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The Rev. Susan Ledbetter, Southeast District Superintendent, gives the devotional at a joint meeting of the staff-parish relations committees from three churches: First UMC Helena, West Helena UMC and Elaine UMC.

AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

Ripe for rebirth

Three Delta churches form one parish to focus on mission

BY AMY FORBUS
Editor

HELENA-WEST HELENA, Ark.—In an area with a rich heritage and a struggling economy that seems on the cusp of recovery, three United Methodist congregations have begun to explore uncharted territory. With their shared mission field in mind, they met on April 28 and May 14 to form the East Phillips County Parish.

The timing of pastors moving from First UMC Helena and the West Helena/Elaine UMC two-point charge created space for looking at a change, says the Rev. Susan Ledbetter, superintendent of the Southeast District.

“The opportunity presented itself for saying ‘What could be

different here?’ instead of just appointing as usual,” she said.

Beginning June 30, churches of the East Phillips County Parish will share a senior pastor, the Rev. Mike Wilkie, and an associate pastor, the Rev. Michael C. Dodson.

But they’ll share more than the responsibility of paying clergy compensation; they’re also entering into what’s known in district superintendent shorthand as “the Paragraph 213 process.”

Assessing potential

Paragraph 213 in the *United Methodist Book of Discipline* (the church’s law book) bears the title, “A Process for Assessment of Local Church Potential.”

Often, the Paragraph 213

process is a step on the path to closing a congregation. But not always.

“I’ve used it, but not like this,” says the Rev. Dr. Kurt Boggan, director of the Arkansas Conference Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence in Leadership and a former district superintendent. He has assigned not one, but two congregational coaches—laity who will walk beside the churches to ask questions and offer support—to help the East Phillips County Parish navigate the process.

Boggan praised the willingness of all parties to examine the churches’ collective potential.

“I think it’s an example of what we are going to see all across the state as we start looking at ministry plans,” he said.

Though the area’s municipalities

and school districts have merged, the two United Methodist churches in Helena-West Helena have, for the most part, led independent lives, just 2.6 miles away from each other. The charge realignment and the Paragraph 213 process will encourage community collaboration from a faith perspective.

When Ledbetter first developed the idea, her plan was for the Elaine church to leave the two-point charge and receive its own part-time pastor. But the leadership of the West Helena/Elaine charge made it clear that they wanted both churches involved. And so the concept of a three-point charge became known as Option B.

“By the time we got to the meeting on the April 28, that was the prevailing option,” Ledbetter said.

[See ONE PARISH, page 10A]

Pine Bluff church reaches mission field through Boys & Girls Club

Staff Report

When the Arkansas Annual Conference developed and approved in 2011 the Imagine Ministry initiative, the Rev. David Fleming encouraged First United Methodist Church Pine Bluff, where he serves as senior pastor, to address one of the priorities of the plan: finding new ways to focus on their local mission field.

“We wanted to connect with the community, and thought that reaching out to children would be an excellent way to do it,” Fleming said. “We knew that we had the facility. We knew that we had the funding to make that possible. And then we realized that we didn’t really know exactly how best to go about that.”

So Fleming started asking around the community to find out where the church might begin. A friend soon introduced him to Leslie Peters, head of

Boys & Girls Club of Jefferson County.

The two men began talking about how their respective organizations could work together. After all, the Boys & Girls Club’s mission “to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens,” fits well with the UMC’s mission-related goal of transforming the world.

Confirmed commitment

But before giving the church the go-ahead, Peters had to know they truly wanted to commit to the effort. He shared with Fleming how he would begin.

“I said, ‘Don’t let me scare you, but I’m going to literally try to talk the church out of it,’” he said. “Because I have to make sure they understand what

[See BOYS & GIRLS CLUB, page 7A]

Reflections on a season of life

BY WILLIAM O. "BUD" REEVES
Special Contributor

I will soon mark a significant anniversary in my life: I will have been a district superintendent for a whole year.

The year has not been without its joys and fulfillments; it has not been without its frustrations and heartbreaks. Mostly, it has been a very interesting learning experience for a 30-year pastor in Mr. Wesley's movement.

As I write, we are almost finished with the particular time called "appointment season." Since February, my thoughts have been largely occupied with placing pastors in mission fields appropriate to their gifts for ministry. It has been exciting to see the appointments unfold, and I can truly testify that I saw God at work in the process.

Many prayers were offered and answered, and some creative moves were made. Appointment season is a grueling time, trying to make a perfect match between resources and needs, knowing it won't be perfect in the end. But we trust in God to fill in the human gaps.



Bud Reeves

The ministry of the DS is unlike anything I have experienced, yet a lot like some things I have experienced in the ministry. As I have come to know Bishop Mueller and my colleagues on the Cabinet, I have been impressed with their pastoral hearts. I won't speak for others, but I think we all

miss being pastors. I've actually thought about getting us bumper stickers that say, "I'd rather be pastoring a church." But then our sanity might really be questioned!

We have been appointed to this ministry. We are United Methodists, so we believe that because we have been appointed, we have also been called. One of my favorite scripture passages is Esther 4:15, which the Revised Standard Version translates as, "Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" For a season, some of us are called to be district superintendents. Perhaps this is our time to do what we can to make a difference for the Kingdom of God through this ministry.

What I miss most about being a pastor is the relationship between a pastor and his or her people. The pastoral moments—baptisms, confirming young people, weddings, funerals, hospital visits, engaging with laity in mission, preaching to people whose stories you know—these are the things that lit my fire for 30 years.

But there are other things I get to do now that I didn't before (besides knowing the *Book of Discipline* a lot better!). I am seeing the "big picture" of ministry across the state, and I see the movement of the Holy Spirit across

the United Methodist Church in Arkansas. I get to be a part of re-defining the role of a DS.

We are now "district missional strategists," but we are just starting to discover what that really means.

Arkansas is one of the leading conferences in United Methodism addressing this new way of thinking about the role of a superintendent. It's exciting to think we may be doing things that have significance even beyond the borders of our state.

And sometimes, I get to help churches and pastors clarify their mission and engage their community in transformational work.

Almost like putting together a wonderful worship service or helping a family deal with

grief, that work feels good.

Some things have become clear to me on this year-long learning curve:

- The characteristics of a dying institution are way too prevalent in our churches and our conference. We don't trust one another enough. There is bitterness and hostility over past grievances and injustices. There is too much of a sense of entitlement that puts self above mission. God can transform the United Methodist Church in Arkansas, but the window of opportunity is shutting.
- I have learned the ignorance of many things I have thought and said about district superintendents in the last three decades. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as one for the great churches and people in Arkansas United Methodism. Our role is to challenge, but ultimately help. We and other appointed clergy are on the same team; we don't need to act like adversaries. The world and the Devil give us enough enemies to fight without fighting among ourselves!
- God is powerfully at work in many places. I have been thrilled and awed by the dedication and perseverance of some great disciples I have encountered. I have been amazed at the deep faith and meaningful ministry in some of our smallest churches. God is there, too! Indeed, "Where two or three are gathered," Christ is in the midst of us.
- It's hard work changing paradigms. We are in the midst of a historic change in the way the Christian movement works in our world. It's such an exciting time to be a follower of the Prince of Peace. But it's not very peaceful. It's messy and chaotic and inconsistent sometimes.

A new day is coming. It won't come quickly, and it won't come easily. But it will come. Thanks be to God!

The Rev. Dr. Reeves currently serves as superintendent of the Northeast District, and on July 1 will become superintendent of the Northwest District.

"I am seeing the 'big picture' of ministry across the state, and I see the movement of the Holy Spirit across the United Methodist Church in Arkansas."



EDITOR'S CORNER

BY AMY FORBUS

Times change...

As I prepared this issue of the *Arkansas United Methodist*, I learned that it would mark the last time the banner on the cover would bear the line, "an edition of the *United Methodist Reporter*."

Digital edition readers of this paper already had lost Section B by June of last year, as the *Reporter* attempted to monetize its online content. Times have changed and customer demand has changed, and now, a national publication with roots dating back to before the Civil War has ceased to be. By the time you receive this issue, their offices will have gone dark.

I grieve the loss, both professionally and personally. The paper I edit has lost an entire section, as well as a printer and distributor. Friends—and co-workers of mine for eight years—have lost their jobs. As you read this column, please say a prayer for them.

At the same time I grieve, I also understand the need for communication methods to evolve. To reach new, more diverse people (one of the Four Areas of Focus of the denomination), we must change the way we deliver news, including the Good News of Christ. My role as editor has changed since I took the helm in 2010; for example, I'm now on the staff of the Arkansas Conference Center for Technology (CFT), which didn't exist until a year ago.

One of the CFT's goals in the second half of 2013 is to begin a communications audit for the Arkansas Conference. That effort will include a survey of *Arkansas United Methodist* subscribers, so I ask that you begin to consider what you value about this publication.

Soon after my arrival as editor, I began to run *Arkansas United Methodist* content through a specific filter: I've tried to give priority to stories that exemplify the disciple-making and world-transforming mission of the church. Stories that inspire readers to take a look at their own mission fields and ask, "How can we, in this place, make disciples of Jesus Christ equipped to transform the world? And how can we bring excellence and passion to that work?"

We're about to get more plain about that filter. In the coming issues of the paper, you'll see graphics that made their debut on page 2A of the May 17 issue: the Core Measures. Approved as part of the Imagine Ministry plan at 2011 Annual Conference, these four statements name key shifts we must make to more effectively fulfill our mission. I hope that when you see one of the Core Measure images connected with a story in these pages, you'll consider how you can apply it on a personal or congregational level.

God's call to go and make disciples remains the same. But the way we answer that call tomorrow may look different from how it looks today. And whether we reach out to others as part of a congregation or on a person-to-person level, our methods can be as individual as each one of God's children.

To reach me, send an email to aforbus@arumc.org.



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Submission Deadlines

Issue Date	Submission Deadline
July 5	June 20
Aug. 2	July 18
Sept. 6	Aug. 21

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A word from the Bishop

BY GARY E. MUELLER

It's just the beginning

Annual Conference is coming. But, then, that's no surprise because Annual Conference always has a way of showing up on the calendar this time of year. Once again, many people have invested a great deal of time, money, energy, creativity and hard work to make it a wonderful experience as we gather June 9-12 in Little Rock for worship, holy conferencing, business and learning.

It's important, however, to remember something. When Annual Conference is over, it's not just the end of an event. Rather, it's the beginning of what we're here to do: develop vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ who are equipped to transform lives, communities and the world with excellence and passion.

So what will it take for this year's Annual Conference to prepare us in this way?

First, we need to prepare intentionally for our time together. The guide to prayer and fasting that has been prepared is an excellent tool for us as individuals and an annual conference. (Find it in the "information" menu at ac2013.arumc.org.)

Second, we need to expect God to do something significant and, perhaps, unplanned. Imagine, indeed, what it would be like for God to use Annual Conference as a means of grace!

Third, we need to be excited to return to our mission fields inspired, motivated and equipped to discern God's work that each congregation

can uniquely engage in, disciple those around us and engage in daring ministry.

It may sound as if I'm overreaching just a bit. But I don't think so. I just happen to believe that Arkansan United Methodists are "all in" when it comes to sharing Jesus' love in ways that change individuals, communities and the world.

And I hope you believe it, too.

Grace and peace,

Gary E. Mueller

APPOINTMENTS

The following appointments, effective June 30, had been announced as of press time on May 28, 2013:

- Alpena/Bergman UMCs—Frank Cook
- Altus/Grenade's Chapel UMCs—Patti Butler
- Asbury/McNeil UMCs (charge realignment)—Michael Daniel
- Blevins Charge—Pam Brule
- Earle/Crawfordsville UMCs—Ryan Spurlock
- East Phillips County Parish (Helena/West Helena/Elaine charge realignment)—Michael Smith-Dodson (Associate Pastor)
- Everton UMC—Dave Smith
- Extra UMC—Jesse James
- Glenwood/Daisy UMCs—Lonnie Landers
- Hampton/Harrell/Faustina UMCs—Charles Perry
- Harmony Grove UMC—Velda Bell
- Hebron UMC—Boyd Savage
- Hughes/Madison UMCs—Mark Massey
- Hunter UMC (Hunter, Ark.)—Cory Pflifer
- Lisbon UMC—Darrell Donaldson
- Mammoth Spring/Camp

- UMCs—John Michael
- McElroy/Ellis Chapel/Central UMC Wynne (charge realignment)—Wayne Baldwin
 - Montrose UMC—Debbie Head
 - Parkin UMC—Melvin Mann
 - Pine Log/Pleasant Hill UMCs—J.R. McElhannon
 - St. James UMC Little Rock—Soniyyah ("Sonna") Blue (Associate Pastor)
 - St. Mark UMC El Dorado—Winston Roden
 - Shiloh Paragould/Marmaduke UMCs (charge realignment)—David A. Moore (Senior Pastor); Carol Moore (Associate Pastor)
 - Southeast District Regional Mission Coordinator—Natasha Murray-Norman
 - Sparkman Charge—Beth Stegall
 - Vesta UMC—Todd Vick
 - Waller's Chapel/Fountain Hill/Zion UMCs—Toby Austin
 - Warren Chapel/Wood's Chapel UMCs—Everett Isom
 - Wiggins Memorial UMC Fayetteville—Lyn Poplin

To see clergy appointment changes as they become official, visit arumc.org/appointments.

What do Maytag, Southwest Airlines and Zappos have to do with ministry?

BY MAXINE ALLEN
Special Contributor

Haier clothes washers sold well in rural China, but needed more frequent repairs there than in other parts of the world. Haier, until 2011, was the Maytag subsidiary in China. When the company investigated why, it learned that farmers were using the washers to rinse their potatoes before taking them to market.

The company could have slapped "FOR CLOTHING ONLY" warning labels on their washers, and declared that any repairs resulting from laundering produce would not be covered under warranty. But that's not what happened.

Instead, Haier redesigned their washers to withstand the strain a load of potatoes would place upon them. They tailored their solution to the customer's need, not to their own expectation.

Because Haier changed to meet the prevailing need, they continued to succeed. They didn't do what companies have always done.

When we, the church, do what we have always done, we end up shutting down Cokesbury and the *United Methodist Reporter*.

When we do what we have

always done, we have churches located in communities where none of the neighbors look like those who gather inside the walls of the church building.

When we do what we have always done, we have pastors whose gifts and graces for ministry are not matched adequately to the mission appointment they are given.

When we do what we have always done, the Kingdom of God suffers due to our lack of creativity, and our inability to "serve the present age, our calling to fulfill."

Theology meets business

The Arkansas UMC has engaged in a unique combination of the secular and theological worlds by sending pastors and key laity to the Cox Business School at Southern Methodist University. Underwritten by a generous gift from the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas, participants were immersed in the world of complex business innovation, with injections from the

Wall Street Journal and *Harvard Business Review*. Adding sessions at Perkins School of Theology to the already innovative collaboration resulted in a formula for creative tension, and a new lens by which to examine the Arkansas Conference ethos.

For 10 weeks this spring, a group of five persons, three clergy and two laity, participated in the Cox/Perkins leadership training. We represented local congregations, student ministries and the Conference staff. Along the way, we were exposed to some of the most current thinking in both business and theological theory and praxis. We analyzed organizational dilemmas, studied coaching and mentoring and developed an understanding of how emotional intelligence impacts globalization. We also have formed collegial bonds that will last through the remainder of our careers.

The cohort that gathered in Dallas for these weekly classes ranged from those representing multinational corporations to others also in the faith-based community. Much to the surprise of many working in industry, those of us from the religious community could hold our own when it came to

application of concepts to our worldviews.

'Aha' moments

After taking an inventory on flexibility in one of the sessions, we Arkansans were surprised to discover that we were more like each other than we thought. (We also wondered how the flexibility score for the Catholic priest in the group was higher than any of ours!) We experienced this and other "aha" moments, such as finding out that one large company, as a way of determining long-term commitment, offers prospective employees money to leave the company *while they are still in training*.

Personally, I found the information on strategic planning, coaching/mentoring and planning for leadership transition most helpful. In my role as the vocational discernment coordinator for the Board of Ordained Ministry, I will be using some of the information in training of clergy mentors this summer. For example, sessions on employee development and front-end screening will have a direct impact on our Orientation to the Ministry Program required of all

new ministry candidates.

It is my hope that the Conference will broaden this relationship with SMU and Perkins by offering an Arkansas-based version of this program. I envision that one day all of our clergy and interested laity will undergo a cultural assessment, and understand why it matters to the church that Maytag is overtaking the Chinese market in appliances. And why flying on Southwest Airlines and buying from Zappos supports innovation and cutting-edge technology—not only in the U.S., but also globally.

And that we may all understand what these businesses can teach the church about fun and function, then apply that knowledge for meaningful ministry.

The Rev. Allen serves as the director of the Wesley Foundation at the UALR and the Conference Coordinator of Ethnic Ministries. Other Arkansas participants in the Cox/Perkins leadership program included Todd Burris (Conference treasurer), Ben Crismon (associate pastor, Cabot UMC), John Embrey (Lakeside UMC Lake Village) and Mark Epperson (Center for Technology director).

Getting away with it doesn't make it right

A word on copyright law and the church

BY PHILIP HATHCOCK
Special Contributor

Did you know that if you print the poem "The Dash" in a funeral bulletin without the author's permission, you may be hearing from the author's lawyers, suing your church for copyright infringement?

A recent email from our Conference chancellors featured a reminder that churches are *not* exempt from copyright laws. Sheet music, video and audio recordings, movie clips, poems, pages from the hymnal... almost everything is copyrighted, and no one has the right to photocopy it, or project it on a screen, or live stream it, or otherwise duplicate it without compensating the author.

"But it's for the church..." is not a defense.

There are various licensing services to which churches can subscribe (for a fee) which will

permit the use of some copyrighted material. These services provide a fairly simple and convenient way for churches to comply with copyright law.

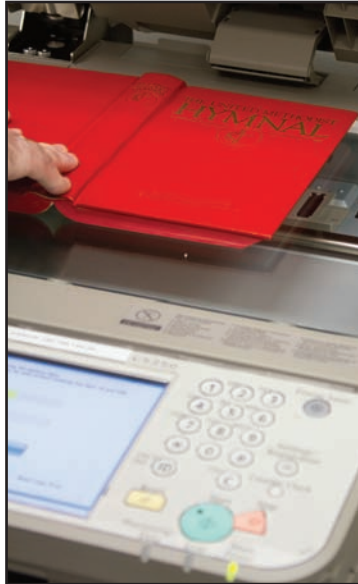
(**Note:** Not every licensing service covers every type of material. Before purchasing such a license, be sure that the service will cover the types of material you're most likely to use.)

The New England Annual Conference has provided very helpful guidelines for churches regarding copyright laws. We asked, and they have graciously given us permission, to duplicate them on our website at www.arumc.org/cic.

The best advice is simply this:

- 1) Assume that all material is copyrighted, and
- 2) get permission before using it.

The Rev. Hathcock serves as director of connectional ministries and assistant to the bishop.



Churches are not exempt from copyright laws. Copying a hymnal page, printing a poem in a bulletin or projecting lyrics without proper licensing can put your congregation in violation of federal law.

AUM PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sad about retiring clergy speaking on video instead of live

I am very saddened by the videoing of retiring clergy. It seems so cold and impersonal. My favorite part of Annual Conference was always the services of retirement after the retiring clergy were allowed to address the Conference. It was a celebration of life, service, and ministry. They spoke from their hearts. We laughed with them, shed tears with them, rejoiced with them and were inspired by them. I don't see that happening with a video.

I remember Dr. George Martin playing his guitar and singing us a song he had written about retirement. Some laughed, some cried. Dr. John Miles had us rolling with laughter (as usual). I don't know the reasons for this change. I have heard that retirees take up too much valuable conference time. Valuable time? I have been on the floor when it

took us half an hour to decide where to put a comma or if a word in a line should be "and" or some other word. Valuable time, again?

But who am I? Just an old retired Methodist preacher that feels very sad that something very valuable has been lost.

J. Wayne Edwards
El Dorado

Letters to the Editor policy:

All letters must be signed (name and city/church) and include the writer's phone number or email address. Letters may be sent to editor@arumc.org, or to 800 Daisy Bates Drive, Little Rock, AR 72202.

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.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

YOUTH DIRECTORS ~ Need help planning a summer trip or already thinking about Spring Break 2014? We've been sending groups packing for 31 years and we're still going strong, thanks in large part to United Methodist youth groups! If all you need is transportation, we've got that covered, too. Kimberling Kids Travel ~ kimberlingkids@aol.com ~ 501-227-8447.

PRAISE BAND DIRECTOR/WORSHIP LEADER - First United Methodist Church in Conway, Arkansas is seeking a Praise Band Director and Worship Leader who is a committed disciple of Jesus Christ with gifts for leading an established band for worship, developing a growing network of spiritually gifted musicians and vocalists, and working in a team environment to plan for worship. Depending on gifts and interests, other responsibilities may include overseeing audio/visual ministries, directing a youth praise band, working with children's ensembles, and helping to develop new worship experiences. Currently, this is a part-time position with potential for growth. For more information, please contact Pastor Michael Roberts at 501-329-3801 or mroberts@conwayfumc.org. Please submit applications to the same email address and include a resume, three references and, if possible, a video or audio of your worship leadership. We are praying for you as you read this and seek to discern God's will.

Swamp Angel Ministries is traveling Arkansas! Donations go to the Annual Arkansas Retired Ministers Day. For info: contact David Bush at thepastor@stuttgartfumc.org.

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

ARUMC older adult study series wins Telly award

Copies available for Arkansas churches

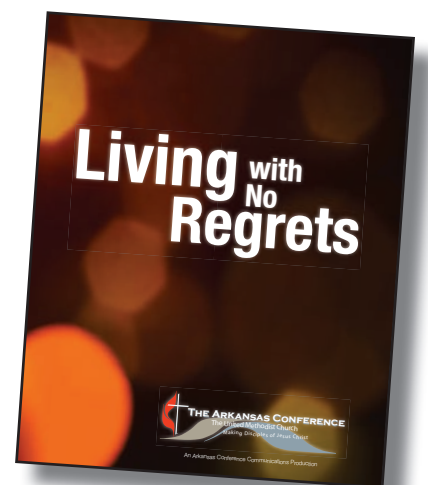
The video components of "Living with No Regrets," a four-week study initiated in 2012 by the Arkansas Conference Council on Adult and Older Adult Ministries, has received a Bronze Telly Award for outstanding work in the category of "Non-Broadcast Productions - Social Responsibility."

The series is packaged as a small group study, focusing on issues older adults and their families face.

Production was funded by a grant from the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas. Producers included the Rev. Martha Taylor of the Arkansas Conference, and Sajni Kumpuris of Kumpuris Communications, who submitted the series for consideration.

Founded in 1978, the Telly Awards honor excellence in film and video productions and web commercials, as well as outstanding local, regional, and cable TV commercials and programs. The awards now receive more than 12,000 entries each year.

Copies of "Living with No Regrets" are available at no charge for United Methodist congregations in Arkansas; all other churches will be charged a fee. To obtain a copy of the study, contact the Conference office at communications@arumc.org, 501-324-8000 or toll-free 877-646-1816.



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PEOPLE OF FAITH

Hill named Cokesbury consultant for Arkansas

The United Methodist Publishing House has selected Julie Kelly Hill as Community Resource Consultant for Arkansas' Cokesbury customers. Resource consultants provide a new type of customer connection with Cokesbury, following the closure this spring of all Cokesbury bookstores.

A Louisiana native who has called Arkansas home for more than 20 years, Hill has served on staff in local churches in Monticello, Rogers, Malvern and Beebe, as well as on the Conference and area levels of youth ministry, children's ministry, singles' ministry, Camp Tanako, and Arkansas School of Christian Mission. She has taught Disciple Bible Study and is a member of the Noah's of Ark Emmaus Community. She has lived in Beebe for 13 years and is the mom of an 11-year-old daughter.

Hill can be reached at jhill@cokebury.com or 501-553-8614. In addition, she will be on site at Arkansas Annual Conference, June 9-12. As in years past, the display area at Annual Conference will include a Cokesbury store.



Julie Hill

Gideon joins CFT staff as application developer

Stephen Gideon has joined the staff of the Arkansas Conference Center for Technology (CFT). He began working April 24 in the role of Software Application Developer / Tier II Support.



Stephen Gideon

Gideon has extensive experience in web design and development, beginning when he ran an online magazine while completing his bachelor's degree in graphic design at the University of Central Arkansas. He also designed and maintained the website for the university's Baum Gallery of Fine Art. Following college, he spent a combined 15 years working for Alltel and Windstream. At Alltel he designed, planned and maintained the Human Resources Intranet site, HR application development, and e-commerce, customer service and business-to-business applications. At Windstream, he served in the corporate communications group as the administrator and manager of the corporate intranet, and produced audio and video.

Gideon's work with the CFT will include database and Learning Management System administration and development; Tier II technical support; process development; assisting with video and audio production and web design and development; and graphic design. He can be reached at stephen.gideon@arumc.org.

He is married to the Rev. Regina Holtman Gideon, and they attend First UMC Maumelle. Their household includes a miniature poodle, Francis.

Lee named helpdesk support staffer with CFT

Palmer Lee has joined the staff of the Arkansas Conference Center for Technology in the role of Tier I Helpdesk Support Specialist. He will be available to provide technical support and assistance in a variety of areas to help fulfill the mission and goals of the church, including providing support directly to local church staff members where applicable.

Lee holds a bachelor's degree in computer information systems from Grambling State University. His background includes five years of technical support experience with Alltel and Verizon Wireless. He began working with the CFT on Jan. 17 through an arrangement with a staffing agency; on May 13, he began full-time work with the Arkansas Conference.

As Helpdesk Support Specialist, Lee plays a key role in the day-to-day operations of the CFT, dealing with both hardware and software issues. He works with technology users to determine the scope and severity of technical problems, then researches and implements solutions, providing instruction where needed.

Lee may be reached at palmer.lee@arumc.org; requests for technical support should be submitted to helpdesk@arumc.org.

His home is in Pine Bluff, where he is a member of St. Peter Catholic Church.



Palmer Lee

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION & DISASTER RESPONSE UPDATES

For information on any Volunteers In Mission project below, contact the individual listed or Byron Mann, Conference VIM coordinator, at vim@arumc.org or 870-703-8361. For Disaster Response projects, contact Byron or Janice Mann, DR co-coordinators, at disaster@arumc.org. To connect with VIM on Facebook, search for "Volunteers in Mission & Disaster Response - Serving Arkansas & Beyond," and join the group for updates.

Van Buren County open to VIM teams

The early response phase following the April 10 tornado damage in Van Buren County has ended, which means VIM teams are needed to help with repairs and rebuilding. To schedule your VIM team for a project in this area, contact Byron Mann, vim@arumc.org.

UMCOR relief kit supplies running low

There is an ongoing need for layette kits, sewing kits, bedding kits, cleaning buckets and health kits for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to distribute wherever disasters strike. Both the Sager Brown and Salt Lake UMCOR Depots have begun to run short on these supplies and look to local churches to help replenish the stock. For kit assembly and shipping instructions, visit umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies.

Storm damage increases need for tornado tubs

Disaster Response teams in Arkansas have distributed nearly the entire stock of tornado tubs to help with clean-up efforts from spring storms. Learn how to replenish these supplies at www.arumc.org/n_new_tornado_tubs_meet_post-disaster_need.php. Several local churches continue to serve as drop-off points for completely assembled tubs: Central UMC Fayetteville, First UMC Harrison, First UMC Mena and St. Paul UMC Fort Smith. If you have kits and tubs ready in another part of the state, email disaster@arumc.org to coordinate delivery.

Updates from Texas

The town of West, Texas, is still not ready for VIM teams in the wake of the April 17 fertilizer plant explosion. Disaster Response teams from surrounding areas continue to provide assistance, and VIM teams will be called when needed.

In addition, the Texas communities of Granbury, Cleburne and Ennis are picking up the pieces from May tornadoes. Kyland Dobbins, VIM/DR coordinator for the Central Texas Conference, says they may not be ready for VIM teams for several more weeks.

To be placed on the volunteer list for any of these locations for a later date, contact Byron Mann at vim@arumc.org. To help financially, visit umcor.org and click "Donate." The Advance number for U.S. Disaster Response is 901670, and is listed as one of the top options on the UMCOR donation page.

Mexico missionary visiting Arkansas in late July

Guillermo "Willie" Berman of Manos Juntas Ministry in Mexico will visit Arkansas churches in late July to promote mission opportunities, and to provide information about and assurance of safety for prospective VIM teams. Manos Juntas is part of the Methodist Church of Mexico, and Berman serves there as a missionary with the United Methodist Church. The ministry serves many people who live in the areas between Reynosa and Matamoras, Mexico, and beyond. To schedule Berman to make a presentation at your church, contact Byron Mann, vim@arumc.org.

Rice and Beans mission journey options available

Rice and Beans Ministries is developing mission journey opportunities for later in 2013. Rice and Beans builds relationships through its food and prayer ministry, then goes on to make a greater positive impact in the name of Christ. A representative will have a display table at Annual Conference. This ministry is connected with the United Methodist Church through VIM and The Advance. To learn about their mission, visit riceandbeansministries.com.

VIM teams needed for Miss. tornado recovery

A total of 1,731 homes were affected by a spring storm near Hattiesburg, Mississippi. If your church is planning a mission journey this spring or summer, please consider helping in the Hattiesburg area. More information on needs will be available in the coming months. Contact Byron Mann, vim@arumc.org, to receive news of opportunities to help.

Have you made or scheduled a mission journey in 2013? Let VIM know!

VIM wants to know if your church has made a mission journey this year, or is planning one for the future. Please send information on 1) your destination site, 2) the number of volunteers participating and 3) the estimated cost of the journey to Byron Mann at vim@arumc.org. Mann also can provide information on putting together mission journeys in Arkansas, the U.S. and internationally.

Arkansans continue toward goal of saving 100,000 lives from malaria

Here are a few of the latest ways United Methodists from across the state have raised awareness and funds for Imagine No Malaria.

Pastor loses weight, gains INM pledges

After seeing a picture of himself at Christmas 2012, the Rev. Ed Seay realized that he had to get serious about his health. He resolved to eat better and begin exercising, and even promised the congregation he serves, Havana UMC, that he would lose 40 pounds in 2013.



The Rev. Ed Seay celebrates the finish of his first official running event at Yell Fest in Dardanelle. He is pictured with his son, Andy, and daughter, Addy.

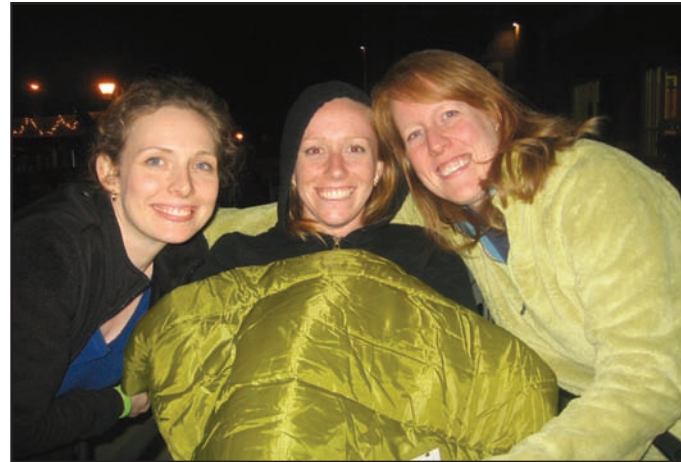
COURTESY PHOTO

Running has turned out to be his favorite form of exercise. He began to run three to four times per week, and decided to enter the 5K at Dardanelle's Yell Fest in May—and to use it as a way to raise money for Imagine No Malaria. His idea was to gather pledges for the minutes he actually ran—walking wouldn't count.

The run at Yell Fest turned out to measure longer than five kilometers—four miles, to be precise—but Seay was undeterred. He ran at a pace of 13 minutes, 22 seconds per mile and raised more than \$250 for Imagine No Malaria. And, as of May 23, he already had lost six pounds over and above what he had promised his congregation.

'Netropolis' brings INM to Hendrix campus

In observance of World Malaria Day, Hendrix College on April 25 held Netropolis, an awareness-raising event that promoted Imagine No Malaria. The night included educational displays and live music, followed by a screening of *Killer in the Dark*, a documentary that explains the problem of malaria in sub-Saharan Africa, and what can be done to fight it. To round out the evening, a number of students and staff bedded down outside under malaria nets. Participants encouraged passersby and their friends to text MALARIA to 27722 to make a \$10 donation toward the cause.



The Rev. J.J. Whitney, left, director of Hendrix College's Miller Center for Vocation, Ethics and Calling, and Leigh Lassiter-Counts, right, the college's associate director of Career Services, tuck into her sleeping bag Michaela Fraser, Miller Center Presidential Fellow. Fraser was among those who spent time under a mosquito net to raise awareness for the Imagine No Malaria campaign.

COURTESY PHOTO

Gravette confirmation class runs church-wide INM campaign

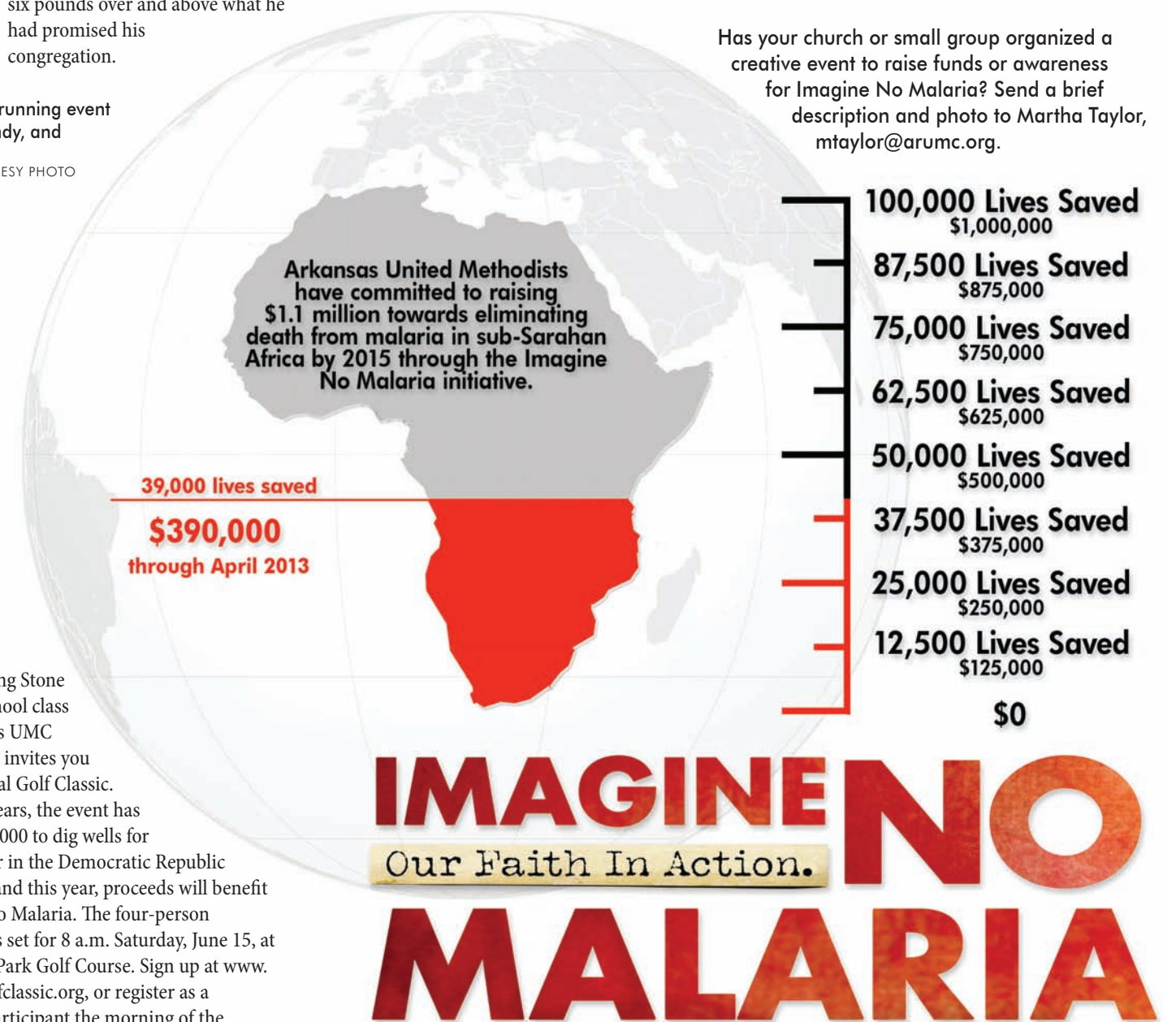
The 2013 confirmation class of Gravette UMC took on Imagine No Malaria as a special way to make a difference together. They kicked off their fund drive on April 14 by leading a worship service designed to educate the congregation about why malaria is a killer, and how it can be stopped. After that day's special offering, they added to the amount by collecting quarters from Sunday school classes, holding a spaghetti dinner and offering a series of games that culminated in the bashing of a mosquito-shaped piñata.

The result? In less than a month, the class had gathered \$878.67 to help fight the disease.

St. James Golf Classic, June 15, benefits INM



The Stepping Stone Sunday school class of St. James UMC Little Rock invites you to its annual Golf Classic. Over the years, the event has raised \$56,000 to dig wells for clean water in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and this year, proceeds will benefit Imagine No Malaria. The four-person scramble is set for 8 a.m. Saturday, June 15, at the Burns Park Golf Course. Sign up at www.stjamesgolfclassic.org, or register as a walk-up participant the morning of the classic.



Has your church or small group organized a creative event to raise funds or awareness for Imagine No Malaria? Send a brief description and photo to Martha Taylor, mtaylor@arumc.org.

The above total reflects a dollar-for-dollar matching grant from the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas.

Core Measure 3

We will equip laity and clergy to transform individuals, communities and the world instead of trying to satisfy the personal preferences of current members and ensure congregational preservation.

Boys & Girls Club

(continued from page 1A)

they're embracing, what they're getting into." Peters explained to Fleming that many of the children who benefit from Boys & Girls Clubs programs lack stability in their lives, so he wanted to make certain the church would provide a source of dependable, consistent relationships.

Peters became confident that he and the children could count on the church. And on April 22, about 18 months after that first conversation, First UMC Pine Bluff celebrated a milestone: They held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark their designation as an official Boys & Girls Club site.

How it works

Following the ceremony, attendees toured the facility. The glass double doors of the Christian Life Center bear both the church's and the Boys & Girls Club's logos, and the church's classrooms and

gymnasium already had begun welcoming children for after-school activities on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Students come from the Pine Bluff School District, which helped identify students who could benefit most from what the First UMC club site offers. The school district, which provides for those same students a Tuesday/Wednesday after-school program, transports the children to and from the site. They even recommended teachers to staff the site's "power hour," a time that helps students strengthen their skills in reading and math. (First UMC provides funds for the Boys & Girls Club to hire those teachers to provide after-school tutoring.)

In addition to tutors, the site depends on volunteers who donate their time to help. Many of those who staff the site as volunteers come from the congregation of First UMC Pine Bluff.



Participants in the Boys & Girls Club program hosted at First UMC Pine Bluff play a parachute game. Some digital edition subscribers will be able to watch a video of this ministry in the space above. Anyone may view the video at www.youtube.com/arkansasumc, the Arkansas Conference YouTube channel.

AUM PHOTO BY PALMER LEE

Core Measure 4

We will address the unique context of each mission field instead of depending on standardized programs and structures.

"It made them uncomfortable because, guess what? they don't do this every day," Peters said. "It's not in their comfort zone. This is not what they had done at First United Methodist Church. So, it was terrifying, but they came."

He and Fleming agree that congregants now have moved past their initial insecurities.

"Now they're saying, 'You know, I'm going on vacation next week, but when I get back, I've got an idea that

I want you to try,'" Fleming said. "And they're actually coming up with inventive ideas that Leslie nor I either one would've come up with. They're sharing them with us, and they're creating."

power to make a positive impact. "If you go and live every day and you don't feel uncomfortable at any point of that day, then you just existed," he said. "You weren't living, you didn't step outside your comfort zone, and you didn't impact anybody different."

"And that's not what we strive to do. We are all about impact. And that means stretching, that means moving, that means pushing, and that's what we believe in at the Boys & Girls Club—and at First United Methodist Church."

Positive impact

Fleming also said that in just the first few weeks, he and others began to notice positive changes in the lives of the students they serve.

Peters pointed out that the church's willingness to step out of its comfort zone means that it has the

Want to help in Oklahoma? Here's how.

Following tornadoes that devastated areas of Oklahoma, Arkansas Conference Disaster Response co-coordinator Janice Mann has been in touch with her Oklahoma Conference counterpart, who has requested:

1. **Prayer**, not only for those directly affected by the tornadoes, but also for those working to help with recovery.
2. **Financial gifts to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).**
 - Text RESPONSE to 80888 to send a \$10 gift immediately.
 - Give online: www.umcor.org, Disaster Response, United States, Advance #901670.
 - Give by phone: 800-554-8583.

A Disaster Response trailer will be available at Annual Conference June 9-12 for individuals or groups who wish to bring various kinds of UMCOR relief kits. For kit assembly instructions, visit www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies.

At press time, Arkansas is not



UMCOR supplies are unloaded May 24 at First United Methodist Church Moore, Okla., to boost tornado recovery work. The shipment arrived from the Sager Brown depot in Baldwin, La., and was joyfully received by volunteers in Moore, one of the hardest hit areas of the May 2013 tornado. UMN PHOTO BY RANDY MCGUIRE / OKLAHOMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

scheduling trips for Early Response Teams (ERTs). The Oklahoma Conference will let us know when they are ready to

receive workers. To be placed on a list for an ERT or VIM trip, contact Janice Mann at disaster@arumc.org, or Byron Mann at vim@arumc.org.

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Some scholarship assistance available to attend Black Clergy Women Conference



With the theme of “Celebrating our Past...Stepping into Our Future,” the 25th Anniversary Black Clergy Women Conference will meet Aug. 5-8, 2013, at the Westin Hotel Dallas-Fort Worth Airport.

The Rev. Maxine Allen, Coordinator of Ethnic and Language Ministries for the Arkansas Conference, is seeking women in ministry (local pastors, elders, deacons, seminary students or candidates for ministry) who would like to attend. Some scholarship funding is available. Visit <http://blackclergywomenumc.com> for more information, then contact Allen at 501-539-0280 or mallen@arumc.org.

New location for Central District office

The office for the Central District has moved to Maumelle. The staff invites you to drop by for a visit if you are in the Maumelle area.

Address

2 Country Club Circle, Box 1
Suite 101
Maumelle, AR 72113

Office phone numbers

501-851-1433 and 501-851-1532

Fax number

877-867-5308

Email addresses

centraldistrict@arumc.org
droberts@arumc.org
fkirkman@arumc.org

COMING UP

June

All welcome for laity celebration at Dickey-Stephens Park June 10

This year's Laity Dinner at Annual Conference will be an informal gathering at Dickey-Stephens Park in North Little Rock, home of the Arkansas Travelers baseball team. All are welcome; you do not need to be a part of Annual Conference to attend this celebration. Bring family and friends! The event is slated for Monday, June 10, during the Annual Conference dinner break, approximately 5:15 to 7:15 p.m.

A “ballpark buffet”—hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans, chips and more—will be served inside the shaded concourse area of the park. Two trolley shuttles will provide continuous transportation between the convention center and Dickey-Stephens Park. Free parking is available at the park for those who would like to drive.

Tickets (\$20) cover the cost of the event, and may be purchased as late as June 9 at the Annual Conference registration table, or by contacting Karon Mann, 501-225-7971 or karon57@comcast.net.

‘Hunger to Ride’ bike tour to benefit First UMC Bentonville food pantry June 15

The first annual Hunger to Ride Tour is set for June 15, 2013 in Bentonville. Routes for the day include lengths of 6, 31, 61 and 97 miles, and proceeds will benefit Second Street Pantry, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located at First United Methodist Church in downtown Bentonville. The pantry will use the money raised to purchase food to serve the needs of the hungry in the community.

Online pre-registration has ended, but on-site registration will be available at 7 p.m. the day before the ride or 7 a.m. the day of the ride, at the First UMC parking lot, 201 NW 2nd Street in Bentonville. For details, contact Jeff Harris at bmcyclist@cox.net or 479-273-2712.

Salem UMC Campmeeting Revival June 23-29

Salem UMC, 1647 Salem Road in Benton, continues a more than 150-year tradition with this summer's Campmeeting Revival under the arbor. Everyone is invited.

Worship begins each night at 7 p.m. with special music, followed by a hymn sing and preaching, then refreshments and fellowship after the service. June 23 is Homecoming Sunday and includes a potluck. The June 29 closing worship is a memorial service for those who have died in the past year. This year's evangelist is the Rev. Travis Langley, pastor of Mt. Zion, Trinity and Center Grove UMCs near Arkadelphia. The Rev. Denman Gillett, a retired elder and former pastor of Salem UMC, will serve as host.

Salem UMC's youth group promises a jam-packed week of

fun, with day trips as well as the evening services under the arbor. All youth are invited to join the festivities and make new friends in Christ. For details on the potluck, singing groups, youth activities and more, visit arnet.pair.com/salemcamp or call Lydia Cheatham at the church office, 501-316-2282.

Youth rally at Center Grove UMC Gurdon June 29

The bands Breakaway and Pardoned will perform at an area-wide youth rally hosted by Center Grove UMC Gurdon, set for Saturday, June 29. Food will be served beginning at 6 p.m., and music will start at 7 p.m. The rally is free of charge, and everyone is welcome. For information or to RSVP for your group, contact Tina Martin at 870-246-1660 or tinam@clarkcountyarkansas.com.

Evangelism workshop at First UMC Searcy begins June 30

First UMC Searcy will host the Rev. Dr. Bob Crossman, Arkansas Conference Minister of New Church Starts, for a three-session “Evangelism Boot Camp.” Crossman will help the local church to prepare for Advent and Easter by sharing his presentations on hospitality and evangelism. Dates and topics for the events are:

- June 30: 68 ways to increase worship attendance without a change in pastors
- July 14: Witness: Inviting persons to church
- Aug. 4: Evangelism: Putting the pieces together

These events are free and open to all churches. Events will begin with a light supper at 5 p.m., with presentation from 5:50 to 7:30. For more information and to register, email kmarilees@gmail.com. To help us prepare, please register number attending and if child care is needed, number and ages of children.

Family Day events at Hunter UMC Little Rock June 8-23

Hunter UMC, 3301 Romine Road in Little Rock, invites everyone to its 29th annual Family Day celebration. A number of activities are planned for the month leading up to Family Day:

- June 8 from 9 a.m. to noon: Community Walk for the Lord
- June 15 from noon to 4:00 p.m.: Community Cook-Out/Health Emphasis Day
- June 16 at 11:00 a.m.: Revival/Youth Rally – Rev. Melvin Moss; 6:30 p.m.: Revival – Rev. Sandy Becker
- June 17 from 2 to 5 p.m. – Youth Rally; 6:30 p.m.: Revival – Rev. Clarence (J.C. Love) Thornton
- June 18 at 6:30 p.m.: Revival – Rev. C.E. McAdoo preaching
- June 19 at 6:30 p.m.: Revival – Rev. Betty Scull preaching
- June 22 from 8 a.m. to noon: United Methodist Women Bazaar; 1 to 3 p.m.: Community Senior Saving Seminar; 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.: United Methodist Women Luau (dine on roasted pig and all the Hawaiian trimmings; \$10 per person)
- June 23 at 10:50 a.m.: Family Day Sacred Worship – Bishop Gary Mueller preaching

For information, call the church office at 501-225-7683.

July

Vacation Bible School at First UMC North Little Rock July 8-12

First United Methodist Church North Little Rock invites children to *Kingdom Rock: Where Kids Stand Strong for God*. At Kingdom Rock VBS, kids participate in memorable Bible-learning activities, sing catchy songs, play teamwork-building games, make and dig into yummy treats, experience epic Bible adventures, collect Bible Memory Buddies to remind them to stand strong, and test out Sciency-Fun Gizmos they'll take home and play with all summer long.

Kids will learn to look for evidence of God all around them through something called God Sightings. Kids at Kingdom Rock will also join a missions effort to share God's love with children at Arkansas Children's Hospital.

Kingdom Rock is for current Pre-K through 5th grade kids and will run from 9 a.m. to noon each day. To register, go to www.nlrufmc.org and click the link at the bottom of the page. For more information, you can call 501-835-2201.

Register now for Mission U: July 31-Aug. 3

Mission U is set for July 31–Aug. 3, 2013, at Hendrix College in Conway.

Sponsored by the Arkansas Conference Board of Global Ministries, Arkansas Conference United Methodist Women and the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas, the annual event, formerly known as the Arkansas Conference School of Christian Mission, provides mission education for all ages—including special activities for children and youth—in a spiritually enriching setting.

The spiritual growth study, *The Call: Living Sacramentally and Walking Justly*, will offer tools to deepen spiritual identity, as well as encourage engagement in community and involvement in mission. The geographic study will examine the culture, lifestyle and spirituality of the Roma, with The Roma of Europe as its curriculum.

The social issue study on poverty will examine the connections between Scripture, church tradition, compassion for the poor, social outreach and social justice. In keeping with this study's theme, Mission U will collect child-friendly, ready-to-eat foods to benefit the Arkansas Rice Depot's Food For Kids program.

Mission U is open to children pre-kindergarten through senior high school, as well as adults. Meals and housing are included in the registration fee, and commuters are welcome to attend.

For a detailed brochure, registration form and scholarship application, visit www.arumc.org/2013_mission_u.php.

Young clergy examine concepts of leadership identity, effectiveness

At the April 22-25 Courage to Lead Conference, twelve young Arkansas clergy were asked to lay aside what they thought they knew or had been told were their leadership skills in order to discover their “true” leadership skills.

Through a series of exercises and intensive one-on-one conversations with the conference leader, the Rev. Janice Virtue, executive director of leadership development in the North Carolina Annual Conference, the participants were asked to move beyond the “what” and “how” questions of leadership and to ask the “who” questions.

The workshop focused on participants recognizing that effective service and leadership flow from the identity and integrity of the person, and challenged them to identify their “birthright” leadership skills that will lead them to become more insightful and effective leaders.

The Rev. Jeanne Williams,

associate pastor at Cornerstone UMC Jonesboro, said it was a “fantastic” four days.

“We were led through a series of adaptive learning tasks, a strength finder assessment and another tool to help us identify our expressed wants and needs versus our unexpressed wants and needs,” she said. “I think what I learned is going

to help me with the transition into my new appointment, as well as with my personal and professional relationships.”

The event was underwritten by First UMC Springdale, which served as the host, and the Arkansas Conference Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence in Leadership.

—Martha Taylor

The Rev. Janice Virtue of the North Carolina Conference spends time in discussion with a dozen of Arkansas’ young clergy during the recent Courage to Lead Conference.



The Revs. Katie Pearce, David Freeman and Jeanne Williams share in conversation at the Courage to Lead Conference. The event was underwritten by the Arkansas Conference Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence, as well as by First UMC Springdale.

AUM PHOTOS BY TERRY GOSNELL

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BOOK REVIEW

Guide to pastoral transition can help clergy and laity alike

Your Best Move: Effective Leadership Transition for the Local Church

Robert Kaylor

Seedbed Publishing, 2013

BY PAT BODENHAMER
Special Contributor

A change in pastors requires preparation and planning before the actual transition. In *Your Best Move: Effective Leadership Transition for the Local Church*, the Rev. Robert Kaylor addresses several aspects of that transition, from the theology behind it to maintaining a healthy balance between personal and professional matters during a time of change.

The book’s casual tone speaks to the most seasoned clergyperson as well as to the pastor in his or her first appointment. Lay leaders in the congregation also would benefit from reading it as a tool for helping both the outgoing and incoming

pastor navigate the waters of change.

Kaylor shares in the introduction a primary source of apprehension for every United Methodist pastor: appointment time phone calls. “Whether you are a pastor or a church member, the announcement of a pastoral change is an anxiety-producing moment,” he writes. From this point, he outlines his objective of helping pastors and churches create space for dialogue, develop a plan of transition and foster an environment for success for both pastor and congregation.

The author’s first chapter lays a biblical foundation of transition, noting that moving is not only about changing leadership, but also about furthering God’s mission for that particular congregation. He develops a theme of leadership for a season: “God sends people to particular times and places in order to further the mission of God’s kingdom.” He also explores the letters of Paul to the Corinthian church, pointing out that Paul himself had to adjust his leadership approach and evangelistic style—just as many pastors must do within new appointments.

In addition to addressing clergy

perspectives on moving, the author lays out a powerful word to the congregation during a time of transitioning to a new pastor: “How a congregation welcomes a new pastor (and bids farewell to the previous one) reveals the congregation’s understanding of hospitality.”

Pastors know that the transition out of one church into another is a difficult and stressful time. To help with thinking through the process, Kaylor devotes several chapters to addressing the familiar “nuts and bolts” of a move. He gives practical advice on what the outgoing pastor should do for the incoming pastor—for instance, leave a notebook with important committee notes, phone numbers, budgets, etc. He also suggests writing a farewell letter to the congregation, and developing a covenant agreement between the incoming and outgoing pastors. The appendix includes examples of many of the documents discussed in the various chapters.

Kaylor encourages the incoming pastor to be proactive during a transition. Suggestions for first steps include writing an

introduction letter, developing a transition team and doing careful research of the congregation: “A pastor entering a congregation must take on the roles of historian, anthropologist, detective and psychologist in order to understand how the congregation got to this point in its life.”

The last few chapters discuss the importance of developing ways to achieve early successes, ensuring the lines of communication are open and working, connecting with the staff and/or leadership team and staying attentive to the well-being of the church, the pastor and the pastor’s family.

Your Best Move offers helpful words from a pastor who has gone through a move and lived to tell about it! The practical advice comes

in an easy-to-read form, and the questions at the end of each chapter could prove very helpful for churches working through the challenging process of pastoral change.

The Rev. Bodenhamer serves Diamond City and Omaha UMCs.





John Crawford, associate director of the Arkansas Conference Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence in Leadership, shares his perspective as a congregational coach for the new East Phillips County Parish.

AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

One parish (continued from page 1A)

“No one was talking about Option A—it was ‘Keep Elaine in the mix,’ which I thought was a great statement about connection.”

The Rev. Mark Norman, incoming superintendent of the Southeast District, said that at the April meeting, everyone had a voice in the decision.

“It caught fire with the youth,” he said. “The youth and young adults talked.”

Bettye Hendrix, a leader in the First UMC Helena congregation, said that she and her son initially questioned the proposed plan.

“But when our young people wanted it, we thought, ‘OK,’” she said. “We think the end result will be the same, whether we do it this way or whether we do it the other way, and if this is what they want to do, then we’ll go with it.”

The vote that night was overwhelmingly in favor of the charge realignment and beginning the Paragraph 213 assessment process.

“I want our church to keep going and growing,” said Hendrix. “We have so many unchurched people in this town.”

Ledbetter emphasized that the assessment process has no prescribed outcome.

“We weren’t saying, ‘We are going to do this so that you will merge,’” she said. “It was just, ‘Do this process. Talk about the preferred future that you would like to have.’”

“We are looking forward to it, and change can be really good,” said Harry Stephens, chair of the staff-parish relations committee at First UMC Helena. “It’s in His hands, and we’re going to let Him look after it.”

“So many people think we’ll wind up having one church come out of this, and I’m hoping we’ll have three churches come out of this,” he added. He said he realizes the need for new growth, and pointed to some existing relationships between First UMC Helena and West Helena UMC, such as their men’s groups meeting as a single entity.

Determining details

At a May 14 joint meeting of the staff-parish relations committees involved in the realignment, leaders began to make decisions for moving forward. They decided on the name “East Phillips County Parish,” approved the establishment of a parish bank account from which to pay pastors’ compensation while retaining each individual church’s account to handle other expenses; and discussed each church’s representation on the Paragraph 213 task force.

The task force, as outlined in the *Book of Discipline*, will include an equal number of laity and clergy. The clergy will come from surrounding areas, perhaps even one from a neighboring conference, and the group determined that Wilkie will serve as chair, without vote.

Along with each church paying into the parish bank account, two other major sources of funding will come into play: support from the Arkansas Conference’s fund for equitable compensation, to help with covering two pastors’ salaries; and a two-year grant from Catch the

Vision, the new church start fund of the Conference.

Though it isn’t a new church, the project falls into the category of “a new work,” which is one of the criteria for Catch the Vision grants. Those funds will bolster the salary of the pastoral staff, as well as provide start-up costs for getting the parish relationship rolling, such as books, study materials and expenses for joint events.

A unique opportunity

The two congregational coaches, Charles Long of Beebe, lay leader for the Northeast District; and John Crawford of Little Rock, associate director of the Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence in Leadership, both attended the May 14 meeting. Crawford encouraged the those present to consider people outside the current leadership roster for membership on the Paragraph 213 task force.

“I’ve always thought that there was genius in the pew that’s never contacted,” he said. He suggested that the churches make an announcement in worship and see who responds.

“Just say, ‘We’re on an exciting

journey, it’s going to be the prototype for the future... it’s an opportunity to grow and to be part of a really God-sized project.”

Stephen Toney, Elaine UMC’s representative on the West Helena/Elaine staff-parish relations committee, looks forward to having the combination of Wilkie, who has experience leading a merged congregation from his time at Good Faith Carr UMC Pine Bluff, and Dodson, who is 21 years old and still a college student, leading the East Phillips County Parish.

“You’ve got two energies working,” he said. “You’ve got experience, and then you’ve got youth.... I’m excited about what’s going on. It’s a synergistic effort. It’s something we’ve never seen before, or ever had before at all.”

As the May 14 meeting concluded, Wilkie emphasized that the Paragraph 213 process will take two to three years, possibly longer.

“We’re not putting any fixed ideas in place, or preconceptions, or setting deadlines,” he said. “We’re trying to open it up for the Kingdom and see what God wants us to do. We need to listen, and it may take us a while.”

For additional perspective on changes in the Helena-West Helena area, read or listen to the three-part series by Malcom Glover, “Hope Rising in Helena-West Helena, Arkansas,” which in early May aired on KUAR FM 89.1.

The first segment, with links to parts two and three, can be found online at <http://goo.gl/XTtge>.

‘Asbury’s Got Talent’ raises \$4,500 for missions



Asbury UMC Little Rock on May 5 hosted “Asbury’s Got Talent,” a benefit event directed by church member Adrienne Dickson that showcased the talents of church members and staff. Amid the music, singing, dancing and baton twirling, the act that gained the most favor with the audience was “Magic Jack,” featuring 7-year-

old magician Jackson South and his lovely assistant (and 4-year-old sister) Claire, pictured at left. Celebrity guests included Ms. Arkansas, Sloane Roberts; Bob Clausen, co-anchor at KARK-TV; and Steve Shields, head coach of UALR men’s basketball. With over 200 tickets sold, and donations given by the audience to show the popularity of each act, “Asbury’s Got Talent” raised more than \$4,500 for the Global Missions of the United Methodist Church.

COURTESY PHOTO

Small church growing big on service

Last year, Goshen United Methodist Church dedicated its Activity Center after members spent several years building it themselves. It is used for fellowship, worship, education and meetings, and is designed as an emergency shelter.

With the building complete, the church wanted to renew its focus on mission and outreach. Since then, the multi-generational congregation that averages 33 in worship attendance has helped with disaster relief, supported the Peace at Home Shelter, given to Nothing in Return foster care support agency, served at the Community Meal at Central UMC Fayetteville and helped the Wesley Foundation campus ministry at the University of Arkansas.

The church’s annual crawfish boil and chicken dinner had previously served as a fundraiser for the new building, yielding up to \$1,500 per year. But the Administrative Board this year decided that the proceeds would help



From left, Goshen UMC treasurer Jennifer Garner, Nothing in Return president Delia Ingle, Pastor Denni Palmer and Nothing in Return clothing coordinator Gwen Marchese stop for a photo as they celebrate the church’s gift of more than \$2,500 to the foster care support agency.

COURTESY PHOTO

provide food and other needed items for foster families in Northwest Arkansas through Nothing in Return. The event, which included a free bike and car show, filled the Activity Center and generated an all-time high total of \$2,503.10. Delia Ingle, president of Nothing in Return, shared how this gives her hope for

the summer months, when they see very few financial donations.

“When people see a way to help others, they want to participate,” says the Rev. Denni Palmer, the church’s pastor. Since the new mission and outreach efforts began, Goshen UMC has welcomed three new families into the life of the church.

OBITUARY

EL DORADO

Renee Peyton Perry

Renee Peyton Perry, 50, of El Dorado, passed away Friday, April 26, 2013, in Pine Bluff.



Renee Perry

She was born March 2, 1963, in Pine Bluff, to David and Glenda Cox Peyton. She was reared and received her early education in White Hall, graduating from White Hall High School. She earned her BA from the University of Arkansas at Monticello. Renee earned two Masters degrees, one from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and the other from the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

She worked as the librarian at Watson Chapel High School.

She had been attending Lisbon United Methodist Church near El Dorado, where her

husband, the Rev. Charles Perry, serves as pastor.

She was a lifetime member and Past Matron of Union Chapter #40, Order of the Eastern Star. She was installed April 7 as Queen of MAT-TA-NAH Temple #136, Daughters of the Nile.

Survivors include her husband, the Rev. Charles Perry of El Dorado; a daughter, Laura Brandon of Magnolia; a stepdaughter, Karen Joyner of El Dorado; two stepsons, Jon Perry of Urbana and Scot Perry of El Dorado; her parents, David and Glenda Peyton of White Hall; a brother, David Peyton of White Hall; six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Monday, April 29, at First Baptist Church of White Hall with the Rev. Bruce Bennett and Dr. David Bush officiating. Burial followed in Memorial Park Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to ESTARL Scholarships, c/o Nancy Lindsay, 1012 Park Drive, Forrest City, AR 72335, or to any Shriner's Hospital.

Methodist Family Health seeks support for camp and Bible funds

What could be more fun for kids than summer camp? And what gift could have a greater impact on a young life than a Bible?

Camping and Bibles are the focus of two special funds managed by Methodist Family Health, the statewide organization that includes the Methodist Children's Home, Methodist Behavioral Hospital and a host of other programs caring for Arkansas children and families.

The Rev. Robert Regnier Memorial Camp Fund makes it possible for children who are residents of Methodist Children's Home group homes to enjoy a summer camp experience at United Methodist-related Camp Tanako near Hot Springs. The fund is named in memory of the former CEO of Methodist Family Health, who was also a longtime United Methodist

pastor in Arkansas.

"Gifts to the Rev. Regnier Camp Fund allow us to give children a joyous summer church camp experience that will be cherished for a lifetime," says Maggie Beeler, director of development for the Methodist Family Health Foundation. During the five-day camp in late June, participants enjoy games, crafts, fishing, swimming, campfires and a host of traditional camp activities.

Methodist Family Health operates eight group homes around the state, housing up to 64 children, in addition to other residential programs that provide comprehensive psychiatric and behavioral healthcare to children up to age 18.

"We are continually working to help children rebuild their lives by

providing a loving Christian environment filled with compassion, guidance and education," Beeler adds.

The Methodist Family Health Bible Fund makes it possible to give a gift of a Bible or Bible storybook to every child and adolescent in the MFH residential programs. For many children, this is the first Bible they can call their own.

"It means so much to these kids to have their very own Bible," Beeler says. "It's something that will have a lasting impact on their lives."

To support the Camp Fund or Bible Fund, send contributions to: Methodist Family Health Foundation, Attn: Jamie Griffith, P.O. Box 56050, Little Rock, AR 72215. Checks should be payable to Methodist Family Health and indicate Bible Fund or Camp Fund in the memo line. For more information, contact Griffith at 501-661-0720 ext. 7304, or jgriffith@methodistfamily.org.



Maggie Beeler, director of development for the Methodist Family Health Foundation, with three young people who have received Bibles thanks to gifts made through the Methodist Family Health Bible Fund.

COURTESY PHOTO

Keo UMC youth group gives to help volunteer firefighters



At a recent swap meet and rummage sale in the Lonoke County community of Keo, the youth of Keo UMC sponsored and worked a booth, selling items donated by the congregation. As disciples of Jesus who are called to love their neighbors, the youth decided to give the money they collected to those who respond first to the hurting, ill and injured in their community: the Keo Volunteer Fire Department.

During the April 28 worship service, the youth presented \$136.65 to a Keo volunteer firefighter. The fire department will use the money to purchase equipment necessary for their work.

COURTESY PHOTO

First UMC Magnolia students earn scholarships



First United Methodist Church Magnolia honored recently its high school graduates of 2013 with a church celebration and luncheon. Three of those seniors were awarded scholarships, and are pictured here with their youth minister, Zach Schrick, left.

Barrett Sanders, son of Cliff and Valerie Sanders, received the Tucker Elliott Franks Memorial Scholarship, given in memory of the late son of Dr. Hayden and Lynne Franks. Sydney Sneed, daughter of Donnie and Bronwyn Sneed, and Chris Shemas, son of Mike and Pam Shemas, each received the 320 South Youth Scholarship, which was set up by the youth group to benefit the church's graduating high school seniors.

COURTESY PHOTO

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UMFA selects new group of Seminary Scholars

The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (UMFA) has announced six new recipients of its Seminary Scholarship: Sara Bayles of Springdale, Patricia Butler of Russellville, James Kjorlaug of Paragould, Kathleen McMurray of Little Rock, Laura Jo Prange of Wabbaseka and Corey Tyson of Jacksonville.

The UMFA Seminary Scholarship Fund, established in 2000, makes grants for full scholarships to Arkansas students attending three-year United Methodist seminaries. Students who receive these scholarships make a covenant to return to serve within the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

"In August there will be 17 UMFA Seminary Scholars serving congregations in Arkansas, and 10 attending seminary," said Jim Argue, Jr., UMFA president. "The UMFA Seminar Scholarship Program has a significant role in ensuring strong pastoral leadership for the Church in years to come."

Bayles, Kjorlaug and Tyson will attend Duke Divinity School in Durham, N.C. Butler has chosen Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Prange will attend Saint Paul School of Theology in the Kansas City area and McMurray is a student at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill.

Bayles is a Duke Divinity Fellow, with an emphasis on learning and teaching congregational placement. She serves as student associate pastor at Asbury UMC in Durham. Before leaving Arkansas for seminary, she was a student local pastor at Overcup and Cleveland UMCs in Conway County, and served as a ministry intern at the University of Central Arkansas Wesley Foundation. Her home church is Wesley UMC Springdale.

Currently the associate pastor for outreach at First UMC Russellville, Butler helped begin an alternative worship service and meal to reach those who had previously felt



Patti Butler

uncomfortable with church. She was among the lay people who began a food pantry 13 years ago in Russellville that continues today.

Kjorlaug was an active member of the Wesley Foundation at Arkansas State University, and after college served as a missionary in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. He then returned to the Arkansas Conference, attended Local Pastor Licensing School and was appointed to First UMC Marmaduke. He will become a full-time student at Duke Divinity School this fall.



James Kjorlaug

McMurray, a volunteer for the past year with Borderless Friendship Foundation in Chiang Mai region of Thailand, will return to Garrett-Evangelical for her final year of seminary in the fall. She has been a leader in music, children's and youth ministries at her home church, First UMC Little Rock, and a volunteer and staff for Ozark Mission Project.



Kathleen McMurray

A certified lay speaker who frequently fills pulpits in her district, Prange is an active member of First UMC DeWitt, and has served as a member of its administrative board. She has served on a dozen Walk to Emmaus and Chrysalis teams, and has made six mission trips to Costa Rica and Central America.



Laura Jo Prange

Tyson is active in the life of Duke Memorial UMC while she attends Duke Divinity School. She works as a tutor with Duke University America Reads America Counts, and last summer served as interim children's minister at her home church, First UMC Jacksonville.



Corey Tyson



Artist: Betty Ruth Dorich Russell McMath

Investing for the Kingdom

Dick Butler spent many years helping the fledgling United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas become the strong ministry partner it is today. Dick and Gertie Butler are an appropriate beginning for the story of the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas. One of the original incorporators in 1963, he had a hands-on, day-to-day role in managing the investments of the Foundation from the start until his death in 1999.

Gertie and Dick Butler shared a great passion for philanthropy. Just a few examples of their great generosity include their support of Hendrix College, the Butler Center for Arkansas History, First United Methodist Church in Little Rock, the Gertrude Butler Child Development Center and Wildwood Park for the Performing Arts. A strong Foundation advocate in her own right, Gertie also looked to the Foundation to help her achieve her charitable goals. Their son Richard Jr. continues their great family tradition of service as an active UMFA board member.

The Butler legacy at UMFA is a series of endowment funds that have helped the Foundation to grow to its current status as one of the largest grant-making United Methodist foundations in the country. Today's ability to make transformational grants to United Methodist ministries throughout Arkansas rests in large part on the witness, generosity, vision and leadership of Dick Butler.



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