

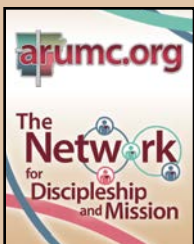
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Vietnamese UMC celebrates its own home, debt-free



Worshippers at Vietnamese UMC Fort Smith used iPads, printed Bibles and smartphones to read together a passage from the book of Joshua during the Oct. 13 service consecrating their new building.

AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

BY AMY FORBUS
Editor

FORT SMITH—After 13 years as a congregation, a lot of fundraising and a year and a half of working weekends on construction, the people of Vietnamese UMC Fort Smith on Oct. 13 consecrated their

new building for the worship of God and for the service of all people. And they did it without incurring any debt.

To reach their goal, they began their fundraising within the membership of the congregation, then expanded. To raise money from outside the church, they sold orders

of eggrolls and fried rice, often delivering the hot food to other local congregations after worship. And on the first Saturday of each month, a local restaurant owned by church members gave its proceeds to the building fund.

The sanctuary, which can hold 110 people, leaves room for the

50-member congregation to grow. On Consecration Sunday, they needed almost all of the folding chairs from the fellowship hall to accommodate the well-wishers from sister churches.

Worship at Vietnamese UMC includes bilingual singing, with each song sung first in Vietnamese, then in English. The Rev. Bud Reeves, superintendent of the Northwest District, served as guest preacher, with church member Do Van Le providing translation into Vietnamese.

“This church is crossing into new territory today,” Reeves said. “You’ve accomplished a lot, and you’ve been through a lot just by being here today. Today is a crossing point into engagement with the mission field in Fort Smith.”

During the liturgy of consecration the Rev. Terry Gallamore, pastor of Vietnamese UMC, asked God that “all that is said and done here may always bring honor and glory to your holy name.”

Reeves asked God to sanctify the new space, and also to save the congregation from a vision that would limit their worship to within the walls of the building.

“Send us out from here to be your servants in the world, sharing the blessings of Christ with the

[See BUILDING, page 5]

Arkansas top-represented state at Leadership Institute

BY AMY FORBUS
Editor

More than 2,000 people gathered Sept. 24-27 at the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kan., for its annual Leadership Institute. While attendees came from across the U.S. and from a number of other countries, 143 participants came from Arkansas—more than any other state.

Founded and hosted by one of the largest churches in all of United Methodism, the Leadership Institute seeks to help renew churches through providing information, encouraging innovation and offering opportunities for inspiration through worship and prayer.

Several Arkansas Conference churches have made attending the Leadership Institute a priority for years, finding it valuable for growth in discipleship and outreach. This year, though, Arkansas attendance there took a big jump, as clergy and laity from 10 Arkansas churches attended at the invitation of the Arkansas Conference Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence in Leadership (CCLEL). A grant from the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (UMFA) covered the expenses for these invited churches.

“We wanted to do something that ignited excitement for local church ministry, and based on the experience of friends who have attended in the past, the Leadership Institute fit the need,” said Jim Argue, president and CEO of UMFA. “What a great gift the Church of the Resurrection has made to the UMC by offering this resource!”

The Rev. Kurt Boggan, director of the CCLEL, enjoyed having an up-close look at Church of the Resurrection in action.

“Everything they do is thoroughly aligned with their mission, and it was inspirational to watch,” Boggan said. “I think many of our participants saw that, experienced that, and are taking it back to apply in their own context and mission fields. If they can do that alignment, regardless of size, they’ll find what works.”

Church of the Resurrection’s size doesn’t limit it to only teaching other large churches. Workshop choices included “Beginning Change in a Small Church” and “Difficult Conversations,” as well as universal topics like “Attracting and Connecting Visitors.”

“These groups were led by some of the top in their respective fields, and gave practical advice and ideas to take back to your own local mission field,”

[See LEADERSHIP, page 11]

Prayer for guidance leads to nursing school in Congo

BY ROBIN THORNTON
Special Contributor

A number of years ago while reading the Arkansas United Methodist, my husband, Denver, saw a photo of people making bricks in Africa. While it reminded him of his hometown's brick company, it also triggered a leap of faith into a new mission field for us.

We had been praying for the Lord to lead us to a place where we could make a donation that might assist Methodists in the mission field—realizing that when we pray, God may lead us in a direction other than the easiest path. But for us, that moment marked the first step in serving our Methodist brothers and sisters in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). It has not been a straight and easy course.

After we decided where to get involved, we tried numerous projects. However, we weren't certain our funds had the impact we were hoping for. At the urging of Bishop Crutchfield, we contacted a Methodist pastor in Indiana: the Rev. Bob Walters, and his daughter, Taylor, were involved in mission work in the DRC. They introduced us to a group of pastors from the DRC who came to the 2008 General Conference in Fort Worth.

Acting on a vision

Two of those pastors, the Revs. Joseph Mulongo and Ivan Mulongo, had a vision to build a nursing school in their home village of Mulongo. Their dream was to create a network of health centers and staff them with the graduates. Their wish soon became our goal.

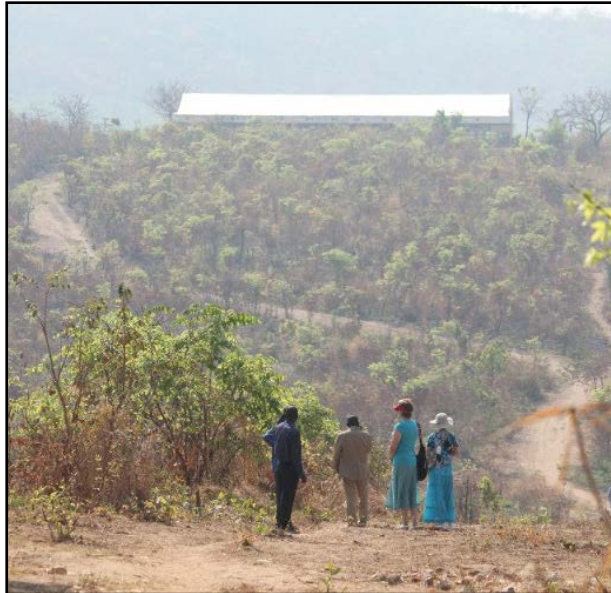
The mayor of the village contributed land on the "Hill of Knowledge" for the building site. Villagers contributed by making the bricks and providing all of the labor (80 percent of the construction costs) for a three-room building. We covered the rest of the cost through Friendly Planet Missiology, a Methodist mission group serving Central Africa. To emphasize accountability beyond the village, the school was named The El Dorado Nursing School, after our Arkansas hometown.

The school was completed earlier this year. In July, I traveled with a group to Mulongo to attend the dedication.

The village of Mulongo has no running water and no electricity. A nearby lake and the Congo River provide its water supply and food. Its population of 60,000 welcomed us with a band and flowers, and a group of boy scouts (guards) provided excellent hospitality throughout our two-week stay.

Answering incredible need

The village hospital has three doctors who see about 18,000 patients each year. Conditions are not optimal. Patients' families must camp outside the hospital to take



Robin Thornton, second from right, and others prepare to walk up the "Hill of Knowledge" in the village of Mulongo, Democratic Republic of Congo, to the El Dorado Nursing School. The first phase of the school was dedicated in July. COURTESY PHOTO

care of their ill family members. Even something as simple as a cot is not guaranteed for each patient. People travel for days to get medical attention, and many diseases go untreated for lack of supplies, equipment and funding.

The El Dorado Nursing School is helping to improve this situation. It has 150 students enrolled in the three-year program. The student population is primarily male, a consequence of the patriarchal culture pervading the village, but 25 women have matriculated thanks to scholarships provided by us and three El Dorado churches: First UMC, Dumas Memorial UMC and Marysville UMC.

Among the current students is a member of the Mai-Mai rebel group's high command. This woman (with the formidable nickname "Shooter") met with us to discuss her desire to become a nurse. In addition to the medical care she is learning to provide, she will be a good safeguard for the town.

The second phase of the school, a center for maternity/midwife training, is under construction. After that phase is complete, we will begin work on an administration building, which is required for accreditation.

Our prayer is that we continue to be aware of what our brothers and sisters in Christ are going through. So many places in the world need assistance. When we become aware of those needs, I feel the Lord wants us to help. It is not always an easy process, but it is a rewarding one.

Thornton and her husband live in El Dorado. She may be reached at 870-918-1227 or Robinthornton7@gmail.com. She would welcome the opportunity to come speak to your church group about the DRC.



EDITOR'S CORNER

BY AMY FORBUS

Loving alike

We have some standing disagreements in the Forbus household.

The first one surfaced almost 18 years ago when we met with Betty, the church organist, to finalize the music for our wedding. She asked how we preferred the fourth line of "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"—leading off with the tied quarter notes so that the first syllable is two beats long, or with a single quarter note so it matches the three previous lines?

I made the call without even consulting my future husband, seated next to me. On the way out of the building, he let me know that he preferred the latter option, which wasn't the one Betty and I agreed was obviously the correct choice.

The good news: It was the recessional music, so on our wedding day we were out of the chapel before Betty ever played those notes.

Another topic that always sparks debate is the serving temperature of pudding. I enjoy a freshly cooked, warm bowl of pudding—chocolate, vanilla, butterscotch, you name it.

John, on the other hand, says that pudding is like revenge: a dish best served cold.

Neither one of us will budge. We each make our pudding the way we like it. (And yes, this means that when I make my toasty warm pudding, I eat all four servings in one sitting.)

In John Wesley's Sermon 39, "Catholic Spirit," using 2 Kings 10:15 as his opening text, he asks, "But although a difference in opinions or modes of worship may prevent an entire external union, yet need it prevent our union in affection? Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?"

And then, he answers his own questions: "Without all doubt, we may."

We live in divisive times. We can choose media outlets to simply echo our existing opinions rather than challenge them. A message on a bumper sticker can provoke a harmful case of road rage. I'm thankful that most differences of opinion we have at home don't cross over into the big topics, like theology, morality or our care for God's creation.

But even if our disagreements do delve into those areas, I think we could keep them from becoming insurmountable. The Common English Bible translates the question asked in 2 Kings 10:15 as, "Are you as committed to me as I am to you?" At our house, we know the answer is a firm "Yes."

When we face brothers and sisters who disagree with us, may that answer hold fast in the larger house of our faith.

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



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Submission Deadlines

Issue Date	Submission Deadline
Dec. 6	Nov. 19
Jan. 3	Dec. 13
Feb. 7	Jan. 20

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GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST: A word from the Bishop

BY GARY E. MUELLER

I'm really serious about this whole revival thing

I'm really serious about this whole revival thing.

That's because it has to happen if we're going to be the church Jesus calls us to be, the disciples the world needs us to be and the people we long to be.

So how's it going to happen?

For starters, I'm making it "Job 1" in my Bishop's Mission Plan. The District Superintendents will make it "Job 1" in their District Mission Plans. And I know many laity and clergy will embrace it as "Job 1" in the coming years.

But simply making it a priority is not enough. If we're serious about serious revival, it has to get serious at the deepest possible level. All of

which means we have to do four kinds of serious soul work.

1. We must cultivate a deep desire for things to change so our church, ministry and lives are rooted in the presence and transforming power of Jesus Christ. And, if we're not there yet, we at least need to get to a place where we want to have this deep desire.

2. We will have to pray like we've never prayed before as we open ourselves to God, are absolutely honest with God, actually listen to God and let God transform us from the inside out.

3. We need to have conversations between laity and clergy about the need for the Holy

Spirit to revive us. Sometimes laity will push these conversations. At other times clergy will. And these conversations need to occur between individuals, in committees (even the Board of Trustees!) and in worship.

4. We will have to encourage each other all the time, and hold each other accountable some of the time. Revival is not easy work. In fact, it's scary work because it means moving from where we're comfortable to a whole new way of living.

Revival is never primarily the result of our vision, strategy or hard work. It comes from the Holy Spirit. We are simply called to be serious about it, pray like we've never prayed before, focus on it and seek it with

each other. But I am fully confident that when we do our work, we will be amazed by what God actually does!

Yes, I'm serious about this whole revival thing. And I trust you are too. So there's no need to wait for "The Plan." Let's just start longing for it, praying for it, talking about it and supporting each other in it.

Grace and peace,

Gary E. Mueller

P.S.—Have a blessed Thanksgiving that I hope leads to ThanksLiving!

APPOINTMENTS

The following appointment changes have been announced since the deadline for the previous issue of the *Arkansas United Methodist*:

- Jenni Duncan (deacon, minister of Hispanic outreach)—St. Andrew UMC Little Rock (effective Sept. 1)
- Terry Chapman (elder)—Wickes UMC (new charge effective Sept. 9; appointment effective Oct. 6) and Lockesburg UMC (existing charge)
- Bryan Richardson (local pastor)—Mountain View UMC Mena (charge realignment, Sept. 9)

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

¡Convivencia!—shared life

BY JENNI DUNCAN

Special Contributor

What do "Abre mis ojos," the Gospel of Mark, baked bananas and tinga have to do with one another?

You might encounter any of those things at the Bilingual Faith Group, part of a growing Hispanic ministry in Little Rock.

After three years working mainly with English as Second Language (ESL) classes and interest groups, my heart said it was time to do more. My first attempt at a Bible study didn't last more than a week, so I tried another format. I invited to my home a few Latino couples who had wanted conversation practice, along with some young adult advocates for immigrants. The first Faith Group met mid-July for a potluck, singing and a Bible discussion in Spanish and English.

It was mostly Spanish the first time, though. One of the members called to say she had company from Mexico, and I feared she wasn't coming. No, she brought them all—mom and dad, sister, nephew and nieces, none of whom spoke English. They loved the gathering, however, and came a second time before returning to Mexico. Since then, Faith Group is mainly in English, with Spanish-to-English translations increasing as we get tired.

The baked bananas? They've appeared as a dessert from El Salvador. A Mexico native served them like a sauce for rice... with chicken and mole (mo-le, chocolate-based sauce). At our house, we served chicken tinga, which I learned to make at a Cooking Intercambio, where U.S. natives and immigrants gather to cook U.S. and Latino dishes.

Home-based meetings

Over the past months, the group has settled into a routine of meeting in homes every other Friday. After dinner and conversation, we sing praise songs in English and Spanish and

then get down to the Gospel of Mark. Reading in both languages makes the progress slow, but for those who are bilingual, it brings extra meaning.

In Mark 3, Jesus teaches how a house divided cannot stand, and the Spanish version translated: "no puede permanecer." Seeing the root of the English "permanent" reminded us that although things may stand for a while, they are not permanent like the healing and grace of God.

And every time I read "misericordia"—mercy—I remember God's heart (corazón) for our misery, and his accord with us. I see God's willingness to step in with compassion. As we share such thoughts, mono-lingual participants chime in, others translate and the discussion becomes a flurry of languages, with the Holy Spirit at work in all of them.

"Abre mis ojos," or "Open my eyes" was the first song the group learned, since we wanted to open eyes not only to God but to a new way to share faith. Some who participate grew up Catholic but haven't found a church here. Others did not grow up in the church at all. Still, everyone honors God, and as a group member said one night before prayer, "This is the church." It was late. Arrivals and dinner are unhurried, and it takes a while to sing and read and, increasingly, to share and shoulder each other's burdens. That we give this evening to each other shows its value.

Sharing faith in the mission field

Sometimes I wonder how I got here from what was to be a one-time stint as an Individual Volunteer in Mission in Mexico. Now I'm appointed in the community as an ESL instructor. I was first at Seis Puentes, a non-profit in North Little Rock, through Pulaski County Adult Education, but my work now extends into southwest Little Rock. ESL classes are housed at St. Andrew and Geyer Springs UMCs, both gracious in providing space for additional Hispanic ministries.

We've had a jewelry-making group, and even more successful, a Cooking Intercambio. We exchange know-how and goodwill and, of course, enjoy our efforts. You could join us in December. Welcome is what we're all about.

For our last book fair I asked Enrique Fuentesvilla, publisher of *Arkansas en Español*, what was the best place to locate the fair, meaning where to find Hispanics. He replied that there were concentrations in southwest Little Rock but said, "We live everywhere."

Maybe you have already noticed that he is right. Immigrants, both Hispanic and Asian, are a fast-growing constituency in our midst... in our mission field. Remember Isaiah's vision of a house of prayer for all peoples? And in Revelation 7:9 (NRSV), this verse: "After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb..."

Jesus prayed for his disciples to be one so that the world would know of his advent and sacrificial love (John 17). That unity begins with togetherness. When we are willing to bridge between cultures, God's love is among us, as powerful as the day of Pentecost and the vision of Revelation. The Kingdom is present, as tribes and languages join together for the glory of God.

Pray with me in Spanish "Your Love is Deep," remembering "sin" (pronounced "seen") means "without." I'm thinking you know what "amor" means:

Profundo amor, inmenso amor, Perfecto amor, amor sin par.

En el nombre de Jesus/In the name of Jesus,
Jenni

The Rev. Duncan serves at Seis Puentes Hispanic Outreach and as minister of Hispanic outreach at St. Andrew UMC Little Rock.



Jenni Duncan



A recent 'Cooking Intercambio'

Adoption professionals challenge: Where are United Methodists on adoption?

November is National Adoption Awareness Month, and two United Methodists are asking Arkansas churches to consider their role in encouraging families to adopt children currently in foster care.

According to information on the National Adoption Center's website, each year more than 120,000 children remain in foster care because there aren't enough adoptive families ready to receive them. The Adopt America Network states that 26,000 children per year leave foster care at age 18 without having been adopted, and with few resources to help them achieve productive lives.

Bill Barling believes that United Methodist churches can do more to help increase awareness of the overwhelming need for adoptive families here in Arkansas. Barling is a member of First UMC North Little Rock and co-founder with his wife, Ann, of the private non-profit adoption agency Families Are Special.

"What is needed is many, many more families who are willing to become trained and prepared to adopt children from foster care," he says. From a personal perspective, he believes that families active in United Methodist churches represent a largely untapped resource for helping to bring the number of ready and waiting adoptive families closer to the number of children who need homes.

Mona Neville, an adoption professional and longtime member of First UMC Batesville, agrees. She and her husband, Greg, are the parents of two children by adoption, and found tremendous support from their congregation during and after both adoptions.

And their family is not alone in that regard. Neville sees a "blessed cell of adoptive families" in her home church, and believes the nurturing community of First UMC Batesville helped bring about that relatively high concentration of families who have chosen to grow through adoption.

Neville cited Jesus' words in Matthew 18:10 (New Century Version): "Be careful. Don't think these little children are worth nothing. I tell you that they have angels in heaven who are always with my Father in heaven."

"I believe our members at FUMC Batesville live by this verse," she said. "We have some of the most caring, non-judgmental people I have ever known. When we adopted our first son 18 years ago, the members were amazing."

But it didn't stop there. When the Nevilles adopted their second son, church members were there for them yet again, just as they have offered support to other adoptive families.

"I witnessed that same quality of support as each additional family adopted a child," she said.

First UMC Batesville members Crystal Anderson and her husband, Wayne, adopted their son in 2008. Crystal attests to a special bond among fellow adoptive families in the church.

"To have members of our congregation that shared the same beliefs and spiritual foundation was something that we depended on heavily to get us through the process," she said. "Our entire church family has been so supportive, encouraging and accepting. We could not have done this without them."

Neville adds that there has never been a formal adoption awareness campaign or discussion group at First UMC Batesville.

"What the discussion has been, however, is that we stand together as United Methodists and take care of the needy, the hurt and the forgotten," she says. "I believe these qualities are why FUMC Batesville is so special."

Both Neville and Barling are convinced that what has happened at First UMC Batesville can happen at churches across Arkansas—and that it can help lessen the number of children who remain in foster care for years at a time, and those who turn 18 without ever being adopted.

"In each of the past five years, a new record has been set in both the number of children entering foster care and the number of kids aging out at 18 to live on their own," Barling said. "Every United Methodist should be concerned, because these are God's children."

Learn more

Among the countless resources available for public and private adoptions, these organizations supplied information used in this feature.

- Adopt America Network: adoptamericanetwork.org or 419-726-5100;
- National Adoption Center: adopt.org or 1-800-TO-ADOPT;
- Families Are Special Inc. (actively assists Arkansas families in adopting children from foster care, both within Arkansas and in other states): arkansasadopttoday.com or 501-758-9184.

Seeking revival: Southwest LR church aims for vitality



Dedra Hamilton joined the St. Andrew UMC on Oct. 6, transferring her membership from another congregation. A student at Philander Smith College, she plans to help build a youth ministry at St. Andrew. Pictured with her are the Revs. Mike Fikes and Chester Jones, left, and church member Angela West, right.

AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

BY AMY FORBUS
Editor

Once a large, thriving congregation, St. Andrew UMC Little Rock has seen a decline that put its average worship attendance for the first eight months of this year at 25.

Since the Rev. Dr. Chester Jones on Sept. 8 stepped into the role of senior pastor, the average attendance has hovered in the 40s. The former district superintendent came out of retirement to serve at St. Andrew

because he enjoys a challenge.

On Oct. 6, when many Christian communities observe World Communion Sunday, Jones preached a message of inclusiveness not just for that sacrament, but for the entirety of the church. He spoke of the St. Andrew's twice-monthly food pantry as a place of invitation—not just to receive groceries, but also to worship. One of the first-time visitors that day received an invitation to worship at St. Andrew when he came to the food pantry.

"We say, 'I don't know anybody. I can't find anybody.' That's the attitude we have to get over here at St. Andrew," Jones said.

An infusion of new part-time staff may help. The Rev. Mike Fikes, a retired local pastor, has agreed to travel a couple of days a week to southwest Little Rock from his home in Diamondhead. As minister of evangelism, he plans to help Jones begin a new wave of outreach to the community surrounding the church—knocking on doors, even visiting local bars to meet the church's neighbors.

The Rev. Jenni Duncan, a deacon, came on board as minister of Hispanic outreach. She teaches English as a Second Language, as well as Bible studies and cooking events that bring together people of different cultures. (See her commentary on page 3 of this issue.)

Martha Downing, a former music minister, hadn't been in a music leadership role for a while. But shortly after she discerned a call from God to get involved again, she heard from a friend she and Jones have in common. St. Andrew was using recorded music as accompaniment for singing, and

Jones wondered if she might serve as a pianist and music leader. She responded to his request with a yes.

"Even though it might have been an uncomfortable decision—I didn't know anyone here, it was unknown to me—I decided that yes, with blind faith, I will commit to work with Chester and this church, to worship and bring the Holy Spirit," she said. "When you bring Jesus, people will come, because people want to feel Jesus."

Jones, for his part, is encouraging a culture of invitation, and is trying to nurture at least one person per Sunday to join the church. He says that by Dec. 1, the congregation will have a five-year plan ready for approval at charge conference, outlining responsibilities and forming strategies for reaching goals.

Members seem hopeful in the wake of the changes. Beulah West, a retiree, has witnessed the neighborhood's decline, seen others move away and transfer to other churches and watched her Sunday school class dwindle and disband due to deaths. But now she sees new possibilities.

"I think it's wonderful," she said. "This is what we really need

here. It's either this, or we're through. I'm excited about it." She noted that with the increased attendance has come a diversity that the church hasn't seen in a while.

Beulah's daughter, Angela West, is a schoolteacher in the area. She finds inspiration in the new people at St. Andrew and the ideas they bring.

"We can get out and reach people we don't know. That needs to be the focus—reaching out," she said. "Not just to people we know, but to the people we don't know."

Asked if she has gone with her pastor to knock on doors in nearby neighborhoods, Angela West says, "Not yet, but it's coming. I'm about the shyest person on the planet, so I could probably sit next to somebody on the couch who could talk."

But she's willing to go?

"I'll try," she says.

Beulah West pointed out that even though with church in decline, its food pantry has continued to serve a need in the community. She envisions putting the building to greater use in service to others, perhaps through a clothes closet or similar outreach.

"All I'm going to do is be faithful," she said.



Members and friends of Vietnamese UMC Fort Smith sing praises to God in two languages at the Oct. 13 service of consecration for the church's new building.

AUM PHOTOS BY AMY FORBUS

Building (continued from page 1)

world he came to redeem," he prayed.

Gallamore recognized the hard work and generosity of the members and the community. Before worship began, he and the congregation thanked a number of churches and people who helped, including an electrician who is a member of a Vietnamese Baptist church and donated his labor to wire the

building. A sister church, St. Paul UMC Fort Smith, housed the congregation for several years, and some of their members attended to help celebrate.

Members and friends celebrated following worship with a potluck dinner in the fellowship hall. The hall includes a kitchen, as well as a meeting room that may one day be converted to a nursery space. A small office sits at the rear of the sanctuary, just off the narthex. The church paid for labor on certain specialized work such as HVAC, concrete and

plumbing, but because of members' work, the church now owns a building with an estimated value of \$650,000—significantly more than they spent, Gallamore said.

There were moments along the way when Gallamore and others weren't sure how the building would actually become reality. But whenever they hit a tough spot, he said, that handful of faithful people—the 17 or 18 families that make up the congregation—moved forward even when they thought they were stuck.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A useful special issue

Thanks for a job well-done with the Special Issue of the Sept. 20, 2013 *Arkansas United Methodist*. It's good to be able to put a face with our Conference staff folks, along with their phone numbers, etc. Is 877-646-1816 still the toll free number for the Conference Office? I didn't see it in the special issue.

I hope there are sufficient copies of this issue available for district superintendents to take to conferences, meetings, etc., and to get to those who are conducting church conferences, so all folks have access to a copy.

I know there are some free subscriptions sent to leaders in each local church, but what about reaching more of our "folks in the pews" and especially our youth?

Anxious to hear,
Mardell A. McClurkin
Kibler UMC Alma

Editor's response:

Thank you, Mrs. McClurkin, for the compliment on our recent special issue. Yes, the Conference office toll-free number remains the same, 877-646-1816. Please accept my apology for omitting it.

We ordered another printing of the special issue,

and have asked district superintendents and circuit elders to share it at charge conferences. In addition, **any United Methodist in Arkansas may request copies of the reprint by calling the toll-free number above or by emailing communications@arumc.org.** We will honor requests of up to 10 copies at a time while our supply lasts.

The reprint also includes a subscription form insert, so if you know anyone interested in subscribing to the *Arkansas United Methodist*, please share it with those persons. For those who prefer to read a copy online, digital edition subscriptions are available, too.

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.



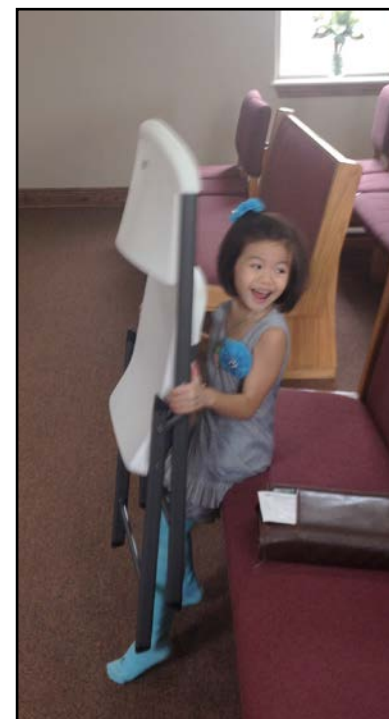
The large cross and flame logo on the façade of the sanctuary proclaims the church's United Methodist affiliation.

"With God's math, it works," Gallamore said. "God provided a way for it all to come together."

After the service, Do Van Le stopped for a moment to reflect on the day. "This is our dream for a long time," he said. Because the people of Vietnamese UMC have worked so hard and relied on faith, he believes they will continue to move forward now that this dream has come true.

"We will work together to bring the gospel to our people," he said. "That's the main purpose of it. We will do our best to serve him—praise the Lord."

After the worship service ended, even the youngest members pitched in to help move chairs to the fellowship hall for the celebration lunch.



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4

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YOUTH DIRECTORS: Still time to plan a Spring Break trip, and it's a good time to start looking at a summer trip!! If you plan your own trips and just need help chartering your bus, we get great rates from 3 different charter companies. **Kimberling Kids Travel** ~ kimberlingkids@aol.com ~ 501-227-8447.

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

Use #GivingTuesday Dec. 3 to triple your Advent gift to Imagine No Malaria

Advent is a wonderful reminder of God's love for all humanity expressed through the birth of Jesus Christ. United Methodists of Arkansas show and share that love to others in many ways: Angel Trees, alternative gift giving, hands-on service in local communities. This year, Advent offers a special opportunity to impact even more lives through #GivingTuesday.

The UMC's General Board of Global Ministries announced in a news release that for one day only, on Dec. 3, 2013, as part of the denomination's #GivingTuesday participation, gifts made online to any project through The Advance will be matched.

Global Ministries announced it will allocate the "matching funds" dollar for dollar, up to the first \$500,000 in gifts to Advance projects received online on Dec. 3, 2013, between 12:00 a.m. and 11:59 p.m. EST. A maximum of \$10,000 per individual gift to a project will be disbursed as matching funds. A project may receive a maximum of \$50,000 in matching funds.

While any Advance project is eligible for the match, Arkansas United Methodists are reminded that matching funds are still available through the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas for gifts made to Imagine No Malaria.

"Because of the UMFA match and now the GBGM match, any gift given online December 3 will be tripled," said the Rev. Martha Taylor, marketing and training for the Conference and the contact person for the Imagine No Malaria initiative in Arkansas. "Gifts will be doubled by GBGM and by UMFA, so a \$10 gift will grow to \$30."

To participate in the #GivingTuesday match, give online at www.umcmmission.org/Give-to-Mission/Search-for-Projects/Projects/3021190 any time between 12:00 a.m. EST and 11:56 p.m. on Dec. 3. The Conference will receive a report with an Arkansas total, which will then be shared with UMFA for their match.

'Strokes Fore Malaria'

The Rev. Stephen Coburn, senior pastor of First UMC Springdale (right), teamed up Oct. 5 and 6 with church member Craig Lile, a former PGA Tour golfer, for "Strokes Fore Malaria." They played golf for 24 hours straight, from noon Saturday until noon Sunday, as church members and friends made pledges by the hour or for the entire 24 hours to support the effort. The pair raised more than \$7,000 for Imagine No Malaria, which will be matched by the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas.

COURTESY PHOTO



The above total reflects a dollar-for-dollar matching

grant from the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (umfa.org). UMFA will match every Imagine No Malaria gift received through the Arkansas Conference, up to \$333,333.

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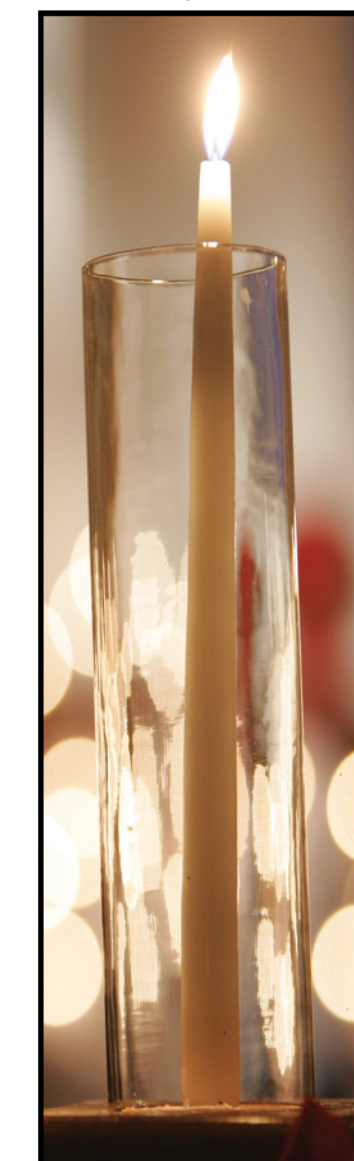
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Candlelight Carol Service

December 5, 6, 7, at 7:30 p.m.

December 8, at 4 p.m.

Greene Chapel • Hendrix College • Conway

Reservations required. Call 501-450-1495 beginning Nov. 25.

Tour Services

Thursday, December 19 at 7:30 p.m.
First United Methodist Church, Springdale

Friday, December 20 at 7:30 p.m.
Trinity United Methodist Church, Little Rock

Ingathering set for Nov. 23

Early drop-off available in four districts



arumc.org/ingathering2013

The 36th annual Ingathering, a supply drive to benefit relief ministries in Arkansas and worldwide, will take place Saturday, Nov. 23 from 9 a.m. to noon, at Arkansas Rice Depot, 3801 W. 65th Street in Little Rock. Sponsored by the Conference Board of Global Ministries, this year's Ingathering will include a brief devotional, refreshments and work organizing donations for storage and transport.

Truckloads and carloads of health kits, cleaning buckets, bulk items and more will arrive from across the state at the Arkansas Rice Depot for sorting and distribution. Some of the items will go to Arkansans; others will go to Sager Brown Depot, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) distribution center in Baldwin, La. From there, they will make their way to people in need around the world.

Helpers are needed to unload vehicles and sort items for packing

and storage. For an assignment to work a specific job, contact **Brenda Norwood**, 501-773-5749 or bnorwood3g@gmail.com.

Ingathering is a request for specific sets of items. Visit arumc.org/ingathering2013 to learn how to assemble the requested kits.

To save time, **complete your Volunteer Consent and Ingathering Report forms before you arrive.**

Churches may send money with their Ingathering Report forms. Rather than including money inside the kits, place it in an envelope and turn it in at the registration table. After shipping costs are covered, any undesignated surplus will be used for hunger relief within Arkansas.

Wear a United Methodist Church t-shirt if you have one. It can be your local UMC or youth group shirt, a shirt from a previous year of Ingathering, a camp or retreat center shirt... let's show the variety within our connection!

Ingathering early drop-off locations and times

Northeast District:

Please call ahead to arrange for drop-off during the week of Nov. 18-22:

- **Nettleton UMC Jonesboro**, 2310 Boydston Street, 870-238-9498
- **First UMC Harrisburg**, 204 S. Main Street, 501-412-6507
- **First UMC Batesville**, 615 E. Main Street, 870-793-3803 or 870-793-5247

1:30 to 4 p.m.

- **Brinkley UMC**, 406 West Ash Street, 501-590-8053; Nov. 11-15, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **First UMC Pine Bluff**, 200 West 6th Street, 870-535-0935; Nov. 11-15, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **First UMC West Memphis**, 215 N. Missouri Street, 870-735-1805; Nov. 11-15, 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 4 p.m.

Southwest District:

The following two churches will have someone at the church to receive all kits on the designated day.

- **First UMC Hot Springs**, 1100 Central Avenue, 501-623-6668; Nov. 16, 9 a.m. to noon
- **Sugar Hill UMC Texarkana**, 1621 Sugar Hill Road, 870-779-1805; Nov. 16, 9 a.m. to noon

The following two churches ask that you call first to be sure someone is there before you drop off Ingathering supplies. (Asbury UMC is currently without an administrative assistant.)

- **Asbury UMC Magnolia**, Nov. 18-21; call 870-949-1033
- **Prescott UMC**, Nov. 18-21 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; call 870-887-2441.

Northwest District:

- **First UMC Harrison**, 1100 W. Bower Avenue, 870-741-2351; Nov. 19-21, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **First UMC Springdale**, 206 W. Johnson Avenue, 479-751-4610; Nov. 19-21, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Goddard UMC Fort Smith**, 1922 Dodson Avenue, 479-785-1415; Nov. 19-21, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **First UMC Russellville**, 304 S. Commerce Avenue, 479-968-1232; Nov. 19-21, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Southeast District:

- **First UMC Monticello**, 317 S. Main Street, 870-367-2471; Nov. 11-15, 9 to 11:30 a.m. and

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Arson causes severe damage to Southbend UMC



The fire scene perimeter at Southbend UMC was cordoned off, with a cross carved from a tree stump serving as one of the anchors.

AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

BY AMY FORBUS
Editor

LONOKE COUNTY—An intentionally set fire caused severe damage to Southbend United Methodist Church Jacksonville early on the morning of Oct. 16.

The church's 70-year-old sanctuary sustained heavy smoke damage, and the fellowship hall was gutted after thieves stole some sound equipment, then set two fires in the building before leaving.

Because deadbolt locks kept them from opening doors, they broke a window to enter the building, then used the American flag from the sanctuary to clear the rest of the glass out of the frame so they could fit the items through the opening.

The church, which has an average weekly attendance of 25 to 30, met for worship Sunday, Oct. 20,

at the nearby South Bend Volunteer Fire Department. A number of area churches, both United Methodist and other denominations, also have offered meeting space while the congregation repairs the damage.

The Rev. Garren Hagemeyer, who lives in Little Rock but has served this rural Lonoke County church since 1991, said members who live nearby were on the scene shortly after the fire department arrived. Witnesses gave sheriff's officers descriptions of people running away from the building carrying sound equipment.

The South Bend Volunteer Fire Department rallied its firefighters and arrived around 7 a.m.

"It didn't take everybody very long to get here, and all we had was fire coming out the back, so we hit it," said Mike Neemann, captain of the fire department.

"The fire department out here did a wonderful job," said Michael Kindall, deputy chief of the Lonoke County Sheriff's Department, who was on the scene to assist with gathering evidence. "They contained this fire and saved the church. They need to be commended for what they did."

Suspect in custody

Later on the day of the fire, Lonoke County Sheriff's Office arrested Joseph Charles Yarberry, 19, on suspicion of arson, commercial burglary and theft of property. Officers recovered the stolen items from his vehicle. At Yarberry's Oct. 18 court appearance, bond was set at \$20,000. According to deputy prosecutor Ben Hooper of the Lonoke County Prosecuting Attorney's office, the projected date



Southbend UMC's pastor, the Rev. Garren Hagemeyer (facing the camera), talks with South Bend Volunteer Fire Department captain Mike Neemann, Bishop Gary Mueller and Central District superintendent the Rev. Dede Roberts.

AUM PHOTO BY TODD BURRIS



The sanctuary sustained heavy smoke damage, but was not destroyed. The fellowship hall appears to be a total loss.

AUM PHOTO BY TODD BURRIS

for Yarberry's plea and arraignment is Dec. 2.

Criminal charges are pending against three juveniles, ages 14, 16 and 17, who were with Yarberry at the time of his arrest.

Hagemeyer used the fire as an opportunity for evangelism, inviting the captain of the fire department to come to 9:45 a.m. worship in the building the department would be lending to the congregation the

following Sunday.

The Rev. Dede Roberts, superintendent of the Central District, said that Southbend's building was well insured, so the congregation will be financially able to make a plan to move forward.

For more photos of the fire at Southbend UMC, visit the Arkansas Conference's Facebook page: facebook.com/arkansasumc.

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION & DISASTER RESPONSE UPDATES

For information on any Volunteers In Mission (VIM) project below, contact the individual listed or Byron Mann, Conference VIM coordinator, at vim@arumc.org or 870-703-8361. For Disaster Response (DR) projects, contact Byron or Janice Mann, DR co-coordinators, at disaster@arumc.org or 870-703-8359 (Janice). To connect with these ministries on Facebook, search for "Volunteers in Mission & Disaster Response - Serving Arkansas & Beyond," and join the group for updates.

Arkansas Conference VIM mission journey to Moore, Okla., for tornado cleanup

Team members are needed for a Nov. 6-10, 2013, Volunteers In Mission journey to help with tornado recovery in Moore, Okla. Team members may sign up as late as Nov. 5. Sheri Matthews is serving as team leader. Contact Byron Mann, 870-703-8361 or vim@arumc.org, if you can be in mission with this team or if you have questions while considering the commitment.

Scott County, Ark.: Workers still needed

Flood damaged homes in Scott County still need teams to make repairs. Two or three families could use help in the next few weeks before winter sets in.

These are one- or two-day projects. Interested individuals or groups should email Byron Mann, vim@arumc.org or 870-703-8361.

Mexico mission journey, Feb. 22-28, 2014

Volunteers In Mission of the Arkansas Conference is sponsoring a mission journey to Rio Bravo, Mexico, from Saturday, Feb. 22 to Friday, Feb. 28, 2014. Opportunities to share Christ's love include Mission Bible School, construction, home visits, painting, repairs and other tasks. For registration and pricing, contact Larry Acton, 870-420-3969 or 512-497-4154; or Byron Mann, 870-703-8361 or vim@arumc.org.

Tuck's Chapel fire prompts discussion of church's future

A Sept. 27 electrical fire rendered the building of Tuck's Chapel UMC Rogers unusable, and now members have some decisions to make.

With a pre-fire average attendance of four persons at its monthly worship gathering, the church has suspended services and entered into discussions about its future.

According to the Rev. Bud Reeves, superintendent of the Northwest District, the immediate decisions the church must make

have to do with insurance reimbursement, building demolition and the incorporation of the church-owned cemetery next to the building.

"After those matters are settled, we will have further discussion about the future of the church," he said.

Tuck's Chapel has met at the same location since 1870. The Rev. Brian Youngs, a part-time local pastor, has been appointed there since 2010.

Next web training by Arkansas Conference CFT set for Nov. 22

Need help with your church's web presence? Free session teaches site management for local churches



Butch Renfroe (left), communication technologies specialist for the Arkansas Conference Center for Technology, leads a recent training session for those interested in building Wordpress-based websites for their churches. Classes are three hours long and limited to 10 participants.

AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

The Center for Technology on Nov. 22 is sponsoring "Wordpress 101: The Basics," a free class on maintaining a Wordpress website geared toward those with a non-technical background. It will meet from 9 a.m. to noon at the Arkansas Conference offices on the campus of Philander Smith College, 800 W. Daisy Bates Drive in Little Rock. There are only 10 spots open for this event, and registration ends Nov. 18. Participants must bring their own laptop (either PC or Mac).

This workshop is ideal for those interested in starting a church website hosted on a Wordpress platform. The CFT offers Wordpress-based websites at no charge to Arkansas churches. To register for the Nov. 22 training session, visit arumc.org and find the registration link in the "Events" block on the main page.

If your church is interested in hosting a similar training event, contact Butch Renfroe at 501-324-8036 or butch.renfroe@arumc.org.

Students from Philander Smith and Hendrix join together for retreat

More than 50 United Methodist students from Hendrix College in Conway and Philander Smith College in Little Rock, came together for a retreat the weekend of Sept. 21 at two United Methodist



locations: Camp Tanako in Hot Springs, and Wesley Chapel UMC Little Rock, on the campus of Philander Smith College.

"I have led a lot of retreats in my 18 years at Hendrix, but this was one of the best retreats I have ever led," Hendrix chaplain the Rev. Wayne Clark said in a news release. "Rev. Ronnie-Miller Yow, Rev. J.J. Whitney, and I have been talking about a combined retreat for a few years. It finally came together and far exceeded anything we could have imagined."

At Camp Tanako, the group helped with service projects, such as painting, trail clean-up and general cabin clean-up. All attendees took the StrengthQuest inventory and participated in a workshop led by Kevin Hamilton, vice president for student affairs at Philander Smith.

The chaplains shared their stories of being called to ministry, and invited students to do the same. Several students shared very powerful stories, Clark said.

Students worshiped together at Wesley's Chapel at Philander Smith College, where Hendrix assistant chaplain the Rev. J.J. Whitney preached at the early service and Philander Smith College chaplain the Rev. Ronnie-Miller Yow, pastor of Wesley Chapel, preached at the later service.

"As we worshiped together, worked together, and played games together, some bridges were built and some walls came down," Clark said. "As we were leaving the retreat, both students and chaplains alike were enthusiastically discussing doing this again."

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD

East End new church start becomes constituted congregation

During its Oct. 20 charge conference, Grace United Methodist Church East End became a constituted congregation, making it the newest United Methodist Church in the Arkansas Conference.

Founded in 2007 as a satellite campus of Sardis UMC Bauxite, Grace UMC East End now ranks 45th in the Arkansas Conference for worship attendance. It has met in the East End Intermediate School cafeteria since its founding, but in the next few months will break ground on its own building.

The Rev. Tommy Jones leads the congregation. Visit them online at thegracechurch.net.

Little Rock golf outing benefits Moscow Theological Seminary

Since 1995, Pulaski Heights UMC Little Rock has been committed to supporting the United Methodist Church in Russia, initially providing volunteers and money to build a church in Ekaterinberg. Many of the church's mission trips to Russia were organized by Wes Smelley, who died in June 2011.

Last year, the Pulaski Heights UMC mission board sponsored the Wes Smelley Memorial Golf Outing in his memory. Together with a special offering and other gifts, the proceeds from the golf outing helped

fund a one-year scholarship for a student to attend the Moscow Theological Seminary of the United Methodist Church.

The second Wes Smelley Memorial Golf Outing was held Monday, Oct. 14, at the Country Club of Arkansas in Maumelle.


Organized under the leadership of Jeremy Jones, a former member of the Sunday school class taught by Wes and his wife, Carol, the event raised more than \$3,500 to help provide education for United Methodist pastors in Russia.

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COMING UP

'Shopping Spree' benefits St. James UMC Little Rock Mission Fund Nov. 6

More than 50 vendors from across Arkansas will participate in St. James UMC Little Rock's Shopping Spree event, set for Wednesday, Nov. 6 from 2 to 7:30 p.m. at the church, 321 Pleasant Valley Drive.

Booths will feature jewelry, artwork, crafts, gourmet foods, unique gifts, bath and body products, home and garden products and more, including non-profit vendors and a bake sale. Funds for booth rentals will benefit the St. James Mission Fund. A meal will be served from 5 to 7 p.m., with reservations required. For information or to reserve a spot for supper, contact Brenda Weeks at brenda@stjames-umc.org or 501-217-6700.

Bazaar at Oak Forest UMC Little Rock Nov. 8-9

The United Methodist Women of Oak Forest UMC Little Rock will hold a Fall Mini-Bazaar Friday, Nov. 8 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Saturday, Nov. 9 from 8 a.m. to noon. The event will take place at the church, 2415 Fair Park Blvd. in Little Rock.

In addition to a Christmas shop, a bake sale, a "white elephant" rummage sale section and a fundraiser featuring a handmade pinwheel quilt, a light lunch will be available from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Friday. For more information, call the church office at 501-663-9407.

Free webinar: "How We Handle Money in the Church" Nov. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

Every church that has ever had a crisis of financial impropriety thought what they were doing was fine until the day it was

discovered. What's your church's policy for handing the gifts people entrust to you? Are you protecting sensitive information? Is it appropriate for the pastor to know what people give? This free webinar tackles these sensitive topics. Ken Sloane of the UMC's General Board of Discipleship leads this hour-long session. Visit www.gbod.org/lead-your-church/webinars to register, or to learn more about this and other free webinars.

OMP sponsors Full Moon Walk to benefit Arkansas Rice Depot Nov. 17

In its fourth year, the Full Moon Walk has a new home with organizers from Ozark Mission Project (OMP), a United Methodist-related nonprofit organization. The Full Moon Walk is a free event that aims to bring together the communities of Central Arkansas and highlight the Big Dam Bridge as a physical connection between Little Rock and North Little Rock. It is set for Nov. 17 at 6:30 p.m.

The Big Dam Bridge Foundation has awarded a grant to OMP to organize this year's event. Last year's walk drew more than 1,500 participants.

To connect this event with residents of the entire state, OMP has partnered with the Arkansas Rice Depot to collect canned goods that will be used by multiple soup kitchens and food pantries to ensure every Arkansan has the opportunity to enjoy a Thanksgiving meal. The Rice Depot works with more than 650 schools and 300 food pantries across the state. Walk attendees are asked to bring non-perishable items for this cause.

Participants will walk to the other side and back for a total of 1.8 miles on the lit Big Dam Bridge. Pets, bicycles, skateboards

and skates/rollerblades are not allowed on the bridge for the walk. Strollers and wheelchairs are welcome. For information and to register, visit BigDamBridge.org.

"Living Our Beliefs" Lay Servant class at Mount Olivet UMC Dec. 7

Certified Lay Servants must take a minimum of one continuing education class every three years to maintain certification. The next opportunity to meet that requirement is "Living Our Beliefs," set for Saturday, Dec. 7, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at Mount Olivet UMC, 20 miles south of Pine Bluff at the intersection of Highway 63 and Highway 114.

The course text is 'The United Methodist Way' by Kenneth Carder. Before the class convenes, participants should take time to preview the book and prepare written answers to one question at the end of each of the 11 chapters.

The class fee is \$20, payable at the beginning of class, and includes a meal, snacks and drinks. To register, contact Jimmie Boyd, Southeast District and Arkansas Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries, at 870-357-2688, 870-718-3649 or jimmie.boyd@arumc.org. The registration deadline is Nov. 8.

"Mrs. Santa's Kitchen" at Sequoyah UMC Dec. 14

Homemade cookies, candy, bread and gifts will be featured at Mrs. Santa's Kitchen, an annual fundraiser held at Mount Sequoyah UMC, 1910 Old Wire Road in Fayetteville.

The event takes place Saturday, Dec. 14, 2013, from 9 a.m. to noon. All proceeds benefit local missions. For more information, call the church office at 479-442-8677.

Churches care for residents of MFH facility

Clients at Dacus Residential Treatment Center, a Methodist Family Health facility in Bono, Ark., attended two swim parties this summer held at Wayland Spring Camp, near Imboden. Individuals and churches in the Northeast District contributed so the residents could enjoy grilled hamburgers and other snacks and drinks. Both events were coordinated by Elaine Gilliam and Linda Holt of Hoxie UMC.

With monetary donations from individuals and churches, the pair also went shopping for Dacus RTC, providing the young people living at Dacus with snacks and drinks, paper goods to use for after-school parties, craft items and special personal care items for the "point store," where clients may redeem points they accumulate for good behavior.

Jason Fredrick, assistant administrator of Dacus Residential Treatment Center; Linda Holt of Hoxie UMC; Dacus staff member Matt Hendrix; and Elaine Gilliam of Hoxie UMC with items from the shopping trip for residents of Dacus Residential Treatment Center.



COURTESY PHOTO

Pumpkin Patch provides fun for kids, funds for ministry

The Rev. Roy Smith, right, reads a story to children visiting the Pumpkin Patch at First UMC Russellville. The money raised through the annual event helps fund Vacation Bible School, which ministers to over 200 children for five days each June. It also helps to fund the children's Sunday school mission project of filling and shipping 200 Operation Christmas Child boxes to children around the world.

In addition to those outreach projects, Pumpkin Patch funds enhance other children's ministries, including the Timothy Team/Tiny Tims Wednesday night Bible study, Sunday school and children's church. More than 200 adults, youth and children from First UMC Russellville work together as disciples in the Pumpkin Patch, hosting about 400 children that visit from daycares and an elementary school.



COURTESY PHOTO

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OBITUARY

Campus minister made disciples, changed lives

The Rev. Jason Andrew Molitor, 41, of Russellville, passed away Monday morning, Oct. 21, 2013, at his home.

He was born June 6, 1972, in Aurora, Ill., and was the son of Martin and Diane Molitor of Venice, Fla., and Marla and Bill Hofrichter of St. Louis, Mo.

An ordained elder in the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church, he was a graduate of Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo.; Arkansas Tech University in Russellville; and Richland High School in North Richland Hills, Texas. He worked as editor of the *Dover Times*, and he served in local church appointments at Liberty (Mo.) UMC; the Cleveland/Overcup Charge; the Dover/Moreland Charge; First United Methodist Church Little Rock; and Hollywood UMC Arkadelphia. He was director of the Wesley Foundation for Henderson State University and Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia before becoming director of the Wesley Foundation at Arkansas Tech University in 2010.

He loved being outdoors, making people laugh and spending time with family and friends.

Hours after Molitor's death, students from Arkansas Tech Wesley and United Methodist leaders from across the state gathered at the campus ministry for a time of prayer and Holy



Jason Molitor

Communion. Afterward, some students reflected on his impact in their lives.

"I don't know if I would even know who Christ is without the Wesley," said Tyra Dutton. "I didn't grow up in a Christian home, and it just really impacted my life when I came to college.... [Jason] knew how to love us right. I always felt welcome, and I always felt like he cared about my heart.

"He was the most intentional man. I feel like I learned what to even look for in a husband, he just loved his wife so perfectly, and his children," she said. "He meant so much to us."

"Even though he was our leader here at Wesley, it wasn't about him," said Abbey Allen. "He never pointed to himself, ever—it was always to God, always. And I think that's what made him such a great leader. He didn't make it about himself. He was such a servant, so humble. He was a strong leader, but he knew who was leading him. He was great. He was just the best."

"He would always be there for me if I ever needed to talk. He always bettered my life every time I talked to him," said J.P. Bradley, a freshman. "He was probably the closest thing to Christ that I saw in my life so far...he was an example of a light—probably the biggest light that I've ever seen."

Bradley grew up in the Baptist church, but had become inactive before college. Soon after he arrived at Arkansas Tech, though, he met Molitor at an involvement fair. "He was just

there, and he reached out and hugged me, and it was just like, 'Man, I need to go there.'

"Every time he would talk everybody was quiet, because they knew the spirit of God was speaking through him, that it wasn't his words, it was God's words," he said. "He was just living proof of God's love."

He is survived by his wife, Emory Tyson Molitor, and two daughters, Abigail Marie, 13, and Olivia Helen, 10, as well as his parents; two grandparents, Helen Glasgo of Aurora, Ill., and Ralphine Molitor of Batavia, Ill. Also surviving are brothers, Chris and Sue Molitor and their children Joe, Luke and Sarah Molitor of Knoxville, Tenn.; David and Heather Hofrichter of Kalamazoo, Mich.; Will Hofrichter and Valerie Bunt and Alyssa of Hollywood, Fla.; a sister, Laura Hofrichter, and children Emily and C.J.; parents-in-law, Van and Ginnie Tyson of Atkins; a sister- and brother-in-law, Gail and Mark Murdoch, and their daughter, Moira Murdoch.

Visitation was held Thursday, Oct. 24, at the Wesley Foundation at Arkansas Tech University. Funeral services were held Friday, Oct. 25, at First United Methodist Church Russellville, with the Revs. Roy Smith and David Scroggin officiating. Burial followed at the Oakland Cemetery, north of Atkins.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the ATU Wesley Foundation or to Age-to-Age, 1111 N. El Paso, Russellville, AR 72801.

Leadership (continued from page 1)

said the Rev. Candace Barron, associate director of the CCLEL. She added that in his keynote, the Rev. Adam Hamilton, Church of the Resurrection's senior pastor, said that everyone needs to be able to answer three basic questions: 1) Why do people need Jesus Christ? 2) Why do people need the church? 3) Why do people need my particular church?

Out of the comfort zone

Eddie Schieffler of the East Phillips County Parish was among the laity who attended—reluctantly, he admits.

"I tried to talk others into going, but there were no takers, so I felt like somebody should stand up, and that was me in the mirror," he said.

Schieffler knew little about Church of the Resurrection, and was concerned about leaving his law practice for four days to attend a church event in another state. But as he witnessed the hospitality there and got to know his fellow travelers, he saw the value in the journey.

"I think I'm not only a better Methodist, but also husband, dad and boss from attending and soaking up the experience," he said. "Our church is not for the professionals to be in charge, but the laity must roll up our sleeves, too. Too often, we just want to be fed."

Schieffler encouraged steps in a new direction soon after his return to Helena-West Helena.

"Within our own framework at the East Phillips County Parish, I have already suggested the leaders listen to the people from the 'outside to the in,' instead of telling people from the 'inside to the out,'" he said.

The parish arrangement has been in effect since July, with the hope that Elaine UMC, First UMC Helena and West Helena UMC together will discover new ways to reach their shared mission field.

The pervasive spirit of hospitality at COR prompted a group from his church to attend worship at Elaine UMC for the first time. "Many felt [the visit to Elaine UMC] was a blessing in stretching outside our individual routine with each other and our brothers and sisters in Christ," he said.

Reinforcement, revitalization

The Rev. Todd-Paul Taulbee, part of a five-person delegation from First UMC Morrilton, called the experience "very much worth it." He noticed familiar themes in keeping with years of conversation in the Arkansas Conference, through the CCLEL and its predecessor, Connected in Christ.

"Just because I heard it before doesn't mean it wasn't valuable," he said. "To the contrary, the Leadership Institute

provided reinforcement and revitalization for me. I also think that for the laity from Morrilton, it allowed them to hear some of what we have been talking about from different voices in a different context, which reinforces the message."

At Church of the Resurrection, Taulbee found both inspiration and a challenge to work toward greater effectiveness for the Kingdom. And attending alongside so many others from Arkansas provided opportunities to share the approaches they take in mission fields near each other.

"It was good to be with so many people from across the country and around the world to hear about their challenges and victories, too," he said.

For downloadable resources from 80 different workshops offered at this year's Leadership Institute, visit li.cor.org.



Pictured are some of the Arkansans who attended Leadership Institute 2013 at Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kan. The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas chartered the bus and covered the cost for 10 churches to send participants.

COURTESY PHOTO

New website, Network provide more ways for Arkansas UMs to connect



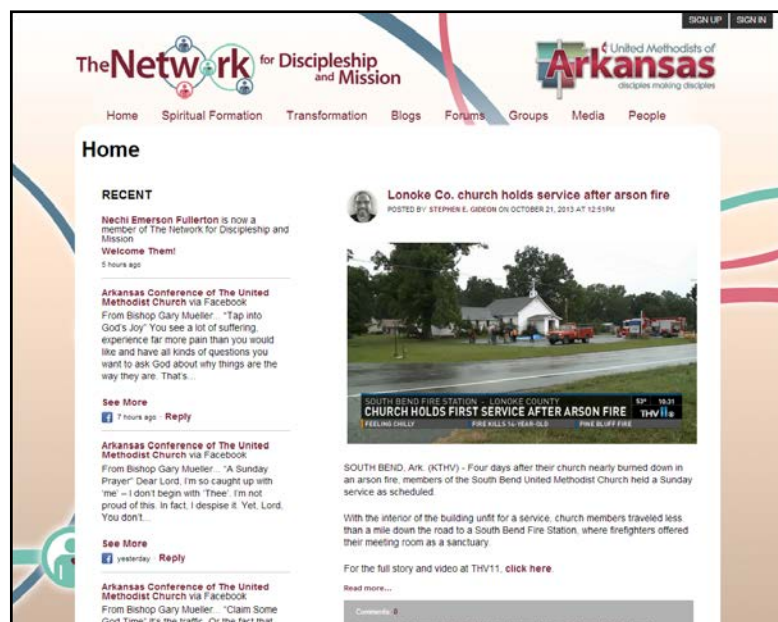
In mid-October, the Arkansas Conference Center for Technology launched a new version of the Conference website at arumc.org. The site is still being updated with new and existing information that United Methodists in Arkansas need to have, but the most-used features of the old site have been activated: an events calendar (and online registration for many of the events); forms relating to charge conference, the Board of Ordained Ministry, Ingathering, finance, insurance and Safe Sanctuaries; Bishop Mueller's daily message; and news from the *Arkansas United Methodist*.

As the CFT continues to build a more robust and useful website, you may have questions about where to find what you're seeking on the site. Email questions to helpdesk@arumc.org and a CFT staff member will be happy to assist you.

The Network for Discipleship and Mission (<http://network.arumc.org>) is open to all people who call themselves United Methodist in Arkansas. Its impact will increase as more of us become active participants in its development. (If you have questions during or after the sign-up process, email helpdesk@arumc.org for assistance.)

The Network is a place to share positive, transformational stories and successful mission strategies that are vital to making us a strong connective body. It is a simple tool to connect the large with the small, the haves with the have-nots, and those who are on fire for Christ with those who may be feeling lukewarm at best.

The team at the Center for Technology hopes you will join The Network to discover and contribute. With our involvement and God's help, this tool has the power to help us come together for spiritual revival.



Faith Funds

Twice the Grace

When UMFA Seminary Scholar Lynn Cross met Nathan Kilbourne at Duke Divinity School, congregations in the Arkansas Conference received a double measure of grace. In 2009, Lynn and Nathan graduated from seminary, married and began serving local churches in Arkansas.

Rev. Nathan Kilbourne has served as associate pastor at Asbury UMC in Little Rock and now as senior pastor at Vilonia UMC. Rev. Lynn Kilbourne began her ministry as associate pastor at Bryant First UMC and is in her third year as Conway First UMC associate.

"The Foundation allowed me to go to the United Methodist seminary of my choice without the anxiety of taking on debt," Lynn said. "Knowing people in Arkansas had invested in me and would welcome me back meant a lot when I was in seminary."

The Arkansas Conference quickly became Nathan's home, too. "Today we are a part of the Advancing Pastoral Leadership program, funded by a UMFA grant," he said. "Without the help of the Foundation, one of us might have been able to participate in this important leadership development program – but definitely not both of us."

The Foundation is pleased to know the Kilbournes will be serving our local churches for decades to come.



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