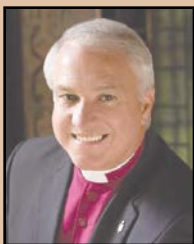


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## 'North of Dover' kicks off new video series



Cindy Hurley and Janice Jones, members of Dover United Methodist Church, share the story of how the congregation's new ministry got started. The church began reaching out to families in a nearby neighborhood after a church member expressed concern about kids going hungry during the summer, when they don't have access to school lunches.

PHOTO COURTESY TINY SEED FILMS

BY MARTHA TAYLOR AND  
AMY FORBUS  
*Special Contributor and Editor*

The Arkansas Conference Center for Technology (CFT) has released the first in a series of video stories about vital congregations and Spirit-filled ministries within the Arkansas Conference.

The first video, "North of Dover," explores Dover United Methodist Church's outreach to families living just north of the church building. With a willingness to learn about its neighbors and their needs, this small church in the Northwest District is having a big impact on its rural community.

What started as a simple

summer food ministry caught fire with the people of the church and has created a stronger connection to their mission field. As church member Janice Jones states in the video, "When you meet a need that is so basic, it just changes them and it changes you. So there was just a new level of relationship that was forged."

Dover UMC's pastor, the Rev. Roy Beth Kelley, agrees.

"I used to think that if we just gave money for a food pantry or gave food or took people food, that was what we were called to do as Christians, as followers of Christ," she said in the video. "But this summer I realized that is not at all

[See VIDEO, page 9]

## Ingathering 2014: day of service set for Nov. 22

The Saturday before Thanksgiving has become an annual day of service for United Methodists of Arkansas. On Nov. 22, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., persons from across the Conference will come together to celebrate the 37th annual Ingathering.

### What is Ingathering?

Ingathering is a supply drive to benefit United Methodist relief ministries in Arkansas and worldwide. Held at Arkansas Rice Depot, 3801 W. 65th Street in Little Rock, and sponsored by the Conference Board of Global Ministries, this year's Ingathering will include a devotional time, a mid-day fellowship meal and lots of work organizing donations for storage and transport. United

[See INGATHERING, page 6]



# Long-ago lessons on love

BY CHARLES COOPER  
Special Contributor

I am reading letters my parents wrote while my father was in Korea. He went over in 1954, less than a year after the cease fire. My mother moved back home into a rental house in DeQueen, Arkansas. She had two kids. Korea was still scary, and my father was on the DMZ. He said he looked through his binoculars one day and saw a Red



**Charles Cooper**

Army soldier looking at him through binoculars. It's Hollywood stuff, but it happens. My parents wrote about the weather. In September it was hot in DeQueen

and cold in Korea. They wrote about the kids—potty training and playmates. They wrote about money, the allotment checks and bills, which my mother itemized to a penny. A big topic was the romance of my mother's mother and a local widower named Fritz. They were both over 60 when they slipped off one morning to Texarkana and got married, then spent their honeymoon in the Ozarks.

These lines of a letter written in September 1954 have to do with comments in a Sunday school class after my grandmother returned from her honeymoon. They also have to do with a piece my Aunt Elizabeth did for the local paper, *The DeQueen Bee*.

My mother wrote, "Mother went to Sunday School at the Presbyterian Church.... We haven't had a preacher yet. Mrs. Capgras [not her actual name] hurt Mother's feelings about the write up of the wedding. She told Mother it sounded like an obituary. Mrs. Capgras went on to say that it would have been alright for teenagers but not people Mother's age. She turned to Elizabeth and asked her if she put that mess in the paper.

"By that time the whole class was in sympathy with Mother and

looking daggers at Mrs. Capgras. One woman behind Mother was crying a little. She married for the first time late in life. Mother turned and asked her if they talked to her that way. She said, 'Not to my face.' The Sunday school lesson was on love."

My poor mother suffering a miserable summer with temperatures over 100 and no air conditioning, and her husband away in a dangerous place and not for the first time, and my sister crying all night and me running out the door and into the street all day—she did not need this ugliness in Sunday school of all places.

I can picture Mrs. Capgras. Those were the days when women in church wore dark dresses and sat with their backs straight. I can picture her speaking with red lips pursed as if she were throwing her voice into a wooden caricature of herself.

Perhaps she had had designs on Fritz. Or maybe her comments came out of a less specific envy. My grandmother was tall and athletic. (She could, family legends say, stand before a door flatfooted and kick the top of the doorframe, and had the legs to make it look good.) Or maybe Mrs. Capgras just enjoyed the sport of throwing tongue daggers at other people's hearts. No matter. It hurt my mother and grandmother and made some gentle soul sitting behind them cry.

I have a letter my mother wrote a few days after those caustic comments. She said, "I took him [him being me] to the church supper last night. Elizabeth baked an extra pie for me. Charlie wore the suit Elizabeth gave him for his birthday. It's size 4.... Charlie had a big time. There were 25 or more children there. They ate at low tables and sat in little chairs."

I am sure Mrs. Capgras was at

that potluck, doing what she did best and eyeing the crowd with metaphorical field glasses, but there is no mention of her. What mattered to my mother was that she was in church finding the support she needed, and that her son was making friends.

My father wrote in that same September, "I was cold all day yesterday. I couldn't seem to get warm. We don't have stoves in the tents as yet.... It is also raining and has been for the last few days. The wind has been strong enough that it blew down three tents."

My father was happy to report that "yesterday we drew our winter sleeping bags." He said, "It felt good last night. The bags have an inner liner which is filled with feathers, something like a feather bed with a zipper to fasten it around you."

So there was my father pushed up against the cold reality of the

Cold War, all zipped up in his bag and remembering what he had read in his letters from home. I suspect he was glad to think about the church supper; I suspect my mother was glad to think about the sleeping bag and the promise of a

stove for her husband's tent.

That's how we get through war and Mrs. Capgras. We remember, as my mother did, that the Sunday school lesson was on love, and as Paul says, we think about what is good: "whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (Philippians 4:8-9).

Think about church suppers, sleeping bags and love letters.

*The Rev. Cooper, a retired elder, lives in Fayetteville.*

**'What mattered to my mother was that she was in church finding the support she needed...'**



## EDITOR'S CORNER

BY AMY FORBUS

# Who can you trust?

We can't trust anything.

Except... we have to.

We have no choice in our daily lives but to trust. We trust that when we stand (if we can stand), we won't fall down. That when we get out of bed in the morning, gravity is still in working order. That the water coming out of our sinks doesn't contain harmful bacteria. Right now, I'm trusting that this chair under me won't crumble into a heap of kindling.

We can't trust anyone.

Except... we have to.

We can't know whether someone will show up for the meeting we agreed to attend. Or if, on the way to that meeting, the other cars on the road will stay in their lanes, obeying those thin lines on the pavement as if they are truly impermeable barriers.

We can't know that when we leave something, or someone, in a specific place that our return will find the situation unchanged. In fact, if it's a person or animal you're dealing with, there's next to no guarantee of them staying where you left them. The question then becomes, what will you do? How will you react to what's different the next time you turn around? (I suppose you can trust that it's not a matter of whether something will change, but how.)

We trust that complete strangers won't let us down—or we wouldn't be able to drive to work, make a trip to the grocery store or flip a light switch on the wall.

We trust that our friends won't let us down—though they undoubtedly will, at some point, in some large or small way.

We trust that our God won't let us down—though we may question God when awful things happen, or even just when things don't go quite like we'd prefer. And that's OK. God put up with his own public execution; he can most certainly bear our questioning.

Life can be tough. People can be cruel. Circumstances can be unfair. Things can be just plain wrong.

But in the middle of it all, God is God, with a persistent, incredible love that bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Jesus is Jesus, asking the blind beggar if he *wants* to be well. And asking whiny little me the same question.

And the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit, blowing and flowing who-knows-where, blessing our lives in ways we may never see.

We can trust in that knowledge.

And thank God for that.

*To reach me, send an email message to [aforbus@arumc.org](mailto:aforbus@arumc.org).*



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**Submission Deadlines**

Issue Date	Submission Deadline
Nov. 7	Oct. 21
Dec. 5	Nov. 14
Jan. 2	Dec. 12

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

BY GARY E. MUELLER

# Are you ready to experience spiritual revival?

**“We need to experience in deeper ways how Jesus’ love is so unconditional he accepts us just the way we are, so transforming he is unwilling to leave us the way we are and so powerful he gives us what we absolutely need but can never get on our own—reconciliation with God, healing and a new way of living that is eternal in every sense of the word. This revival is foundational for everything we do, because we can only passionately share Jesus’ love that brings healing, hope, justice and transformation in lives, communities and the world when we first have been transformed ourselves.”** (*Bishop’s Mission Plan: Next Steps’ Trajectory*)

### Why are we talking about spiritual revival?

We’re not talking about spiritual revival because it’s “Next Step #1” of my Mission Plan, yet another attempt to address the sad reality that the United Methodist Church is growing smaller, becoming older and struggling with financial sustainability, or because it’s what we do when we don’t know what else to do.

We’re talking about it because we believe God wants the people called United Methodists to become a movement so filled with the Holy Spirit

that we become passionate about reaching out to a hurting and broken world to share the good news of Jesus’ love that changes everything about everything—including us!

### What is spiritual revival?

Spiritual revival is not a three-night hellfire and brimstone event every summer, an attempt to replicate a powerful experience we had years ago or a way to hide from real life pain and injustice.

Rather, revival is experiencing a deeper relationship with Jesus as Savior and Lord, being empowered by the Holy Spirit to see and do things in brand new ways and making a commitment to be involved in God’s mission in the world.

Revival may begin with individuals, but it always grows to involve more and more people: Sunday school classes, Bible studies, discipleship groups, congregations, annual conferences and our denomination.

### How do we experience spiritual revival?

We can never bring about spiritual revival on our own, because revival is always the work of the Holy Spirit.

We can, however, prepare ourselves for it as we talk about it, long for it, and seek it through

prayer, confession, repentance, waiting, watching and paying close attention to what God’s up to.

We don’t have to be great theologians, preachers or evangelists to be part of revival. We just have to desire it deeply, talk about it with others, begin praying for it and, most of all, discern how God is making it a reality.

### What happens when spiritual revival comes?

Spiritual revival changes us as the Holy Spirit re-awakens us, re-news us, re-fills us, re-forms us, re-directs us and re-energizes us for carrying out the church’s mission just as the Holy Spirit did 2,000 years ago on the day of Pentecost.

So what will the outcome of revival be? People will come to know God’s love in Jesus Christ—maybe for the first time and maybe in deeper ways than ever before. Congregations will become more vital as they are inspired, energized and equipped to carry out their mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ—who make disciples—who are equipped to transform lives, communities and the world.

And God’s healing, hope, joy, justice and new life will become a reality that people actually begin to experience.

## APPOINTMENTS

The following appointment changes have occurred since the adjournment of the 2014 Annual Conference:

- Elizabeth Gersch (part-time local pastor)—Pleasant Grove UMC Jonesboro (associate); effective Sept. 1
- Everett Isom (retired)—Warren’s Chapel UMC (charge realignment: the second point in this charge, Wood’s Chapel UMC, merged with Shiloh UMC Paragould); effective Sept. 15
- Loye Vern Mason (retired)—no appointment (Forrest Chapel UMC Brockwell voted to discontinue as a congregation); effective Aug. 10
- Nancy Cameron (retired part-time local pastor)—Hardy UMC (interim co-pastor); effective Sept. 21

For the most recent appointment changes, as well as a full list of the appointments announced at the 2014 Annual Conference, visit [www.arumc.org/appointments](http://www.arumc.org/appointments).



BY ANDREW C. THOMPSON

## PRACTICAL DIVINITY

# Care for children: a Wesleyan calling

The ministry of early Methodists impacted the lives of men and women in remarkable ways. Under John Wesley’s leadership, the Methodist revival in the British Isles emphasized a gospel that included concerns for both body and soul.

The Methodist preaching of the time called for a renewal of the heart through faith in Jesus Christ. But it also taught that those whose hearts had been renewed would be changed in their outward lives. So for people of that time, it was only natural that powerful preaching services and prayer gatherings would go hand in hand with social outreach to feed the hungry, heal the sick and educate the unlettered.

One part of the early Methodist movement that often gets overlooked is the Methodists’ deep concern for the welfare of children. When John Wesley and other young men met to organize their spiritual lives in the way that would eventually be called “Methodist,” their Irish friend William Morgan led them in

gathering together a group of poor children for instruction. The project was so successful that they eventually had to hire a local woman in Oxford to take on the role of schoolteacher.

The commitment to the wellbeing of children would become a hallmark of the Methodist movement when it began to expand in 1739—a point made by Richard Heitzenrater in his excellent book, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists*. One of the first major projects that John Wesley undertook after he committed to field preaching was the Kingswood School near Bristol, England, which was founded to provide education and Christian instruction for the poor children of the area.

Wesley also gathered the children in the places where Methodism spread so that they could form “little societies” similar to the societies intended for grown-ups. One of the questions Wesley began asking new Methodist preachers in 1766 reads, “Will you diligently and earnestly instruct the

children, and visit from house to house?”

Wesley at times admitted that he found ministry with children to be difficult, but he never let that stand in the way of pursuing it at every opportunity.

### Ministry with children in Arkansas

Many of our local churches in the Arkansas Conference see ministry with children as one of their primary activities. I think it’s encouraging to recognize how deeply embedded that commitment is in the Methodist DNA.

Wesley himself defined Methodism first and foremost as the “religion of the Bible.” And in that sense, it’s also true that the Methodist devotion to ministry with children is an outgrowth of Jesus’ own teaching: “Let the little children come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:14).

This past June our annual conference approved a Childhood Hunger Initiative that will seek to address food insecurity among children across the state of Arkansas. The hope is that every local church in Arkansas will participate in some way to help end childhood hunger across the state.

There is already good work being done on that front through various agencies, of course, and it is important to publicize and support it. Our local churches represent a huge resource to start new projects addressing children’s hunger in their own contexts, as well. So congregations ought to think creatively about what they can do to spread the gospel by caring for hungry children.

### ‘With utmost care’

We’ll be hearing more about this new initiative in the weeks ahead. As we prepare in prayerful and practical ways to commit ourselves to this good work, drawing on some Wesleyan wisdom might be helpful.

Wesley once referred to children in a sermon as “immortal spirits whom God hath for a time entrusted

to your care, that you may train them up in all holiness, and fit them for the enjoyment of God in eternity.”

He believed children were gifts of God, as we all do. His point here is not just about the value of children, though. It is about the profound responsibility of Christian adults to guard them, protect them, provide for them and raise them as followers of Christ.

That’s an issue of faithful stewardship—care for the little boys and girls God has placed in our midst. So I think Wesley’s pastoral advice serves as a fitting word for us to consider as we embark together on a great missional ministry:

“Every child therefore you are to watch over with the utmost care, that when you are called to give an account of each to the Father of Spirits, you may give your accounts with joy and not with grief.”

*The Rev. Dr. Thompson, Wesley scholar for the Arkansas Conference, teaches at Memphis Theological Seminary and serves as associate pastor of Marion UMC. He writes “Practical Divinity” quarterly for the Arkansas United Methodist. Email: [athompson@arumc.org](mailto:athompson@arumc.org).*

## Vernon and Eva Lee Paysinger Endowment established to battle hunger

United Methodists of Arkansas are taking on the problem of childhood hunger in our state as part of a three-year Childhood Hunger Initiative, as addressed in the Practical Divinity column on page 3 of this issue. And thanks to the legacy of two generous saints, the cause of hunger relief has a new ally: an endowment designated for funding ministries that seek to end hunger.

The late Rev. Vernon and Eva Lee Paysinger dedicated their lives to Christian ministry. After the death of Mrs. Paysinger this summer, the \$750,000 Vernon and Eva Lee Paysinger Endowment was established at the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (UMFA) to make grants to causes that work to eliminate hunger.

"Eva Lee and Vernon were life-long advocates for programs designed to eradicate hunger," said Jim Argue, Jr., UMFA president, in a Sept. 9 news release. "They lived simply so that they could give to others abundantly. The income from their fund will be used each year to support hunger ministries, extending their legacy of giving far beyond their lifetimes."

UMFA served as Trustee of the Paysingers' revocable trust for many years, initially providing investment oversight, then assuming responsibility for household finances and finally overseeing in-home and later skilled nursing home health care.

The Paysingers grew up together as schoolmates and members of the Evening Shade UMC in Sharp County.

"Aunt Eva Lee and Uncle Vernon lived through the Depression," said Rita Davis, who is married to a great-nephew of the Paysingers. "They didn't have a lot back then, and probably at times they were hungry themselves."

The Rev. David Orr, senior pastor at First UMC Searcy, knew the Paysingers for nearly 40 years.

"They were united in everything they did, and it was an inspiration," he said. "There was a contentment about their lives that you could not miss. They felt blessed to be in the Lord's service. They loved the people in their parishes. They enjoyed every town to which they were sent."

After a lifetime of serving churches throughout Arkansas, the Paysingers retired in Batesville to be near family. "They were remarkably humble, remarkably committed and remarkably in love with Jesus Christ," Orr said. "If they heard me say these things, they would shrug their shoulders, grin, and ask if I wanted a second slice of pie."

UMFA manages \$135 million in endowment funds and other charitable assets that benefit local churches and other United Methodist ministries. UMFA is one of the largest United Methodist Foundations in the country. Founded in 1963, UMFA is responsible for over 650 funds that support United Methodist ministries.

## UMCOR grant will address unmet needs in Vilonia, Mayflower

### Recovery agencies coordinating their efforts in the area

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) has approved a grant in the amount of \$250,000 to provide assistance in Vilonia and Mayflower and other affected areas, in response to the devastation caused by the April 27 tornado. The funds will be dispersed based on unmet needs as determined by Disaster Case Management and the long-term recovery groups based in Vilonia and Mayflower.

The grant monies will be leveraged with Arkansas Conference Disaster Response funds, volunteer labor and resources from other disaster response partners to aid in the recovery of the 825 households affected by this disaster. United Methodist disaster recovery efforts will continue through the duration of the recovery.

An Interfaith and Partners Disaster Recovery

Alliance (IFPA) office is now open in Mayflower, with the Arkansas Conference's disaster response coordinator, Janice Mann, serving as recovery coordinator. IFPA's mission is to provide spiritual, emotional, and physical resources to those affected by the disaster; to respond to needs not met by other relief systems or disaster recovery programs. This office allows survivors easy access to resources, as well as a home base out of which IFPA can operate.

Vilonia Disaster Recovery Alliance (VDRA) has also reopened an office in Vilonia; their previous office there was destroyed by this tornado. IFPA and VDRA are working very closely together to coordinate efforts, so as to avoid duplicating services.

## VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION & DISASTER RESPONSE NEEDS

For information on any Volunteers In Mission (VIM) project below, contact the individual listed or Byron Mann, Conference VIM coordinator: [vim@arumc.org](mailto:vim@arumc.org) or 870-826-0268. For Disaster Response (DR) projects, contact Byron or Janice Mann, DR co-coordinators: [disaster@arumc.org](mailto:disaster@arumc.org) or 870-703-8359 (Janice). To connect on Facebook, search for "Volunteers in Mission & Disaster Response - Serving Arkansas & Beyond," and join the group for updates.

### Long-term recovery: skilled labor still needed for smaller projects

Long Term Recovery in Central Arkansas has some smaller projects that need skilled construction labor. A leader who knows how to build and some helpers would be great. Most of these projects involve porches, steps, ramps or storage sheds. Some involve roof repair or building roof-overs.

If you can help, contact Janice Mann at [disaster@arumc.org](mailto:disaster@arumc.org) or 870-703-8359.

### Sign-ups for tornado recovery still welcome

Long Term Recovery repair and rebuilding projects associated with the April 27 tornado should be starting mid- to late September, and will continue for several months, possibly as long as a year to 18 months.

Teams wishing to assist with tornado recovery efforts should continue to register at [www.arumc.org/arkansas\\_disaster\\_response](http://www.arumc.org/arkansas_disaster_response) (click on the "Volunteer Form" tab). Teams should be able to offer skills needed for major repair and rebuilding projects, and should have a designated team leader that has had VIM Team Leader Training or has equivalent experience leading teams. Teams larger than 15 members should be willing to divide into multiple teams and have an additional appropriate number of trained or experienced team leaders for those multiple teams. All team members must have medical insurance coverage. Additional trip insurance is available if desired.

Please consider contributing to the recovery efforts by continuing to pray for those affected and those working to help, by volunteering with a team or by donating funds for building materials and other needs.

## Arkansas NOMADS hit the road to help with tornado recovery

### New members welcome in RV-based ministry

NOMADS (Nomads on a Mission Active in Divine Service) will begin work in the Vilonia area the first week in October. Their long-term recovery and rebuilding work will be conducted in partnership with Arkansas Conference Disaster Response and Wesley UMC Conway, which also will serve as their home

base (the church's campus is equipped with RV hookups).

NOMADS provides volunteer labor for United Methodist organizations around the country. New members are welcome at this service project.

To learn more, contact Mount Eagle Retreat Center at 501-723-

4580; or Dan Brown, the South Central Jurisdiction's representative to the national NOMADS board. Brown lives in Rogers and is coordinating the October event. He may be reached at 479-721-1203. For general information on NOMADS, including how to join, visit [www.nomadsumc.org](http://www.nomadsumc.org).



A few of the approximately 30 Arkansas United Methodists who attended the national gathering of NOMADS, held Sept. 6-12 in Branson, Mo.

COURTESY PHOTO



## Imagine Ministry Team seeks feedback on progress of change

With three years having passed since the Annual Conference's 2011 adoption of the Imagine Ministry Vision, Mission and Core Measures, the Arkansas Conference Extended Cabinet and the Imagine Ministry Team have designated 2014 as a time to evaluate the emerging results of the plan.

To read the Imagine Ministry Team's reflections on each of the six major areas of deep change, visit [www.arumc.org](http://www.arumc.org) and click on the "Imagine Ministry" link in the menu bar. The team invites both laity and clergy to respond.

The Rev. Gil Rendle, consultant to the Imagine Ministry Team, attended the Sept. 17 joint meeting of the Extended Cabinet and the Imagine Ministry Team. He saw evidence of necessary change gaining a foothold in the Arkansas Conference.

"Changing structure, staffing, programs and practices is the easier work of deep change, and there is a good bit of evidence that such organizational change is not only happening, but is being evaluated and adapted," Rendle said.

"I was impressed with the willingness to acknowledge what has not worked, what can be improved and what now is most important in order to continue on a very challenging path," he added.

The Imagine Ministry Team's initial draft of reflections applies five questions to each to area:

1. Why did we do what we did?
2. What did we do and what did we want to accomplish by doing that?
3. How far did we get?
4. What did we learn?
5. What do we need to focus on next?

The assessment documents have been shared so that laity and clergy of the Arkansas Conference may review and comment on them. Please send thoughts to [imagineministry@arumc.org](mailto:imagineministry@arumc.org) or [IM@arumc.org](mailto:IM@arumc.org) by Nov. 1, 2014.

## Limited access to arumc.org during mid-October site upgrade

The Conference website, [www.arumc.org](http://www.arumc.org), beginning Oct. 13 will be temporarily unavailable as the Arkansas Conference Center for Technology (CFT) implements a site upgrade.

While the upgrade is in progress, visitors to [arumc.org](http://arumc.org) will find a single page with links to essential information. By Oct. 15, the upgraded site will be available, with improvements such as enhanced calendar features and easier access to forms. Additional features will be rolled out over the course of the following weeks and months.

Thank you for your patience as the CFT seeks to better serve local churches, clergy and laity.

### *Annual gathering equips UM lawyers to serve the church*

United Methodist attorneys gathered Sept. 18 at Pulaski Heights UMC for the annual United Methodist Lawyers Conference hosted by the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas. The event provides continuing legal education for those who assist United Methodist churches with legal issues.

Attendees received instruction on such topics as licensing and copyright issues, tax issues, liability of local church boards of trustees, planned giving and ethics. A panel discussion addressed questions of church law that the bishop and the Conference chancellors have faced in the past year. The day closed with a celebration of Holy Communion.



Bill Waddell, a Little Rock attorney who advises the United Methodist Council of Bishops, provides an overview of recent rulings by the United Methodist Judicial Council as part of his presentation, "Church Law and Same Gender Issues in the Local Church."

AUM PHOTO BY BUTCH RENFROE



# Share the light!

## Methodist Family Health Christmas Offering

### December 14 & 21, 2014

**Your donations help us minister to children and families close to home.**

Children all around us are hurting. But you can let the joy of your life shine into theirs! Methodist Family Health is a nonprofit organization providing comprehensive psychiatric and behavioral health care to Arkansas children and families. We can help restore a happy home. Sometimes we even become the home. And with support from local churches like yours, we bring healing and hope all year long.

A packet of Christmas offering materials will arrive at your church by December 5. For more information or to request a Sunday speaker, contact Maggie Beeler at 501.906.4220.



Rebuilding the Lives of Children and Families Since 1899



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

Methodist Family Health is the management company of: Methodist Children's Home, Methodist Counseling Clinic, Methodist Behavioral Hospital and Arkansas CARES.



## Ingathering (continued from page 1)

Methodists will deliver, sort and pack relief supplies to help to those affected by disaster, both here at home and around the globe.

Truckloads and carloads of health kits, cleaning buckets, school kits and more will arrive from across the state at the Arkansas Rice Depot for sorting and distribution to anyone in need. 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 around the world affected by disaster or need.

### 'Potato drop,' other jobs

Helpers are needed to assist in unloading vehicles and sorting items into their proper locations for packing and storage. In addition, for several years now, Ingathering has included a "potato drop" by the Society of St. Andrew. Faithful workers will be needed to move a mountain—of sweet potatoes. The multi-ton truckload of surplus produce must be boxed for distribution to area food pantries,

and the more helpers on hand, the faster the job goes.

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

### Instructions

Ingathering is a request for specific sets of items. As you prepare, visit [www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies](http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies) to learn exactly what you need to assemble the following kit types:

- Bedding Kit
- Birthing Kit
- Cleaning Bucket
- Health Kit
- Layette Kit
- Sewing Kit
- School Kit

In addition, we will accept Children's Disaster Kits and Tornado Tubs. Tornado Tubs, which were developed by Northwest District disaster response coordinator Denni Palmer, received a lot of use during the aftermath of the April 27 tornado. The assembly instructions

for both of these kits are available on this page, as well as at [www.arumc.org/ingathering2014](http://www.arumc.org/ingathering2014).

If you have an item that isn't on the list for a kit, please donate it to a local organization instead of bringing it to Ingathering.

Complete your Volunteer Consent forms and Ingathering Report forms before you arrive. It saves time, meaning you can get to work faster! Download forms at [www.arumc.org/ingathering2014](http://www.arumc.org/ingathering2014).

Churches may send money with their Ingathering Report forms. (In fact, the Health Kit instructions ask that you include a dollar to purchase toothpaste.) Rather than including money inside any of the kits, please place the money in an envelope and give it to someone at the registration table. After shipping costs are covered, any undesignated surplus funds will be used for hunger relief projects within Arkansas.

Be sure to pre-register at [www.arumc.org/ingathering2014](http://www.arumc.org/ingathering2014) to make reservations for the free fellowship meal.

If you have one, wear a t-shirt from a United Methodist congregation, organization or event... it will be great to see the variety within our United Methodist connection!

New this year at Ingathering:

a free fellowship meal!

Visit [www.arumc.org/ingathering2014](http://www.arumc.org/ingathering2014) to RSVP.

### Children's Disaster Kit assembly instructions

- 1 Coloring Book
- 1 Box of Colored Pencils
- 1 Storybook (preferably about feelings)
- 2 Small Toy Vehicles (these should be emergency vehicles such as police cars, fire trucks, ambulances)
- 1 Soft, Cuddly Stuffed Toy


Place all items in a large zip-lock bag or box.

### Tornado Tub assembly instructions

- 2 18-gallon storage tubs with lids (stack one inside the other)
- 1 5-8 oz. can or bottle of insect repellent
- 1 8-12 oz. can of air freshener
- 1 pair work gloves
- 1 pair rubber gloves
- 1 package of gallon-size zip-lock bags (20 count)
- 1 package of quart-size zip-lock bags (30 count)
- 1 permanent marking pen
- 1 roll of colored duct tape
- 5 dust masks
- 22 heavy trash bags
- 20 kitchen trash bags
- 1 40-50 oz. laundry detergent
- 1 UMCOR health kit (See UMCOR's site, [www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies](http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies), for the Health Kit contents list.)

Place all items inside inner tub and tear off two 3-foot strips of duct tape. Place the rest of the roll inside the tub. Put both lids on and snap them down, then place the strips of duct tape across the lids to hold everything together.


To find supply lists for the other types of relief kits being received at Ingathering 2014, visit [www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies](http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies).



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# Imagine No Malaria spokesperson Bickerton coming to Little Rock Nov. 9-10

Through a relentless layering of efforts—including communication, case management and grassroots education supported by Arkansans' fundraising efforts—the United Methodist Church is making tremendous headway in the fight to end malaria. But our work is not finished.

We have a lifesaving opportunity coming up Nov. 9-10, through the generosity of the Fiser-Christie Endowed Lectureship at St. James UMC Little Rock: St. James is honored to host Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton as the inaugural guest speaker of the Fiser-Christie Lectureship.

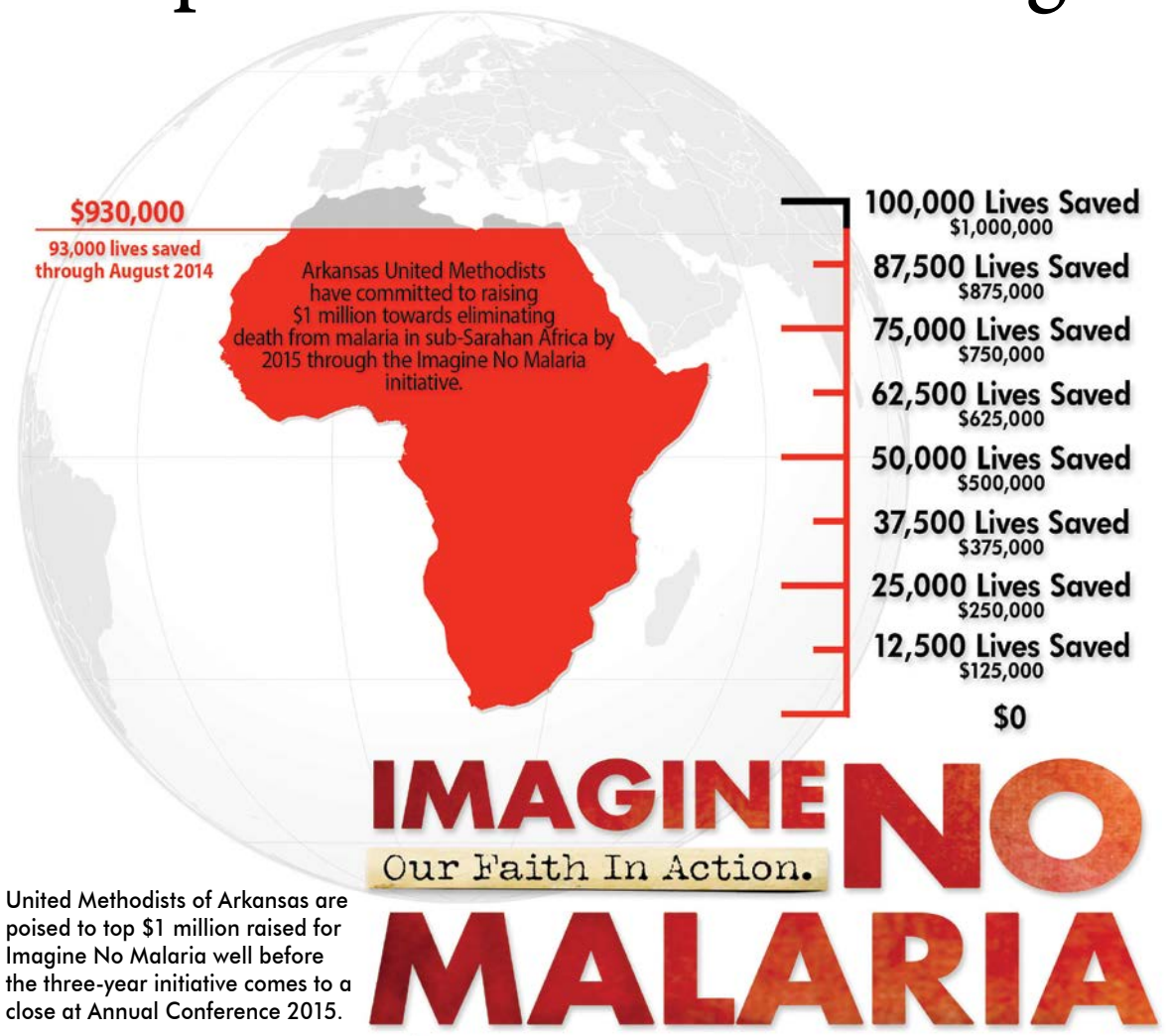
Bickerton, who many Arkansans may remember from his preaching at the 2013 Arkansas Annual Conference, served as president of the General Commission on the United Methodist Communications (UMCom) from 2004-2008. Since 2006, he has been the lead spokesperson for the United Methodist Global Health Initiative, which includes the Imagine No Malaria campaign.

In addition to preaching at St. James' three Sunday services Nov. 9, Bickerton also will speak at a youth rally Sunday night, and at a community luncheon and evening lecture on Monday, Nov. 10. Pre-registration is required for the youth rally and the luncheon; see instructions below.

Bickerton will share the groundbreaking results of the efforts of the United Methodist Church in leading the charge to end malaria in Africa, and instill in us a call to action that we must continue in the fight against malaria until it is eradicated. Each event will include a special offering for Imagine No Malaria.



**Bishop Thomas Bickerton**



United Methodists of Arkansas are poised to top \$1 million raised for Imagine No Malaria well before the three-year initiative comes to a close at Annual Conference 2015.

## Schedule of events featuring Bishop Thomas Bickerton

(all events held at St. James UMC, 321 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock)

**Sunday, Nov. 9:** Worship at 8:30, 9:30 and 10:55 a.m.

**Sunday, Nov. 9:** Imagine No Malaria Youth Rally, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Free concert featuring Thin Margins – all church youth groups welcome! Free pizza and drink, games and fun. Contact Brandon Bates to register your group: [brandon@stjames-umc.org](mailto:brandon@stjames-umc.org) or 501-217-6729.

**Monday, Nov. 10:** Mid-Day Lunch & Presentation, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Box lunch (\$10); advance registration required at [www.stjameslr.org](http://www.stjameslr.org).

**Monday, Nov. 10:** Evening Lecture, 6 p.m.

A special offering for Imagine No Malaria will be taken at each event.

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## Witness the life & ministry of Jesus Christ through the eyes of Mary

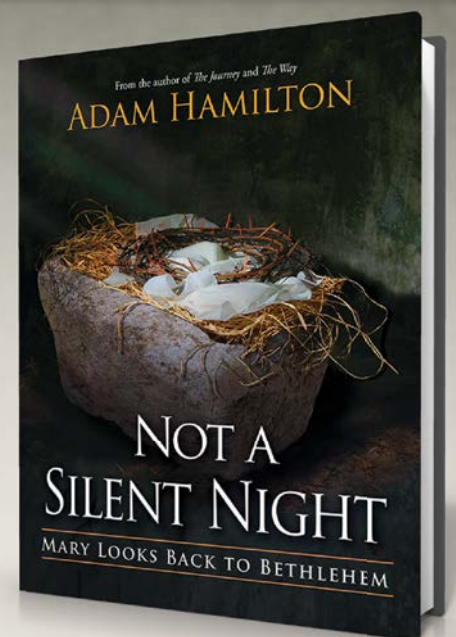
### Not a Silent Night: Mary Looks Back to Bethlehem

By Adam Hamilton

Imagine Jesus from Mary's point-of-view—proud of her son, in awe of his gifts and mission, guided by love for him as a person and so much more. In this book, Adam Hamilton begins at the end, with Mary at the crucifixion and resurrection; travels back in time as she witnesses his life and ministry; and ends at the beginning, with the Christ child born in a stable, Mary's beautiful baby. This year, experience Advent and Christmas with Mary.

#### Components of the study include:

- Book • Leader Guide • DVD (with 5 video segments)



Adam Hamilton is the best-selling author of *The Way*, *24 Hours That Changed the World*, *The Journey*, *When Christians Get It Wrong* and *Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White*.

Learn more at [AdamHamilton.org](http://AdamHamilton.org)



# National events in the works to focus on ministry with the poor

George Howard, deputy general secretary of mission and evangelism for the General Board of Global Ministries, speaks about the potential for United Methodist churches to expand ministry with the poor, not just to the poor.

AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

BY AMY FORBUS  
Editor

LITTLE ROCK—Leaders from five United Methodist churches around the country gathered at the BCD EmPowerment Center Sept. 3 and 4 to discuss how their work among the poor might help them teach other churches interested in similar ministries.

Representatives from Cass Community UMC Detroit, Mich.; Church for All People in Columbus, Ohio; Glide Memorial UMC San



Francisco, Calif.; St. John's UMC Houston, Texas; and Theresa Hoover UMC Little Rock spent time sharing about their ministries and, in some cases, the independent nonprofit organizations that have grown from them.

Led by George Howard, deputy secretary of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM), the meeting focused on how these churches embrace what GBGM now refers to as "Ministry With," a term that distinguishes between ministering *to* people and

the alternative model of walking alongside them to help break the cycle of poverty. GBGM believes this group of churches is among those that could help others learn to do similar ministry in communities around the U.S. To learn about the Ministry With approach, visit [www.ministrywith.org](http://www.ministrywith.org).

"The bishops have said over the last four years that ministry with the poor is just part of who we are as a people, all around the world," Howard said. "In this country, there are a number of places, churches—and this represents five of them—that have really been doing it for a while, that have learned some things, that have some things to share. And so what better group of people to begin to have some conversation about, 'How do we mobilize, across the country, more churches to be engaged in ministry with?'"

By the close of their time together, all five churches had agreed

to partner for a series of Ministry With educational events, hosting one at each site and featuring a national faculty drawn from each of the ministries. They plan to hold the first of these gatherings by the end of 2015.

Participants felt energized at the meeting's end, citing the common spirit among the churches and their ministries.

"I felt like I've made a new family here," said the Rev. Faith Fowler of Cass Community UMC. "We don't look alike, but we sure do think alike most of the time."

Retired Bishop Felton May, who currently serves as pastor of Theresa Hoover UMC Little Rock, told a story of his late colleague Bishop Leontine Kelly declaring, "I just can't wait" in a situation where she was expected to keep silent. He said the meeting had awakened his "Leontine Kelly spirit."

"Maybe that's where we are as a church: we just can't wait any longer, following rules and regulations that were meant to prohibit as opposed to motivate and send us forth," May said. "We just need to do it."



The Stop Hunger Now meal packaging project is a great inter-generational event, as there are jobs for people of all ages and abilities. Here, Nancy Mulhearn works with her granddaughter, Daylee, to ensure that the right amount of rice goes into each meal package.

PHOTO BY STUART HOLT

## Church packages 21,000 meals during 3rd annual One Service Day

Each year on the Sunday before Labor Day, the people of First United Methodist Church Conway celebrate One Service Day with a single worship service, a church-wide meal and a service project.

On Aug. 31, more than 200 people worked to package 21,168 meals for Stop Hunger Now ([www.stophungernow.org](http://www.stophungernow.org)), an international hunger relief agency that works to end hunger by distributing of food and other lifesaving aid to children and families all over the world.

In 2013, First UMC Conway packaged 10,000 meals. Because the event was a success, they tried it again for One Service Day 2014—this time, doubling their goal for the number of meals to package.

Extra-mile giving from the people of First UMC Conway funded the project. The \$6,846.16 raised paid for the 21,168 meals packaged, as well as the fellowship meal, with seed money left for next year's One Service Day.

Stop Hunger Now meals are nutritionally sound, and every dehydrated rice-and-soy-based meal is fortified with essential vitamins and nutrients. The organization has designed the meals to store and transport easily, and also to be customizable according to cultural needs and desires. In some countries, added items might include plantains or different types of beans.

The fellowship meal on One Service Day was basically identical to the ones that were being packaged. To customize it, the cooks (members of the Koinonia Sunday School class) added chicken and beans to the meals.

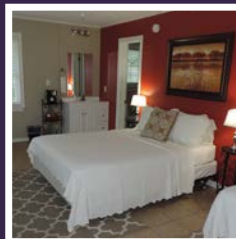
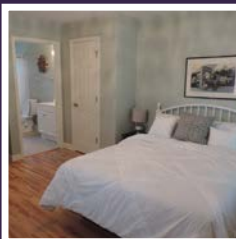
For more information about this project and One Service Day, call the church at 501-329-3801.

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# Video

(continued from page 1)

what we are called to do. We are called to love people, to love everyone and to let everyone know that Jesus loves them, too.”

The Center for Technology will release video stories each month of the series, covering a number of different ministries and themes. Local churches are encouraged to share the videos in worship or small groups. The videos may be downloaded from the Conference’s YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/arkansasumc](http://www.youtube.com/arkansasumc). For those who may have connection speeds that prevent large downloads, DVDs will be mailed to local churches upon request. To order a DVD, call 501-324-8036 or email [communications@arumc.org](mailto:communications@arumc.org).

“We have wanted to produce this series of stories for a long time,” said Mark Epperson, CFT director. “One of the many functions of the Center is to better tell the story of the UMC in Arkansas, and how it is transforming lives and communities. Using technology to do this helps to spread the word to a wider audience, to show just how big of an impact our local churches are making in

their mission fields across the state.”

For “North of Dover,” the CFT partnered with documentary filmmaker and retired United Methodist pastor the Rev. Bob Hager of Tiny Seed Films. Hager’s 2013 film “Black Marks on White Paper” chronicled the story of retired United Methodist Bishop Bennie D. Warner, and his dream of building a school in his home country of Liberia. It premiered at the Ozark Foothills Film Festival and later aired on the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN).

Epperson hopes that as the video series grows and the installments are shared in local churches, they will show how United Methodists of Arkansas are taking hold of the Bishop’s Mission Plan and making it their own.

“It will be exciting to watch this series show how we are changing lives and communities in so many ways,” he said.

The CFT team is currently reviewing story ideas and would love to receive more. To share a story, call 501-324-8035 or email [communications@arumc.org](mailto:communications@arumc.org). Not all stories will be selected for the video series, but may be shared in other forms through the *Arkansas United Methodist* or through social media.

## Resources for observing Donor Sabbath in local churches

### What is the UMC’s position on organ and tissue donation?

“...organ transplantation and organ donation are acts of charity, agape love, and self-sacrifice. We recognize the life-giving benefits of organ and other tissue donation and encourage all people of faith to become organ and tissue donors as part of their love and ministry to others in need.”

—Paragraph 162, *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*

The United Methodist Church also encourages local congregations to observe Donor Sabbath, which in the U.S. is set two weekends before Thanksgiving. This year, Donor Sabbath weekend is Nov. 14-16. For information and resources for observing Donor Sabbath, visit [www.organdonor.gov/materialsresources/donorsabbath.html](http://www.organdonor.gov/materialsresources/donorsabbath.html).

“During National Donor Sabbath, faith leaders from many religions, donor families, transplant recipients and donation and transplantation professionals participate in services and programs to increase awareness of the need for the lifesaving and enhancing gifts passed to others through transplantation and encourage people to sign up in their state registry as organ, eye, tissue, donors.”

—from [www.organdonor.gov](http://www.organdonor.gov)

### Learn more, or sign up

**Bone marrow and stem cells:** To join the registry for the National Marrow Donor Program, visit [www.bethematch.org](http://www.bethematch.org).

**Organ and tissue donation:** To learn more about organ and tissue donation in Arkansas, including how to ensure you are signed up as an organ donor, visit the website for the Arkansas Regional Organ Recovery Agency (ARORA), [www.arora.org](http://www.arora.org).

## Children’s Sabbath resources available through GBOD

Each year the Children’s Defense Fund sponsors a National Observance of Children’s Sabbath. The 2014 theme is “Precious in God’s Sight: Answering God’s Call to Cherish and Protect *Every* Child.”

The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship has some suggestions for celebrating a Children’s Sunday in worship at [www.gbod.org/resources/childrens-sunday-and-childrens-sabbath](http://www.gbod.org/resources/childrens-sunday-and-childrens-sabbath). The page includes a link to Children’s Defense Fund resources.

Children’s Sabbath falls on Oct. 17-19, the same weekend as the United Methodist Church’s designated Laity Sunday (see page 10 for a link to resources), but either observance can be rescheduled to accommodate local churches’ plans.

## Conference VBS mini-grant enables cooperative Bible school

Calico Rock United Methodist Church and Calico Rock Cumberland Presbyterian Church partnered this summer to hold Vacation Bible School the evenings of Aug. 3-6. More than 50 children, eight youth and 25 adults participated.

If it had not been for a \$200 mini-grant offered by Arkansas Conference Children’s Ministry, this VBS could not have happened. As a small church in a small community, financing Bible School can often be a challenge. This mini-grant helped to ease that burden, so the children who attended the tropical-themed SonTreasure Island Bible School had the opportunity to discover Jesus Christ in a fun and inviting way.

To help the children better understand the joy of giving, an offering contest was held between the boys and girls, to benefit the Fill-a-Bowl 5k Food room program that feeds hungry children in the Calico Rock School District. By the

end of the week the boys had given \$206.73, while the girls had raised \$249.54, for a grand total of \$456.27.

The evenings also included an adult class led by Dr. Tom Campbell of the Calico Rock Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

He led a study on the formation of the Bible, covering the history, politics and theology that shaped the Bible we have today.

The community of Calico Rock was able to experience Christ’s true vision for the church as United Methodists and Cumberland Presbyterians worked together to



share the Gospel. By joining forces, neither church was stretched for volunteers. Relationships between the congregations were both made and strengthened. The entire community of Calico Rock was blessed by receiving this Vacation Bible School Mini-Grant.

—the Rev. Bill Sardin

To watch or download ‘North of Dover,’ visit the Conference’s YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/arkansasumc](http://www.youtube.com/arkansasumc). Alternatively, DVDs will be mailed to local churches upon request; to order, call 501-324-8036 or email [communications@arumc.org](mailto:communications@arumc.org).

## Insurance dividend to be reinvested in ministry

Bishop Gary Mueller, left, on Sept. 2 received a dividend check on behalf of the Arkansas Conference from James Greene & Associates president Jeff Brantly, center, and vice president of sales and marketing Kurt Hetherington, right. This dividend check for \$28,193



AUM PHOTO BY AMY FORBUS

represents premium dollars that were given back to the Conference by churches that insure with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company. This voluntary dividend program was developed to provide a way to reward strong insurance risk management practices.

Since 2004, Brotherhood Mutual has given back almost \$180,000 in dividends to the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church for ministry needs. A portion of the dividend this year will be put toward the Conference-wide Imagine No Malaria effort.

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## COMING UP

**Resources available for Laity Sunday, Oct. 19**

Laity Sunday in the United Methodist Church is designated as the third Sunday in October. This year, on Oct. 19, the theme for Laity Sunday is "Disciples Called to Action: Engaging Small Groups." For resources, including worship planning suggestions, bulletin inserts and posters, visit <http://tinyurl.com/laity2014>. For more resources related to how laypersons can engage more deeply in ministry, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ministrylaity>.

**Want to host ACCYM Choir Tour? Apply by Oct. 25**

The ACCYM Choir Tour Task Force is now considering host churches for its 2015 tour, set for June 8-15. The choir will make stops at six churches, and would like to worship in as many districts as possible. The choir-led worship service usually begins at 7 p.m. Contact Rosemarie Gagnon, [Rgagnon50@outlook.com](mailto:Rgagnon50@outlook.com), by Oct. 25, 2014, if your church is interested. The task force will make its decisions by Nov. 1, 2014, and will notify selected churches by Nov. 3.

Before you apply, please prayerfully consider the following requirements for hosting the Conference Youth Choir:

Sleeping space for roughly 60 people, most of whom have cots or air mattresses (typically there are twice as many females as males; a final count will be supplied after the first rehearsal in January 2015) ... A common space for youth and adults to enjoy fellowship with each other and your church members ... Dinner the evening of the worship and breakfast the morning after for the same number of people ... Showers available for everyone, either at the church or private homes (occasionally, we are fortunate enough to have churches host us that wash our shirts; it's great to have clean shirts for the next day!) ... Space for the band with their equipment and the choir to have a worship service that lasts for about an hour ... Electric and water RV hook-ups greatly appreciated (there is a possibility that our sound team will have its own RV) ... The opportunity to worship creatively with your church using music and other liturgical performing arts.

**Silent Centering Prayer Retreat at Mount Eagle Oct. 26-29**

Mount Eagle Retreat Center near Clinton will host a Centering Prayer Retreat Sunday, Oct. 26 through Wednesday, Oct. 29. The bulk of the retreat time will be conducted in silence, and will end in debriefing and fellowship over lunch. Each day includes an opportunity for three hours of centering prayer in community, as well as live and video teaching on the contemplative journey. The retreat will be facilitated by the Revs. Bill Buchanan, Gail Brooks and David Fleming.

"Centering prayer" is a contemplative form of spiritual practice that has its Christian roots in the experiences of the desert fathers and mothers in the fourth century Middle East. For details, including cost, scholarship information and recommended readings, visit [www.mounteagle.org](http://www.mounteagle.org).

**'Journeys with the Messiah' at Trinity UMC Little Rock Nov. 2**

An award-winning fashion photographer whose images have appeared on the cover of *Vogue* magazine, Michael Belk was living the high life when he found he could no longer ignore God's voice asking, "What are you doing with the gifts I've given you?" The response to that question changed his life and led him to create a powerful collection of photographs of first-century Jesus

interacting with all walks of 21st-century people. During this production, the 2008 economic downturn caused Belk to lose half of his life savings, including the money for the project. Trust in God and a determination to follow where God led took Belk on a personal journey of faith.

Belk will share his book, *Journeys with the Messiah*, featuring photographs illustrating stories from the Bible as well as behind-the-scenes footage and artist's commentary, on Sunday, Nov. 2 at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1101 North Mississippi in Little Rock. He will speak at the 9 and 11 a.m. worship services, and at a 2 p.m. presentation. Visit [www.journeyswiththemessiah.org](http://www.journeyswiththemessiah.org) to see Belk's images. For information on the Nov. 2 events, contact Trinity UMC Little Rock at 501-666-2813, or visit [www.tumclr.org](http://www.tumclr.org).

**Donor Sabbath observance at Quapaw Quarter UMC Nov. 16**

The congregation of Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church, 1601 Louisiana Street in Little Rock, will observe National Donor Sabbath on Sunday, Nov. 16 at their 11 a.m. worship service. Quapaw Quarter is participating in conjunction with Arkansas Regional Organ Recovery Agency (ARORA). ARORA's mission is to provide lifesaving organs and tissue for transplant and to register Arkansans to become organ, tissue and eye donors.

National Donor Sabbath Weekend (Nov. 14-16) is a time for faith leaders of all denominations and faiths across the U.S. to alert their congregations to the pressing need for organ and tissue donations to save lives. Currently there are more than 123,400 persons on the transplant waiting list.

Donor Sabbath is viewed by the United Methodist Church as a time to come together around the issues of life and thanksgiving. Congregations are encouraged to support National Donor Sabbath Weekend by including the topic in their worship services.

To receive information on National Donor Sabbath Weekend and how you can participate, please contact Stacy Robinson, [srobinson@arora.org](mailto:srobinson@arora.org) or 501-749-3938.

**Beyond! Children's ministry conference set for Jan. 30-31, 2015**

The Arkansas Conference Council on Children's Ministries presents Beyond! 2015 Children's Ministry Conference, to be held Jan. 30-31, 2015, at Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center in Fayetteville. Early check-in is available Jan. 29, with some pre-conference programming the morning of Jan. 30.

The keynote speaker will be Mark Burrows, director of Children's and Family Ministries at First UMC Fort Worth, Texas. He has gained national recognition for his books and recordings for and about children and children's ministry, and has a special passion for engaging children in meaningful worship experiences.

Other featured presenters include the Rev. Mackey Yokem, executive director of mission and ministry for the Arkansas Conference; Karen Anderson, director of Christian education at Central UMC Rogers and a certified instructor for the Created By God faith-based human sexuality curriculum; and Jena Barber of Elm Springs, who will speak on "FaithYoga" meditation.

Breakout session options will include: Bible Boot Camp, Created by God. Finding and Keeping Volunteers, Equipping Families for Faith Formation at Home, Children's Ministry 101, Parenting in the Pew, Early Childhood Education, Puppets, Worshiping with the Family of God, Safe Sanctuaries and more. For registration information, including a scholarship option, visit <http://kidz.arumc.org>. Registration ends Dec. 15.

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## OBITUARIES

### LITTLE ROCK

#### James Cleveland Foster

The Rev. James Cleveland "Jim" Foster, 81, of Little Rock passed away Sept. 10, 2014.

He was born May 5, 1933, in Moorefield, Ark., to Cleveland and Una Foster. He grew up in Batesville, Ark., and graduated as valedictorian from Batesville High School in 1951. A graduate of the University of Arkansas with a degree in accounting, he was a member of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity and Beta Gamma Sigma honor society. Jim was in the ROTC and served eight years in the U.S. Army Reserve.



**Jim Foster**

Jim had a 32-year career with Southwestern Bell, AT&T and AT&T Bell Laboratories before becoming a United Methodist minister. He received his Master of Divinity degree in 1990 from St. Paul School of Theology, and served at Trinity UMC Little Rock, Sulphur Springs UMC, Oak Forest UMC and First UMC Little Rock. In retirement, he continued to be active in First United Methodist Church. Known as Brother Jim, he lived out his strong faith in God in service to others and touched countless lives.

Jim was a member of West Little Rock Rotary Club, where he was a Paul Harris Fellow. He was an avid Razorback fan and a season ticket holder for more than 50 years. For more than 10 years, he played golf twice a week with the same two friends, and parred a hole at Pebble Beach, Calif. on his 70th birthday. Jim was a lead tenor and soloist in the choirs of the churches he attended and led. A loyal, life-long friend to many, Jim reached out to all those whose paths he crossed. He

will be celebrated; he will be remembered; and he will be missed.

Jim is survived by Nancy, his wife of 54 years; a son, Col. (Ret.) Phil Foster and his wife, Wendy, of Dallas, Texas; a daughter, Carol, of Menlo Park, Calif.; four grandchildren, Christina Sanchez and her husband, Kevin, of McDill Air Force Base, Fla.; Jennifer Foster of Oklahoma City, Okla.; and Megan and Cody Wiebe of Menlo Park, Calif.; two great-grandchildren, Aundrea and Hosea Sanchez; his sisters, Margaret Tanner and her husband, Ray, of Memphis, Tenn., and Ellen Sayle and her husband, Bill, of Collierville, Tenn.; and a niece and six nephews.

A celebration of his life was held Saturday, Sept. 13, at First United Methodist Church Little Rock. A private burial followed in Batesville, at Oaklawn Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to Oak Forest UMC Food Pantry, 2415 Fair Park Blvd., Little Rock, AR 72204; or First United Methodist Church, 723 Center Street, Little Rock AR 72201.

### INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.

#### ImoJean Wilder

ImoJean Walls Wilder, 85, of Indianapolis, formerly of Fort Smith, Ark., passed away Aug. 28, 2014.

She was born Feb. 29, 1928, at Cleveland, Ark., the daughter of George Walls and Coma Wolverton Walls. She attended Arkansas Tech and the University of Central Arkansas, and later graduated from the University of Arkansas. Through the years she worked alongside her



**ImoJean Wilder**

husband, the Rev. William M. Wilder, as they served Arkansas United Methodist churches in Sherwood (Sylvan Hills); Lincoln; Van Buren (St. John's); Heber Springs; Fayetteville (Trinity); Marked Tree; Wynne; Forrest City; and Jonesboro.

ImoJean taught Sunday school and was a lifetime member of United Methodist Women. She was a dedicated member of the Builders Class of First United Methodist Church Fort Smith. She taught in the public schools for 16 years, and retired in Fort Smith along with her husband in 1989. In 2008, she moved to Indianapolis and became a member of Greenwood United Methodist Church. She was devoted to her family and kept them in line as best she could.

She was preceded in death by a daughter, Pamela, and by her beloved husband of 51 years.

She is survived by a son, W. Michael Wilder of Burlington, N.C.; three daughters, Mary Wilder Cartwright of Nashville, Ind.; Jeannie Wilder Ayers of Franklin, Tenn.; Elizabeth L. Wilder of North Potomac, Md.; her sons-in-law, Michael Cartwright, Dan Ayers and Phil Smith; her sister, Hester Henley of Morrilton; grandchildren Jennie Wilder Kristiansen, Katy Wilder Schaaf, Jack Wilder, Julie Wilder, Hannah Cartwright, Erin Cartwright, Jamie Cartwright, Annie Riddle-Wilder, Bethany Cartwright, Emily Ayers, Elizabeth Ayers, Melody Riddle-Wilder, Abby Ayers and Greer Ayers; and five great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Sept. 2, in the Roebuck Chapel at First United Methodist Church Fort Smith, with burial following in Forest Park Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to UNICEF 125 Maiden, New York, NY 10038; or to First United Methodist Church, 200 North 15th Street, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

## UMFA grant to Methodist Family Health provides field trips for children in treatment

The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (UMFA) recently awarded a \$9,500 grant to the Methodist Family Health Foundation to provide educational field trips for 250 children in the Behavioral Hospital, Residential Treatment Centers, Therapeutic Group Homes, Therapeutic Day Treatment Program and Arkansas CARES Program, UMFA announced in a Sept. 22 news release.

"Though they require intensive support, children with emotional and behavioral problems also need fun, fresh air and exposure to art, history and theater," said Jim Argue Jr., UMFA president and CEO.

Children in Methodist Family Health programs statewide will attend Children's Theatre Productions and special exhibits at the Arkansas Arts Center. They also will make trips to Toltec Mounds, a pumpkin patch and tour the USS Razorback. Other destinations include the Little Rock and Memphis Zoos, museums throughout Arkansas and in Memphis, Blanchard Springs Caverns and the Ferndale 4-H Center.

"Methodist Family Health is grateful for the UMFA grant that allows our children to have recreational outings," said Ashley Coldiron, executive director of the Methodist Family Health Foundation. "Many of the children we care for have never had the chance to slide down a water slide, go to a play or visit the local science museum; we thank you for giving the children we serve the freedom to be a kid!"

As one of the largest United Methodist foundations in the country, UMFA manages \$135 million in endowment funds and other charitable assets that benefit local churches and other United Methodist ministries. Founded in 1963, UMFA is responsible for over 650 funds that support United Methodist ministries.

Methodist Family Health provides quality, compassionate psychiatric and behavioral healthcare to children and families throughout Arkansas, serving approximately 1,400 clients daily in inpatient, residential and outpatient venues of care.

## Calico Rock church supports Care Caps' mission

Since four of its members attended a Care Caps "sew-in" three years ago at Mount Eagle Retreat Center, Calico Rock United Methodist Church has been blessed to support Care Cap Connections. The church's United Methodist Women have now hosted three sewing events for this nonprofit that provides free, comfortable head coverings for patients going through chemotherapy. The organization reaches thousands of patients in major cancer treatment centers around the

country, and every cap is free to the wearer.

Calico Rock UMC Care Cap events have included participants from other churches and the surrounding community, and have resulted in approximately 300 caps completed for delivery. Additionally, Calico Rock UMC's United Methodist Women contribute \$200 to Care Caps each year.

This year, following Calico Rock UMC's sewing event, the church's two Ozark Mission Project teams left for camp. Early in the week, one of the church's campers contacted Mary Philips, the founder of Care Cap Connections, to obtain a cap for a "neighbor" she was serving. Mary put a cap in the mail that day to Cabot UMC for the camper to share with her neighbor.

Calico Rock UMC hopes to continue to host these inspiring events at least once each year. Visit [www.carecaps.org](http://www.carecaps.org) to learn more about this ministry.

—submitted by Carol Campbell



Liz Moad and Carol Campbell of Calico Rock UMC United Methodist Women present \$200 to Mary Philips, founder of Care Cap Connections.

COURTESY PHOTO



## The Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence in Leadership: helping local churches seek vitality

The Center for Clergy and Laity Excellence in Leadership (CCELEL) continues to evolve to create vital congregations who make disciples of Jesus Christ equipped to make disciples who transform lives, communities and the world. Led by the Rev. Deidre Roberts, who began her work with the CCELEL in July, the staff works as a team to resource congregations committed to taking the next steps of the Bishop's Mission Plan.

### Background

The CCELEL has trained and deployed 90 circuit elders and 32 lay congregational coaches into the mission fields of the Arkansas Conference. In its first 18 months, under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Kurt Boggan, the CCELEL led the denomination in defining the work of **circuit elders**. These pastors assist district superintendents in some administrative work, mentor local pastors and lead peer gatherings with other clergy. Every local church has an assigned circuit elder ready to assist their pastor and leadership team.

Another early work of the CCELEL was the identifying, training and deployment of lay **congregational coaches** to churches who requested help in visioning, strategic planning and reaching beyond their walls into the mission field. To date, nearly 130 churches have been engaged in work with a congregational coach. Churches of all sizes can benefit from the expertise of these lay men and women who are committed to the UMCs of Arkansas. They bring a variety of experience and expert knowledge to this specialized work.

### Local church goals

The Bishop's Mission Plan offers the CCELEL an opportunity to focus their work on the **Next Steps toward**

**creating vital congregations.** The CCELEL will be resourcing congregations to look more like their neighborhoods (Step 5); to grow by at least one in professions of faith, worship attendance, small group ministry and outreach ministry (Step 6); and to experiment with new ways to reach the "nones"—those who claim no faith relationship at all (Step 10).

In addition, the CCELEL will work with the Board of Laity and the Board of Ordained ministry to unleash lay leadership (Step 7) and grow excellent and passionate clergy (Step 8).

The CCELEL is asking superintendents to identify strategic churches in their districts who are ready to make disciples. In addition, the CCELEL is enhancing the coaching and circuit elder programs to better meet the needs of local churches as congregations seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

The CCELEL is also working

closely with the Center for Technology to develop and link to online resources for training church leaders, understanding our faith as United Methodist Christians, learning to share our faith and grow as disciples.

### How to get started

To make a request to work with a congregational coach and the CCELEL, contact your district superintendent.

Questions, feedback and ideas about how the CCELEL can resource your local church should be addressed directly to Roberts, droberts@arumc.org or 501-324-8016.



The staff of the Arkansas Conference CCELEL, clockwise from top left: The Rev. Dede Roberts, director; John Crawford, lay coaching coordinator; Che Dolan, administrative assistant; and the Rev. Dr. Candace Barron, assistant director.



### 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.



**The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas**

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