds," Virgie Brown says. "You're going to help somebody and give of yourself, but then you're also working with your new best friends. And you can go back to your RV and take off your shoes and put your feet up when you're done with the day."

Like many NOMADS members, they cherish the fellowship as well as the meaningful work.

"You can't help but be a better Christian when you're around these folks," says Dan.

"We say it's the best kept secret in the Methodist Church," said Virgie Brown. But they don't want it to stay that way. At the annual meeting, two main areas of focus for 2013 emerged: improving leader training and working harder at getting the word out about NOMADS.

After all, a great way of sharing God's love should never be kept secret.



NOMADS workers frame up a new free-standing bathroom at a church camp in Texas.

PHOTO COURTESY CAROL STONER

## What to know about NOMADS

**How to connect:** Visit [www.nomadsumc.org](http://www.nomadsumc.org) or call toll-free 866-4NOMADS (466-6237).

**Types of projects:** NOMADS can choose 3-week construction-based projects; disaster rebuilding projects; and drop-in projects, where they can work for as long as they want. NOMADS workers provide their own hand tools.

**How to join:** NOMADS membership dues are \$40 per person per year. Visit [nomadsumc.org](http://nomadsumc.org) to learn more.

**NOMADS hosting agencies in Arkansas:** Heifer Ranch, Heifer Project International, Perryville; Langley UMC; First UMC Lockesburg; Mount Eagle Retreat Center.

## Pastor uses hobby to raise funds for needs in Africa



The Rev. Rodney Steele, pastor of First UMC Mountain Home, is using his passion for nature photography to support two United Methodist causes in Africa. He has set up an online store with a selection of his photos, and 100 percent of the profit from his sales will be divided between the Congo Wells Project of the Arkansas Conference, which provides clean water to villages in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and

Imagine No Malaria, the denomination-wide effort to end deaths from malaria by 2015.

The photo above was taken at Petit Jean State Park. To view Steele's portfolio, visit [rodneysteele.zenfolio.com](http://rodneysteele.zenfolio.com).

PHOTO BY RODNEY STEELE

## Voting: What would Wesley say?

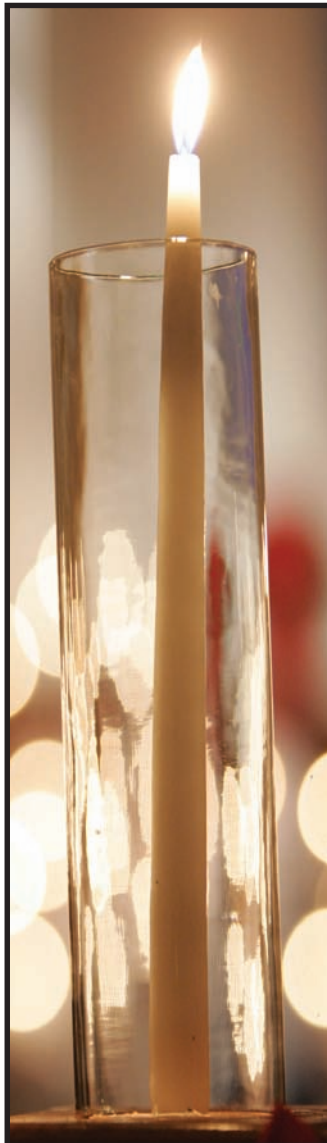


John Wesley, oil on canvas, painted in Tewksbury, England, by an unknown artist in 1771. A UMNS photo reproduced with permission from the Methodist Collection of Drew University Library.

*"I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election, and advised them, 1. To vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy; 2. To speak no evil of the person they voted against; And, 3. To take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side."*

—John Wesley, *Journal* entry for Oct. 6, 1774

"Wesley's advice on voting hits on some important considerations that are just as relevant for us as they were at the time," says the Rev. Andrew Thompson, Wesley scholar for the Arkansas Conference. "He suggests that we make our decision based on the merits and character of the candidates in question—and, we might add, the merits of the positions they hold. He advises us not to poison the body politic with unnecessary negative commentary against the candidate we do not favor. And he counsels us not to think ill of people whose honestly held political views differ from our own. All in all, this is pretty good ethical advice on the practice of voting in a democratic system."



The Hendrix College Choir presents the 48th Annual

## *Candlelight Carol Service*

Nov. 29, 30 & Dec. 1 at 7:30 p.m.  
Dec. 2 at 4 p.m.

Greene Chapel • Hendrix College • Conway  
Reservations required. Call 501-450-1495 beginning Nov. 19.

### *Tour Services*

Thursday, December 13 at 7:30 p.m.  
Belle Meade United Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee

Friday, December 14 at 7:30 p.m.  
Lakewood United Methodist Church, North Little Rock

## This Christmas, Start a New Tradition

### GIVE THE GIFT OF HOPE TO AN ARKANSAS FAMILY

Methodist Family Health is a nonprofit organization that provides comprehensive psychiatric and behavioral healthcare to children and families throughout Arkansas. By donating to Methodist Family Health, you'll improve the lives of thousands of Arkansas families in desperate need of answers and guidance. This Christmas, listen to your heart and help us care for the children and families who need your love and support.

#### Share your love by choosing one of these three options:

-  Visit [www.methodistfamily.org](http://www.methodistfamily.org) for online giving
-  Make checks payable to Methodist Family Health Foundation and mail to P.O. Box 56050, Little Rock, AR 72215
-  Call (501) 661-0720 ext. 7304



 [MethodistFamily.org](http://MethodistFamily.org)

 **Methodist**  
FAMILY HEALTH  
Rebuilding the Lives of Children and Families Since 1899

## PEOPLE OF FAITH

## New Conference ministry coordinators selected

The Arkansas Conference has named three individuals to part-time ministry coordinator positions. These coordinators will help connect and provide resources for local churches in the areas of Volunteers in Mission, youth and young adult ministries and children's ministry. All three coordinators began work on Oct. 15.

**The Rev. Byron Mann** has been named the Conference Volunteers in Mission (VIM) Coordinator. He most recently served as a part-time local pastor appointed to DeAnn and Hinton UMCs, and will continue as co-coordinator of Arkansas Conference disaster response efforts with his wife, Janice.



Byron Mann

He is a certified trainer for UMCOR Early Response Teams, and has served as team leader for more than a dozen VIM trips, including 11 trips to Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

At the community level, Mann has served as mass care coordinator for the Hempstead County office of emergency management since 2005; operated an evacuee shelter following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and participated in a number of training courses through the American Red Cross. Through his involvement with the South Central Jurisdiction's Disaster Response Academy, he has forged connections with a number of VIM and disaster response coordinators from neighboring states.

To receive information on VIM training opportunities, as well as notice of upcoming VIM trips, contact Mann at 870-777-9305 (home), 870-703-8361 (mobile) or vim@arumc.org.

**Michelle Moore** is the new Conference Coordinator for Youth and Young Adult Ministries. A youth minister since 2003, she has served as director of youth ministries at First United Methodist Church Conway since 2008. A graduate of Hendrix College, she anticipates receiving her Masters degree in Specialized Ministry with an emphasis in Youth Ministry from Southwestern College in December of this year.

Moore has experience as a volunteer at the Conference level, serving as adult coordinator for the Arkansas Conference Council on Youth Ministries (ACCYM) since 2009. She is the 2011 recipient of the Hendrix College Youth Minister of the Year award.

Contact Moore at michelle.moore@arumc.org with questions about youth and young adult ministry resources.

**Karen Swales** has been selected as the Conference Children's Ministry Coordinator. She has served as a minister to families with children at First United Methodist Church Springdale since 2003. She develops and implements Christian education programs for children ages birth through 5th grade and their families and conducts weekly children's chapel services.



Karen Swales

She received bachelor's degrees in elementary and special education and later, a Master of Education degree in special education, all from the University of Arkansas. She has also completed coursework for a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction.

Before joining the staff of First UMC Springdale, Swales was a special education teacher. She also has taught courses in special education at the University of Arkansas and John Brown University. In 2000, she was honored by the Arkansas Council for Exceptional Children as Teacher of the Year. She is the 2012 recipient of the Mary and Ira A. Brumley Award for Religious Education from Hendrix College.

Contact Swales at karen.swales@arumc.org with questions about children's ministry resources.



Michelle Moore

## 'One Service Day' moves church beyond its doors

BY COLLEEN HOLT  
Special Contributor

On Sunday, Sept. 2, First United Methodist Church Conway held its first One Service Day. More than 300 people gathered in the sanctuary for one worship service, followed by a meal in the great hall. Then, about 95 people participated in service projects throughout the church and city.

In preparation for One Service Day, congregation members of all ages worked with staff to organize several different service projects. Volunteers signed up for the projects online or by calling the church office, and plenty of open spots were reserved for anyone who didn't sign up in advance. Projects included cleaning a local cemetery, helping with a church member's yard maintenance and picking up litter in local parks.

The Townsell family—Conway Mayor Tab Townsell, his wife Donna and daughter Riley—worked at Laurel Park.

"When I reviewed the choices for the One Service Day project, I wanted to find something that would be meaningful to our 6-year-old daughter, Riley, and that she could participate in," said Tab Townsell. "When I saw cleaning up a park on the list, I thought that was perfect for us, as Riley loves to play at Laurel Park. But when she's there she doesn't walk around the park looking at it from the eyes of sanitation, she is there to play. It was a great experience for her to realize when you slow down and look around you how much people abuse the public treasures we have."

The city's EcoFest event was planned at Laurel Park for the weekend following One Service Day.

"We also attended EcoFest the next weekend, so Riley felt a part of



Ward Boone, a member of First UMC Conway, picks up trash at Laurel Park.

COURTESY PHOTO

cleaning up the park for others to enjoy—including herself," he added. "It was a great experience for our family as well as the church to give back to the community... its ministry reaches outside the walls and is available to all."

Lora and Ward Boone brought out the whole family—children Ethan, Gwen and Kinsey—for One Service Day.

"This was a unique opportunity for the members of FUMC to devote time to projects around the church and the community," said Lora Boone. "Our busy lives give us so many excuses not to get involved with the many little projects that need to be done in our church and in our town."

"Many times I've driven by Laurel Park and seen trash, thinking 'someone should really pick that up.' Well, One Service Day allowed me to be that 'someone,'" she said.

Holt serves as communications assistant for First UMC Conway.

## A church on the move... down the parade route

The Sept. 22 Perry County Fair Parade included a float from Perryville United Methodist Church. In keeping with the parade theme, "Old Fashioned Country Fair," the float harkened back to 1845, the year the church was established. Perryville UMC members rode in a re-creation of an old fashioned "brush arbor," wearing clothing styles common in the late 19th and early 20th century. Accompanied by concertina, guitar, harmonica and violin, the group sang selections from the Cokesbury Hymnal.



PHOTO COURTESY PERRY COUNTY HEADLIGHT

The most important element of the float: It extended an invitation to worship at Perryville UMC, both on Sunday mornings and for "Sunday Night Live" at 6 p.m. on the last Sunday of each month. The congregation found a new way to get out into the community, and also took second place in the float competition. —submitted by Ida Rose

## CLASSIFIEDS

**PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED** in the *Arkansas United Methodist* for 60 cents per word, no limit. Call 501-324-8037, email aforbus@arumc.org or mail to: *Arkansas United Methodist*, 800 Daisy Bates Drive, Little Rock, AR 72202.

**Camp Tanako is seeking an executive director.** This position is responsible for oversight/management/operations of entire facility and programming year-round. Resumes are to be emailed to pastorstaton@yahoo.com by November 16, 2012.

**Home Study:** Save \$\$\$ Christian Bible College, P.O. Box 8968 Rocky Mt., NC 27804 Phone (252) 451-1031; [www.christianbiblecollege.org](http://www.christianbiblecollege.org).





## A message from Mark Epperson, director

On July 1, the newly created Center for Technology (CFT) launched with the vision of developing the technological resources necessary to help local churches in the Arkansas Conference in making disciples and reaching their mission field. As the CFT ramps up over the coming months, it will begin offering technology, training, communications and marketing to help congregations collaborate easily and grow in mission-fulfilling vitality.



**Mark Epperson**

The CFT plans to standardize and facilitate communication among churches, districts and the Conference and support pastors, staff and laity by delivering opportunities for growth, networking and technology skill development. Additionally, the CFT will develop standards and best practices for hardware and software, and will provide counsel to local churches for upgrading technology infrastructure. Finally, the CFT hopes to increase entry and connection points to engage the unchurched and “nominal” members.

As we continue to lay the foundation for full-scale operations, including the phased-in addition of staff—see the job postings listed below—we will take on technology projects and consultations on a case-by-case basis. The projected launch date for full-scale services is March 2013. We appreciate your feedback, as well as your prayers, during this process.

If you have questions concerning the CFT, send an email to [techcenterinfo@arumc.org](mailto:techcenterinfo@arumc.org). Send all communications and marketing requests, including submissions for the Conference Email Network, to [communications@arumc.org](mailto:communications@arumc.org).

## COMING UP

### November

#### United Methodist Women of First UMC North Little Rock host ‘HollyFest’ Nov. 2

First UMC North Little Rock is the site of HollyFest on Friday evening, Nov. 2, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. HollyFest includes a chili supper, handmade gifts and baked goods, live entertainment, silent auction items and children’s activities. The church’s United Methodist Women will direct all HollyFest proceeds to missions. The church is at 6701 JFK Boulevard in North Little Rock.

#### Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty dinner Nov. 8

The Arkansas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty will hold its annual meeting Nov. 8 at Our Lady of Holy Souls Catholic Church, 1003 N. Tyler Street in Little Rock. The keynote speaker this year will be Scott Bass, the new executive director of Murder Victims’ Families for Reconciliation. Tickets are \$25 each for the evening, which includes a 6 p.m. reception followed by dinner at 7 p.m. To reserve your seat, email [info@acadp.org](mailto:info@acadp.org) with your name and how many tickets you would like to purchase.

### December

#### ‘Mitto’ youth mission event Dec. 26-30 in Springdale; early-bird registration deadline Dec. 1

WHAT IS MITTO? Pronounced me-toe, *mitto* is Latin for mission. Mitto is five days full of missions and outreach in a specific regional area. For its second year, Senior High Youth participating in Mitto will help the community in and around Northwest Arkansas, using First UMC Springdale as base camp. This event focuses on missions, fellowship, worship and being the hands and feet of Jesus.

Mitto 2012 runs from Dec. 26 through 30. The cost is \$60 per person for those who register by Dec. 1, and \$85 for registrations received by the Dec. 15 deadline. Mitto is limited to

60 registrants, with a maximum of five registrations per church. For a registration form, visit [arumc.org/register](http://arumc.org/register).

#### Tuckerman UMC celebrates 125 years on Dec. 2

Tuckerman United Methodist Church, 108 Highway 67 in Tuckerman, will hold a celebratory service commemorating its 125th anniversary on Sunday, Dec. 2 at 10:30 a.m. A dinner will follow in the church’s fellowship hall. All pastors and family who have served or worshipped at the Tuckerman church are invited to attend. Pastors who would like to participate in the ceremony should contact Jamie Darling at [jamedarling@gmail.com](mailto:jamedarling@gmail.com) or 501-454-5612 by Nov. 20. To learn more, call the church office at 870-349-2389, or visit the congregation’s Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/tuckermanmethodistchurch](http://www.facebook.com/tuckermanmethodistchurch).

#### ‘Mrs. Santa’s Kitchen’ at Sequoyah UMC Fayetteville Dec. 8

Mrs. Santa’s Kitchen, an annual event featuring homemade cookies, candy, bread and gifts, will be held on Saturday, Dec. 8, 2012, from 9 a.m. to noon at Sequoyah United Methodist Church, 1910 Old Wire Road in Fayetteville. All proceeds from the event will benefit local missions. For additional information, contact the church office at 479-442-8677.

#### ‘Christmas in the Quarter’ at Quapaw Quarter UMC Dec. 9

Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church, 1600 S. Louisiana in Little Rock, will host its 9th annual Christmas in the Quarter holiday tour of homes on Sunday, Dec. 9 from 2-6 p.m. The event raises funds for Quapaw Quarter UMC and its missions.

Guests will tour five holiday-decorated homes, learn a bit about the history of each, and enjoy appetizers, beverages and live music. Guests can walk from home to home or take one of two trolleys. The tour will begin and end at the church. Advance tickets are available at [qqumc.org/citq](http://qqumc.org/citq).

## ARKANSAS CONFERENCE OFFICE JOB POSTINGS

### Position: Communications/Marketing Technologies Specialist

The Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church is seeking an experienced Communications/Marketing Technologies Specialist to play a key role in the day-to-day operations of a technology center that supports the “digital connections” used to fulfill the mission and goals of the church. The position is based in Little Rock.

#### Essential Job Functions and Responsibilities:

**Problem Solving and Support:** Provides leadership developing/delivering/supporting communications/marketing systems. Advises end users on routine questions regarding applications’ features/functions.

**Written and Oral Communications:** Creates comprehensive written presentations on features/functions of communications/marketing applications and suggestions for their use. Able to develop materials in a variety of presentation media.

**Systems Integration:** Identifies communications and marketing applications and identifies options for utilization within an integrated system to solve a wide range of user needs.

**Marketing:** Develops and supports technologies used for recruiting potential new church members. Takes direction from, and collaborates with leadership in the church in marketing the services of the ARUMC.

**Product and Supplier Research:** Surveys end users to clarify desired outcomes and identifies general purpose for new applications, systems, etc. Compares and contrasts existing technologies with other vendor technologies.

**Information Technology Industry Trends:** Basic familiarity with current and future trends of the IT industry. Able to analyze end user technology needs and requirements and research IT solutions.

#### Additional Skills, Abilities and Position Requirements:

- Working knowledge of web-based applications and search engines.
- Experience with/working knowledge of Communications and Marketing applications.
- Working knowledge/advanced skills with MS Office, Mac Environment, Google Apps.

**Compensation Package:** Market-competitive salary plus outstanding benefits (including comprehensive health coverage, retirement program and vacation, sick pay, and paid holiday plans).

### Position: Tier I Support - Helpdesk Specialist

The Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church is seeking an experienced Helpdesk Support Specialist to play a key role in the day-to-day operations of a technology center that supports the “digital connections” used to fulfill the mission and goals of the church. The position is based in Little Rock.

#### Essential Job Functions and Responsibilities:

**Problem Solving and Support:** Able to install, troubleshoot, and solve basic hardware, software and connectivity problems. Determines scope and severity and priority of problems as they occur. Researches and discusses all possible problem resolutions with customers.

**Written and Oral Communications:** Writes reports summarizing steps taken to solve problems. Provides comprehensive responses to a broad range of questions asked about applications/systems solutions presented.

**Project Management:** Evaluates and prioritizes incoming telephone, voicemail and email requests for assistance from technology users experiencing problems. Logs and tracks all calls in the help desk support database and maintains trouble ticket records and related problem documentation.

**Performance Under Pressure:** Able to maintain a professional, composed demeanor. Handles difficult or emotional customer situations. Able to set and achieve challenging goals and deadlines. Demonstrates persistence and overcomes obstacles.

**Information Technology Industry Trends:** Very knowledgeable with the information technology industry. Maintains a comprehensive familiarity with current and future trends of the IT industry.

#### Additional Skills, Abilities and Position Requirements:

- Working knowledge or ability to learn Help Desk Management application.
- Basic computer skills and familiarity with installs, configs, file management, communications.
- Working knowledge/advanced skills with MS Windows, Mac OS, MS Office and Google Applications

**Compensation Package:** Market-competitive salary plus outstanding benefits (including comprehensive health coverage, retirement program and vacation, sick pay, and paid holiday plans).

The application deadline for both of these positions is Nov. 30. For more detailed descriptions and how to apply, see the Job Listings section of [www.arumc.org](http://www.arumc.org).

# Arkansas tries new job seeker, employer plan



Bobby Ward gives a life skills presentation at Better Community Development in Little Rock. The presentation is an enhancement component of the Jobs for Life program.

PHOTO COURTESY BETTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

BY LINDA BLOOM  
United Methodist News Service

United Methodists in Arkansas are engaging in denominational matchmaking to pair potential employers with graduates of a job-training program for those recovering from addiction.

The prospective match: Little Rock area church members who also are employers and graduates of the "Jobs for Life" program at Better Community Development, originally founded in 1967 as Black Community Developers, an outreach program of Theresa Hoover United Methodist Church.

A side benefit from a successful marriage: a model that could be replicated across the denomination.

By focusing on partnership rather than blame in a difficult economic climate, the model puts a positive spin on the relationship between employers and workers, said the Rev. Israel Alvaran of the United Methodist Board of Church

and Society.

"Sometimes, in economic justice campaigns, there's the tendency to demonize business," noted Alvaran, a United Methodist pastor from the Philippines now based in San Francisco. "As people of faith, our role is really to be bridge builders in the midst of these contentious issues."

The courtship began with Alvaran, one of six grassroots organizers hired by the United Methodist Board of Church and Society to strengthen networks among local churches and annual conferences on specific issues. The idea, he explained, is "to increase intentional outreach. The best lobbyists for public policy are constituents, and they are in our churches."

"I see my role as more of a matchmaker," he said. "They're the ones doing the work on the ground."

## Arkansas connection

In the Arkansas Conference,

Alvaran connected with the Rev. Steve Copley, who has been involved with the Board of Church and Society on economic justice issues. An ordained Elder who is a church and community worker for the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, Copley also works with local congregations on immigration issues as director of Arkansas Justice for Our Neighbors.

He led a religious coalition to increase the state minimum wage in 2006; was chairman of "Let Justice Roll," a campaign to raise the federal minimum wage; and serves as chair of the Arkansas Interfaith Alliance.

Copley gathered a core group of interested church members and he, Alvaran and John Hill, director for economic and environmental justice at the Board of Church and Society, planned a training session in Little Rock, which has some of the largest United Methodist churches in the state. Twenty-five people attended the June event.

One of Copley's key contacts is

Deborah Bell, with whom he has served with on church projects and non-profit boards over the years. Bell is director of community development for Better Community Development, which serves low-income, disadvantaged and at-risk children, youth and families. The organization's \$5 million fundraising drive has resulted in the construction of the organization's new "Empowerment Center," to be finished later this year.

The executive director of Better Community Development, supported by the denomination's annual Human Relations Day offering, is the Rev. William Robinson Jr., pastor emeritus of Theresa Hoover United Methodist Church and Bell's father.

The organization's Hoover Treatment Center runs a state-licensed intensive residential and out-patient program for men and women with addictions. Some graduates of that treatment program enroll in "Jobs for Life," formerly called Jobs Partnership, an eight-week national curriculum that originated in Raleigh, N.C., to provide training for chronically unemployed or underemployed people.

Another advantage of the job-training program is additional days of addiction treatment. "In most cases, treatment is only 30 days," Bell explained. "The people who are serious, their treatment is extended longer because they're involved with Jobs for Life."

Just completing Jobs for Life is a victory for some of its graduates, she noted, but that accomplishment does not guarantee a career path. "After they completed the training, they would get very discouraged because they couldn't find jobs," she said.

So Bell posed the question: Could her graduates be connected with employers attending United Methodist churches?

## Reaching out to employers

Copley and others believe the answer is yes. He has been visiting United Methodist pastors in the Little Rock area and asking them to take one church member who is an employer to a special lunch this fall to "hear what we're trying to do. I think we're going to be fairly successful."

He is confident he can get employers engaged in the project because Better Community

Development is respected as a "trusted institution" and offers a built-in accountability system.

"What we'll do is continue to provide case management for the client," Bell said. "It's a post-treatment concept." The organization also will provide housing for the new employees.

Both cited Trinity United Methodist Church, which is expanding its own work with the jobless, as a congregation already engaged with the project. Bell met Trinity's mission chairperson at the June training and said the church made a donation for her organization's new facility.

Alvaran, Copley and Bell agree the model being formed in the Little Rock area could be adapted elsewhere, giving local churches a means to move traditional programs such as support groups and résumé-writing workshops for the unemployed.

Bell said she knows other church-related community developers who "would welcome the opportunity" to connect with annual conferences on employment projects.

"We [church members] do good meetings and excellent training, but as far as taking that information and really using it in communities that are stressed or there's a lot of poverty, I think we're challenged in that area," Bell said.

Bloom is a United Methodist News Service multimedia reporter based in New York.

## Interested in helping?

Are you an employer who would like to help people get back on their feet through partnering with a job training program? Contact the Rev. Copley, [scopley438@gmail.com](mailto:scopley438@gmail.com) or 501-626-9220.

Pastors and employers who wish to attend the informational luncheon mentioned above also should contact Copley. The gathering is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 14, and will be hosted at First UMC Little Rock.

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# Program hopes to deliver 5,000 cups to local hospitals

## Searcy teen brainchild behind Kupz for Kidz

BY KYLE TROUTMAN  
The Daily Citizen

SEARCY—Erin Pike knows how difficult it can be for children with special needs to use hospital-provided cups.

Her brother, Jacob, was born with nine different birth defects and makes multiple visits a year to Arkansas Children's Hospital.

The hospital provides plastic foam cups to children with special needs during visits, but Pike said the unfamiliarity with the foreign cups and kids' tendency to chew up the foam makes the cups unfit.

While most 14-year-old high school students would just deal, Pike decided to do something about it.

In observance of October being National Disabilities Awareness month, along with seeing the needs of her brother, Pike is spearheading the Kupz for Kidz program at St. Paul United Methodist Church Searcy.

The program has a goal of obtaining 5,000 spill-proof sippy cups, which will be donated to Arkansas Children's Hospital for

children with special needs, like Jacob.

"We always bring a cup from home because he feels more comfortable with it," she said. "Kids tend to bite the Styrofoam cups and wind up eating them, and we wanted to help. I think it's really cool and I've wanted to do it for a couple years."

Melissa Wolfe, assistant director of volunteer services at Arkansas Children's Hospital, said she was excited to hear about Pike's plan.

"Arkansas Children's Hospital is always excited to have community support and a passion to help the hospital," she said.

Youth Minister Cody Bauman, who has only been at St. Paul UMC for a few months, said he latched on to Pike's idea as soon as he heard it.

"It's like Linus' blanket from Peanuts," he said. "We want to give kids something that is like home."

Wolfe said the cups will be great for parents in a rush or children looking for a more normal setting.

"Parents come in a hurry and forget to grab a sippy cup or a cup the child needs, so it's nice to

provide them with something," she said. "[The cups will] give patients a feeling of home and comfort in a more normalized environment."

Bauman said Pike's original goal was 50 cups, but he had bigger ideas.

"I challenged her to get 500 cups," he said. "My plan all along was 5,000 cups, but I thought if I told her that right off she would get overwhelmed."

Pike has taken the challenge and run with it, already topping her 500-cup goal, as the church had received 549 cups as of early October.

"It's the mission of our church to help kids with special needs," Bauman said. "Many of the kids in our youth group have siblings with special needs."

Bauman said the Kupz for Kidz program has had all sorts of donors, from individuals, to businesses, to motorcycle clubs like the Sons of Thunder.

The program has raised over \$1,000 worth of cups, most of which will be delivered to Arkansas Children's Hospital. Bauman said



Erin Pike hands two Nuby brand sippy cups to her little brother Jacob. Pike spearheaded the Kupz for Kidz program at St. Paul United Methodist Church, which is collecting spill-proof cups to donate to children with special needs at the Arkansas Children's Hospital.

PHOTO BY KYLE TROUTMAN

any leftover cups the hospital does not need may go to local hospitals in White County, but he does not know for sure if that will happen.

For those who wish to donate, Bauman and Pike said Nuby cups, \$2.25 at WalMart, are the best because they have silicone tips that help children who have issues with straws. The group is also getting spill-proof cups from dollar stores.

The Kupz for Kidz program

took place during the entire month of October, with Pike hoping to deliver 5,000 cups to the hospital in early November.

To donate or for more information, call 501-203-9782, email [info@thetruthforall.org](mailto:info@thetruthforall.org) or visit [www.kupzforkidz.org](http://www.kupzforkidz.org).

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## Children's Sabbath marked by connecting the generations



St. Paul UMC Little Rock on Oct. 14 observed Children's Sabbath by reaching out to a local retirement facility. Bob Bidewell, director of music ministries, and Liz Wright, director of children's ministries, coordinated rehearsals for several weeks so the children could offer their music as part of a worship service at Presbyterian Village. Twenty-one children and 24 adults from St. Paul attended the service. Of the Presbyterian Village residents present, four were longtime St. Paul members. Minister-in-residence the Rev. Ray Brown thanked the children for adding something special to the residents' Sunday worship service experience.

Children's Sabbath is an annual observance sponsored by the Children's Defense Fund, and is marked with special worship services, learning programs and advocacy activities. The goal is to engage people of faith in the lives of children and their families by "offering the opportunity for houses of worship to renew and live out their moral responsibility to care, protect and advocate for all children."

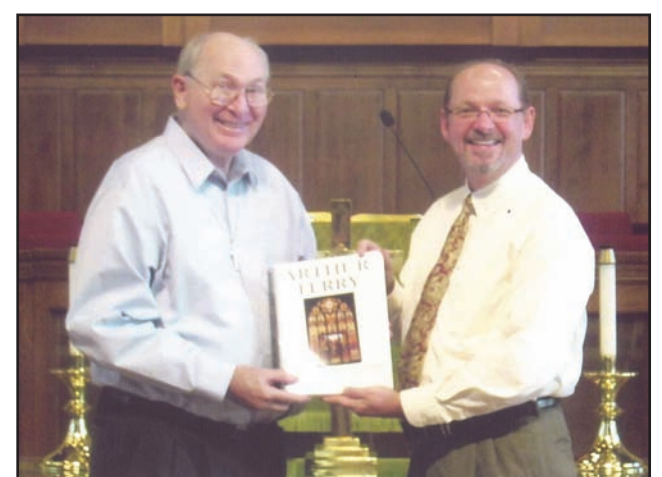
## Church makes laundry detergent for distribution through food pantry

Like many similar organizations, Jonesboro's Helping Neighbors Food Pantry offers more than groceries when possible. One item that can cut into a household's budget is laundry detergent, but it is often in short supply at pantries, because while it is needed, it tends to be overshadowed by the pantry's central focus. Members of Shiloh UMC Jonesboro have begun making homemade laundry detergent to help meet the need for Helping Neighbors clients.

Packaged in donated bottles, the batch shown amounted to 255 pounds of detergent and cost only a few dollars to make. To learn more about the project, including how to make the detergent, contact Linda Fowler at [linda.fowler@yahoo.com](mailto:linda.fowler@yahoo.com) or 870-243-2067.



## Arthur Terry publishes autobiography, sermon collection



COURTESY PHOTO

Dr. Robert Terry, left, presents a copy of *From There... To Here*, the autobiography and collected sermons of his father, Dr. Arthur Terry, to the Rev. Bruce Bennett of First UMC Texarkana. The younger Terry edited the book; the elder Terry wrote it to chronicle his life's journey, from being born in a log cabin in Dumas to serving as a pastor and district superintendent throughout the Little Rock Conference. He is now retired.

Copies of the book have been given to each church Terry served, as well as to family members. To learn more about the book or purchase a copy, contact Carolyn Terry at 870-234-7446 or [c.e.terry@suddenlink.net](mailto:c.e.terry@suddenlink.net).

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## Can't make Ingathering Nov. 17? Early drop-off locations available

The 2012 Ingathering, set for Saturday, Nov. 17, marks the 35th year of this annual supply drive to benefit relief ministry in Arkansas and worldwide. Much of Ingathering's success depends on the ability to transport kits and supplies from all corners of the state to the Arkansas Rice Depot on the appointed date. To help make that transport possible, several churches serve as drop-off locations in advance of the big day.

### Northeast District

St. Paul UMC Jonesboro  
2201 S. Culberhouse St.  
870-932-2083

Drop-off days: Monday, Nov. 12 to Thursday, Nov. 15.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. To make a drop-off on Friday, Nov. 16, call the church office before Thursday at 2 p.m. to arrange a time.

First UMC Batesville - Fellowship Hall

615 E. Main St.  
870-793-3803

Drop-off days: Monday, Nov. 12 to Friday, Nov. 16.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call ahead at 870-793-5247 if you need to make a drop-off after 4 p.m.

### Northwest District

First UMC Harrison  
1100 W. Bower Ave.  
870-741-2351

Drop-off days: Tuesday, Nov. 13 to Thursday, Nov. 15.

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

First UMC Springdale

206 W. Johnson Ave.  
479-751-4610

Drop-off days: Tuesday, Nov. 13 to Thursday, Nov. 15.

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Goddard UMC Fort Smith

1922 Dodson Ave.  
479-785-1415

Drop-off days: Tuesday, Nov. 13 to Thursday, Nov. 15.

Hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### Southeast District

First UMC Monticello

317 S. Main St.  
870-367-2471

Monday, Nov. 5 to Thursday, Nov. 8.  
Hours: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., and 1:30

p.m. to 4 p.m. Call the church office if you need to schedule a different drop-off time.

First UMC Pine Bluff

200 West 6th St.  
870-535-0935

Drop-off days: Monday, Nov. 12 to Thursday, Nov. 15.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call the church office to schedule a different drop-off time.

First UMC Forrest City

101 South Izard St.  
870-633-1094

Drop-off days: Monday, Nov. 5 to Thursday, Nov. 8.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., and 1:30 pm to 4 p.m. Call the church office to schedule a different drop-off time.

### Southwest District

First UMC Hot Springs - Christian Life Center

1100 Central Ave.  
501-623-6668

Drop-off day: Saturday, Nov. 10.

Hours: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Contact person: Candi Poirier

Asbury UMC Magnolia

1300 East Magnolia  
870-234-5594

Drop-off days: Monday, Nov. 5 to Thursday, Nov. 8.

Hours: Call the church office to schedule a time.

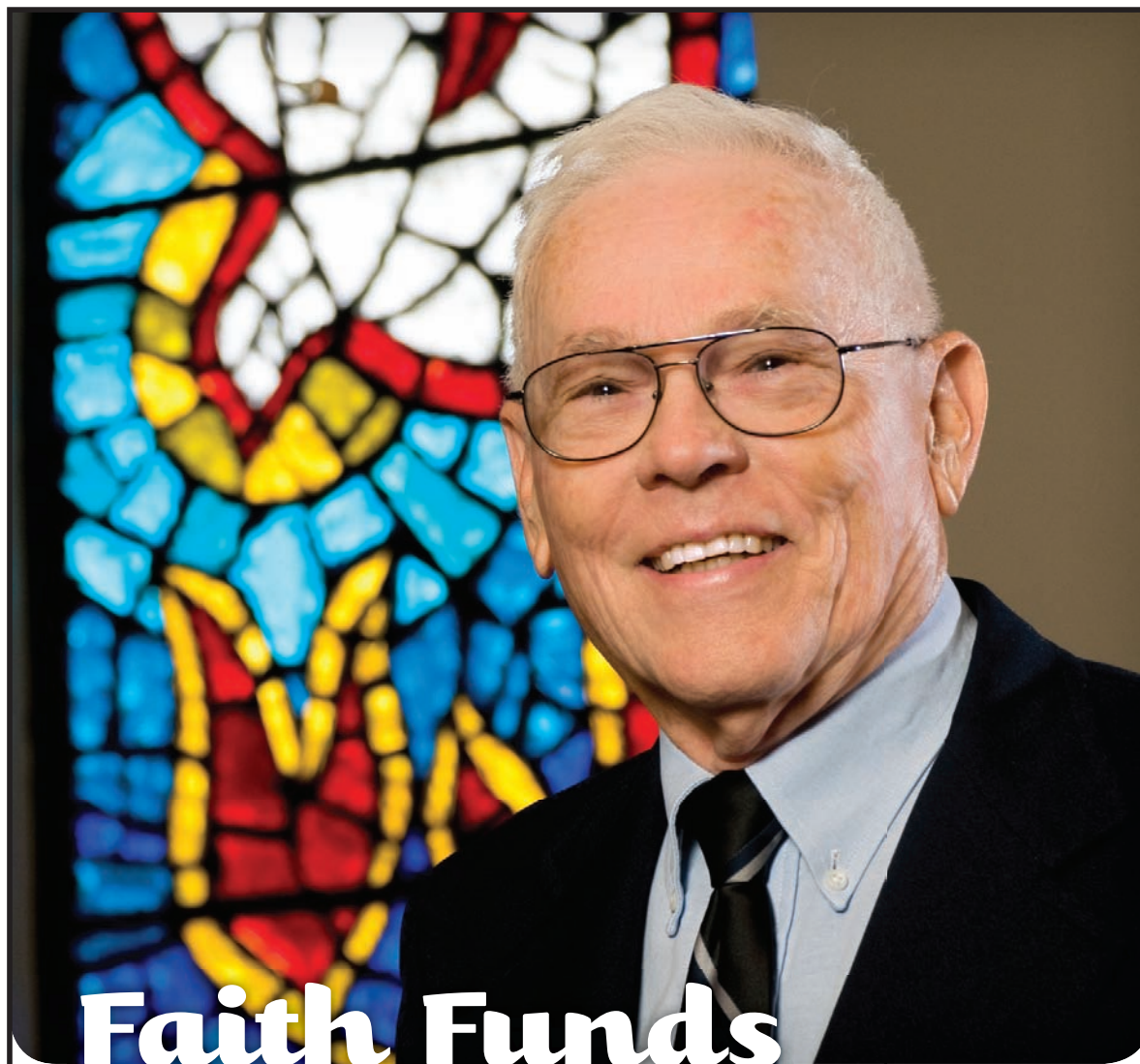
First UMC Prescott

125 West 2nd Street North  
870-887-2441

Drop-off days: Monday, Nov. 5 to Thursday, Nov. 8.

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Please call first.

For lists of supplies to include in the various kits, see [www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies](http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies).



## Faith Funds

### *Serving His Church Family Forever*

Retired engineer Kenneth Brumley joined Wesley United Methodist Church when he moved to Conway 10 years ago to be near his daughter's family. Soon the entire congregation was family to Mr. Brumley. "My church is the focus of my life."

A lifelong Methodist, he teaches Sunday School, sings in the choir, and is past chairman of the Trustees for this congregation that averages 60-70 in services each week. Mr. Brumley spends most every day at Wesley UMC doing light maintenance tasks and working at their Bread Basket Food Bank that feeds 900-1,000 people a month.

"For my lifetime, I have extra income from an investment in a charitable gift annuity with the United Methodist Foundation," said Mr. Brumley. "But the best thing about having an annuity is that when I go, the money in my account is left to the church." Recently, he created a second gift annuity account with UMFA, further ensuring that the support he gives today to his church family can continue after his lifetime.

If you would like to learn more about how gift annuities can benefit United Methodist causes in Arkansas, contact UMFA Vice President of Development Janet Marshall at [jmarshall@umfa.org](mailto:jmarshall@umfa.org) or call her at the Foundation.



### The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas

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