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Want a reason to fight childhood hunger?
Arkansas has 200,000 of them.

200,000 REASONS

to fight childhood hunger



A 200K Reasons initiative update

BY MARTHA TAYLOR
Special Contributor

This month's Veritas youth gathering in Hot Springs will be first event where the 200,000 Reasons Childhood Hunger Initiative will have a public presence.

A resolution approved by the

2014 Arkansas Annual Conference called for all United Methodist churches to focus on fighting childhood hunger in Arkansas for the next three years. Following several task force gatherings, the initiative was named 200,000 Reasons, a reference to the estimated number of children in Arkansas who

are hungry or suffer from food insufficiency.

Led by the initiative's task force facilitator, the Rev. J. J. Whitney, and assisted by Deaconess Colleen Caldwell, 200K Reasons initiative task force is finalizing a mission statement and goals for the coming

[See 200K REASONS, page 8]

Holding steady Apportionment payout influenced by change in pension billing

BY AMY FORBUS
Editor

The totals are tabulated: In 2014, United Methodist congregations in Arkansas contributed \$11,275,741 toward the Conference budget through apportioned giving. This number represents a payout of 88 percent—a reduction of slightly more than one percent from 2013.

Apportionments support ministries beyond the local church, such as camping and retreat centers, campus ministries, staffing, resourcing congregations to pursue the Arkansas Conference trajectory of congregational vitality and more.

This decrease continues a trend that began with the shift to billing clergy pensions directly to local churches.

"While this is not unexpected, it is still a little

disappointing," said Todd Burris, director of administrative services and treasurer for the Arkansas Conference. "The pension and benefit apportioned item has typically been paid at a much higher percentage than other budgeted items, so as we move those funds out of the Conference budget and directly bill them to the local church, the overall payout percentage drops."

In actuality, apportionment payout is probably holding steady, Burris says, but the change in how the Conference bills clergy pensions results in a decline.

The transition to billing local churches for the pension of the clergy serving there began in 2013, following 2012 Annual Conference approval. Churches paid 25 percent of their clergy's 2013 pension total through direct billing. Last year, churches paid 50 percent

[See APPORTIONMENTS, page 9]

Bishop names Coburn DS for Northwest



Stephen Coburn

Bishop Gary E. Mueller has appointed the Rev. Stephen Coburn superintendent of the Northwest District, effective July 1, 2015. Coburn currently serves as senior pastor of First UMC Springdale, and as chair of the Arkansas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

"Stephen has led the congregation at Springdale to grow in discipleship and outreach ministries, including the development of the multicultural Agape Campus," Mueller said. "I believe his presence on the Cabinet will help us pursue our stated trajectory of creating vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped to transform lives, communities and the world."

A native of Monticello, Coburn graduated from Hendrix College in Conway, and earned his Master of Divinity degree at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colo. In addition to his tenure at First UMC Springdale, he has served in Cabot, Fort Smith, Texarkana, Lonoke, Maumelle, Bradley and Little Rock. He and his wife, Dara, have three children and four grandchildren.

"The excitement for me is two-fold," Coburn said. "I'm excited about the opportunity to serve the Northwest District, and I'm excited about the future of our Conference and the larger church. I'm honored to be asked to do this, and I look forward to working with all the pastors and laity in our district. I believe in the trajectory that has

[See NEW DS, page 4]

Choosing downtown

BY TAYLOR HUBBARD
Special Contributor

“Downtown” is a complicated word. While the spelling and definition are simple and well-known, the word “downtown” is complicated because of what it has come to represent for many people: urban areas with higher crime, visible poverty and racial divides; business epicenters that the working class commutes into and out of daily.

So when my husband and I shared with our family that we would be purchasing our next house in downtown Little Rock, we were prepared for a little skepticism, misinformation and all-around wariness of our departure from the suburbs.

Our decision to move seemed like a natural progression. We spend a huge chunk of our time downtown since my husband works at First United Methodist Church. We frequent the restaurants and shops here. Above all, we are drawn to the



Taylor Hubbard

history of an area that played such a vital role in the historic civil rights movement.

As we looked for a place to call home, we focused on the south side of I-630. We drove around

pointing out houses we loved, houses we would love to restore, houses that could be “the one.” We began to learn about the community and familiarize ourselves with the general climate of the area.

Our block is wonderful—neighbors who look out for one another. Living a stone’s throw from Arkansas Baptist College, we see and hear the ABC marching band as they practice. We hear helicopters overhead as they take off and land at Children’s Hospital. While we describe the Central High Historic District as “up and coming,” people not familiar with the area may more bluntly describe our neighborhood as “the ‘hood.”

Awareness

Despite the negatives, one of the biggest draws for us to move into this area is our ability to see it as a mission field—but not in the sense that we moved in to be saviors of the neighborhood and its residents. It’s hard for us to compartmentalize our



Step 5 of the Bishop’s Mission Plan: Look Like the Neighborhood

Christian identity. “Christ Follower” is as deeply ingrained in our DNA as our hair or eye color, so it makes sense for us to be in an area where we can share Christ’s love and understanding in hopes of building stronger communities.

We are not here to convert, not here to build membership numbers or to confuse the business of the church with the love of Christ. No; we are here to consciously *be*. To be aware of what is going on around us. To be mindful that we may be an example of a strong, loving family unit. To be in a position to love our neighbors unconditionally and build relationships that bridge racial and socioeconomic divides. To fully witness and participate in the realities of living “downtown.” Immersion.

We are painfully aware of cultural differences in our neighborhood that we may not understand. We believe that living here helps us take steps toward better understanding.

Convicting moment

One afternoon while walking our dog, we went by the park, an afterschool hangout for teenagers in the area. As I approached the corner and saw a group of guys standing around the sidewalk, my first thought was to go another direction. I realized that I am not as immune to stereotyping as I thought I was; despite working with youth for the last six years, I feared this group of teenagers. Instead of turning the other way, I asked myself a simple yet challenging question: Would I be fearful if I were walking past a group of white teens? I knew in my heart the answer was no.

As I got closer to the group, I could see their young faces. They were kids. As we walked by, all of the

teens said hello and waved or nodded, and one said how much he liked my dog.

The encounter was brief but convicting. I had come close to letting fear override an opportunity to be in community. I now walk this route with our dog often. We’ve built understanding, and we interact regularly.

My steadfast belief that we moved downtown for a purpose helps me work through the tough spots. These experiences push and challenge us. They also affirm that we are on the right path to building the Kingdom here.

I once heard a mentor of mine say he wanted to “take that territory for Jesus before the devil had a chance to strengthen his grip.” At the time, I was taken aback by his brashness, but now, I get it. The enemy can be seen in families broken by drugs, crime and violence, and the systems that perpetuate such things. The enemy can also come from within, through fear of the unknown, stereotyping and misunderstanding. But bringing in the Kingdom, even in seemingly small ways, can have a powerful and positive effect.

Being in relationship with our neighbors, treating everyone equally, stepping out of our comfort zone to learn names, listening to stories, giving the benefit of the doubt, *not judging*... these acts bring the love and light of Christ to our mission field of downtown. It’s not showy; it’s not loud or widely advertised. It can be difficult, and often confusing. However, our love for this place and our neighbors is genuine and heartfelt, and it’s absolutely incredible to see the face of Jesus in every single person we encounter.

Hubbard, a marketing consultant, is a member of First UMC Little Rock.



EDITOR’S CORNER

BY AMY FORBUS

Giving up people

Less than a week after Ash Wednesday, author Rachel Held Evans took to Facebook to share some thoughts on how we treat each other in American popular culture.

“It’s not exactly a Lenten practice,” she wrote, “but during this season of reflection and repentance, I’ve been observing the ways in which our culture dehumanizes, commodifies, and consumes people, and confronting my own complicity in that. It’s been eye-opening. And convicting.... it’s clear to me that we struggle with something of a shared addiction here in which our fellow human beings are flattened out and used as projection screens for our fears, anger, hopes, amusement, dysfunction, insecurities, expectations, and pride.”

It was the morning after the Oscars, and as she placed her thoughts against the fresh backdrop of judgments on physical appearance that had rained down upon celebrities via Twitter and Facebook the night before, she got my attention.

I was reminded of something simple my dad used to say when he dropped me off at school in the mornings: “Be nice.” As a child, I wondered why he told me that so often, even as I struggled to follow the instruction and sometimes rejected it outright. As an adult, I realize that showing kindness to others can be far more challenging than I ever understood as a kid.

Regardless of one’s age, harsh opinion tends to spew forth easily, especially when separated from others by a TV or computer screen. Acknowledging this distance, Evans issued an invitation to refrain from treating human beings like products that exist primarily for us to evaluate and discard on a whim.

“What would it mean to ‘give up people’ for Lent—not in the sense of fasting from relationships, but in the sense of fasting from our dehumanizing consumption of others?” she asked. “I don’t know the answer to that question exactly, but simply asking it has given me a lot to think about and has already changed my behavior. It’s a strange fast, but an instructive one.”

Strange but instructive, she called it. But the more I think about it, the less strange it seems. We encounter frequent opportunities to belittle other children of God, and whether we blame their fashion sense, their beliefs or their life choices, we should know better than to do it. The fault lies at least as much within our own hearts as it does in anything anyone else has worn, spoken or done.

Perhaps by taking time for an extra look inward at our own insecurities and fears, we can learn to give a measure of grace to the people we might otherwise dismiss.

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



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Submission Deadlines

Issue Date	Submission Deadline
April 3	March 17
May 1	April 13
June 5	May 18



GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST: A word from the Bishop

BY GARY E. MUELLER

A confession

I believe it's always important to be honest with God, as well as with those who are my sisters and brothers in Christ. That's especially the case during this season of Lent. So I'm going to do it. In fact, I'm so serious I'm going to make a confession.

I confess I do everything I possibly can to get churches excited about experiencing true spiritual revival. I strategize about how to get churches more fully engaged in their mission fields. And work diligently to get the right pastors in the right places so those pastors will thrive and the congregations they serve will become far more vital in making disciples who make disciples.

Of course, that's not much of a confession since it makes me sound like a hero. But it is an appropriate prelude to my real confession. I confess I'm trying too hard, doing too much and

taking way too much responsibility for the United Methodist churches in Arkansas. Or, to put it a little more candidly, I confess don't trust God nearly enough, don't get on board with God nearly as much as I should and often don't really expect God to do all that much.

But confessing this means I also need to confess something else. It's hard, because I don't like acknowledging it. But I must. I confess I need to take God's unconditional, transformational and invitational love so seriously it truly becomes the most powerful thing in my life. I need to become a far more faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. And trust the Holy Spirit to lead me as I lead the people called United Methodists in Arkansas. In other words, I confess that I know the most important thing I can do as your bishop is to get a whole lot

more serious about walking my talking.

But that's exactly the point of confession. To clear the air with God, others and myself. To get back on track. And to experience God's gift of enabling me to do a far better job of doing the right thing in the right way at exactly the right time than I could ever do on my own. Not because I'm good. But because I'm getting better at letting God be God.

Grace and peace,



Gary E. Mueller

APPOINTMENTS & RETIREMENTS

The following appointment changes have been announced since the deadline for the previous issue of the *Arkansas United Methodist*. Changes are effective July 1 unless otherwise noted.

- Stephen Coburn (elder)—Northwest District superintendent
- David Freeman (elder)—First UMC Little Rock
- Tom Letchworth (elder)—General evangelist
- Mike Morey (elder)—First UMC Pine Bluff; effective March 1
- Natasha Murray-Norman (elder)—First UMC Pine Bluff (associate); effective March 1
- William O. "Bud" Reeves (elder)—First UMC Fort Smith
- Judy Wilson Clark (retired elder)—Judsonia/Kensett UMCs (interim); effective Feb. 22
- Martha Taylor (deacon)—St. James UMC Little Rock (secondary appointment; no change to primary appointment)

Retirements effective July 1:

- Fred Hunter (elder)
- Robert Burton (elder)
- Chris Cooper (elder)
- George McCoy (elder)

For the most recent changes, as well as the full list of appointments announced at the 2014 Annual Conference, see www.arumc.org/appointments.

Why do we give?

BY NATASHA MURRAY-NORMAN
Special Contributor

In recent weeks I have been fascinated with a particular story that went viral. James Robertson is the Detroit resident who walked 21 miles to and from work each day for 10 years. After Wayne State University student Evan Leedy heard Robertson's story, he established a GoFundMe account to accept online contributions. Robertson received a new car and much more as a result of Leedy's action.

The story of the philanthropy of many focused to help one person has made me ask a question: Why? Why were the hearts of thousands moved with compassion for this one man and his plight? Could it be that in the midst of all the bad things that have inundated their timelines and newsfeeds, they simply needed to be part of something good?

Upon hearing about the contributions to help with Robertson's transportation, many began to wonder about the condition of the public transit system. That someone would have to walk 21 miles each day because of the gaps in public transportation becomes a community-wide concern. Others voiced concern over the wages that Robertson was earning. In 10 years of earning \$10.55 an hour and having a car that did not work, he could not afford to repair it. Robertson now has a solution to his problem, but what about others with similar challenges?

The reality is that there are many like Robertson in our mission fields here in Arkansas. Whether we are in urban or rural areas, we know of those who lack adequate transportation, housing and healthcare. There are those in our community who struggle to live on the wages they earn. Robertson's story helps illustrate the realities of the working poor. What can our response be to these neighbors of ours? Through the telling and retelling of this story, there are lessons that we in our local churches can learn.

The first lesson we can learn is that we need to know the specific stories of the mission field. When telling the narrative of our mission field, we tend to speak in generalities. Very seldom are we specific. We know about

problems, but we lack a connection to them.

Robertson's story provided a point of connection for the online community. His experience helped people understand some of the problems that the working poor face: long commutes, low wages, inadequate transportation. And they moved to respond.

The second lesson we can learn is that we need to listen and connect. Wayne State University student Evan Leedy read about Robertson. His heart was moved with compassion, and he decided to do something about it. Not only did he listen, but he also felt empathy—what if he were the one making that commute? Leedy placed himself in the story.

What would happen if we placed ourselves in the story of our neighbors in the mission field? Not as the hero who comes in to save the day, but as someone living those experiences?

Lastly, we can learn that whenever we witness the story we must act. Our response may not always to create a GoFundMe account—in fact, most

of the time it won't be—but we can choose to respond. We can use our own networking abilities. Monetary contributions were helpful for Robertson, but it was the networking that told the story, that brought the financial help and made the difference.

During this Lenten journey, we are encouraged to take on a new spiritual practice. I encourage you to take on the task of getting to know a new part of your community. Learn the stories. Place yourself in

the story. Respond and connect in new ways. The good that comes from giving can be good news for all of us.

The Rev. Murray-Norman serves as associate pastor of First UMC Pine Bluff.



Natasha Murray-Norman

'Whether we are in urban or rural areas, we know of those who lack adequate transportation, housing and healthcare.... What can our response be to these neighbors of ours?'



Show your care for God's creation!
Be sure to recycle your copy of the *Arkansas United Methodist* when you're finished reading it (or share it with a friend).

PEOPLE OF FAITH



Lyles



Guinn



McDaniel



Stewart

Lyles named distinguished alumnus at Perkins

Arkansas native the **Rev. Dr. James V. Lyles** on Feb. 2 received a 2015 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Alumni/ae Council of Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University. This annual award recognizes Perkins graduates who have demonstrated effectiveness and integrity in service to the church, continuing support and involvement in the goals of Perkins School of Theology and SMU, distinguished service in the wider community and exemplary character.

With four fellow students—John Wesley Elliott, Arthur Hawkins, Negail Rudolph Riley and Cecil Williams—Lyles helped Perkins School of Theology lead the way in the desegregation of SMU as the five became the first African Americans to be admitted as degree candidates and to graduate. Lyles earned the Master of Theology degree from Perkins School of Theology in 1955.

Lyles' ministry has included pastoring churches in Arkansas, Tennessee, Illinois, Wisconsin and California; serving as a denominational and annual conference staff executive with responsibilities in mission, evangelism and church renewal; as a military chaplain with the U.S. Air Force; and in campus ministries and teaching at the college level.

Lyles recently published a memoir, *Hard Trials, Great Tribulations: A Black Preacher's Pilgrimage from Poverty and Segregation to the 21st Century*. In addition to his degree from Perkins, he earned a B.A. from Philander Smith College, where he graduated at the head of his class with distinction, and a Doctor of Ministry degree from McCormick Theological Seminary.

Steel-Hendrix Awards for Guinn, McDaniel, Stewart

Hendrix College has announced the winners of the 2015 Steel-Hendrix Awards. The recipients include **Belinda "Be" Guinn**, Youth Minister of the Year; **Dr. Jay B. McDaniel**, the Mary and Ida Brumley Award for Religious Education; and the **Rev. Hezekiah David Stewart Jr.**, the Ethel K. Millar Award for Religion and Social Awareness.

The Youth Minister of the Year Award was created in 2003 to honor individuals who have been outstanding in their service to young people through the youth ministry of the United Methodist Church in Arkansas.

Guinn has served as youth ministry volunteer, junior high youth minister, youth ministry director, membership secretary and historian at Sardis United Methodist Church. She also serves on the church's administrative board, as well as being a life-long member of the church body.

Guinn has attended Perkins School of Youth Ministry eight of the 10 years she has served as a youth minister. Along with her local church youth ministry experience, Guinn has also served on the former South Central District Council on Youth Ministry, the Conference Council on Youth Ministry Junior High Assembly Task Force Team, and the Central District Council on Youth Ministry.

The Mary and Ida Brumley Award for Religious Education honors those who have provided distinguished service in the field of religious education. The award celebrates the legacy of Mary and Ida Brumley, long-time Christian education leaders in the North Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

McDaniel regularly speaks at Ecumenical Buddhist Society, Pulaski Heights UMC, First UMC Little Rock, First UMC Conway, Hot Springs Unitarian Church and Arkansas Governor's School.

In addition to his speaking positions, McDaniel is director of the Steel Center for the Study of Religion and Philosophy at Hendrix College, co-founder and member of the board of directors of the Center for Spirituality and Sustainability, member of the American Academy of Religion, member of the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies and founder of "Journey into Silence."

McDaniel has also served as chairperson of the Church and Society

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION & DISASTER RESPONSE NEEDS

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

Rio Bravo mission journey set for June 7-14; register by March 31

A Volunteers In Mission journey to Manos Juntas Mission in Rio Bravo, Mexico, will take place June 7-14, 2015. The Rev. Jim Benfer of First UMC Dardanelle will be the VIM team leader.

The group hopes to have at least four teams of eight people each: a medical team holding daily clinics, a team working construction, a Vacation Bible School team and a sewing team.

All ages are welcome; those under 18 must be accompanied by a parent. Participants will make their own travel plans to and from McAllen, Texas, and will assemble at the McAllen airport at 4 p.m. on Sunday, June 7, for the drive to Rio Bravo. Each missionary will need to raise a total of \$575 to cover the cost of construction supplies, medical team and VBS supplies, books for the school library, sewing machines and materials, room and board at the Manos Juntas mission, van rentals, maestros, translators, meals, VIM insurance and miscellaneous items. Visit www.okumcministries.org/VIM/VIM_Files/Section6_TeamMemberForms.pdf to download application forms. Applicants must include a copy of the photo page from their up-to-date passport. Send check and application to FUMC Dardanelle, P.O. Box 188, Dardanelle, AR 72834, by March 31. Call Benfer at 479-699-4683 with questions.

Central Arkansas tornado recovery updates and needs

The six houses being rebuilt in Mayflower are nearing completion and the foundation is complete for a seventh. Five houses in Vilonia are being rebuilt with five more in planning stages. Three houses have been rebuilt in the county. The Vilonia Disaster Recovery Alliance (VDRA) and the Interfaith and Partners Disaster Recovery Alliance (IFPA) coordinate these efforts, which are made possible by our partners in response: the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and other Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).

- If you have or know of resources for new or gently used furniture and household goods for these new homes, contact Janice Mann. Donations or significant discounts are appreciated.
 - There will be an effort to clean up more in the areas along the path of the tornado over the next couple of months prior to the April 27 anniversary date. Events to mark the day are also being planned.
 - Types of workers needed include skilled repairers and rebuilders, clean-up crews (including picking up and sorting debris, chainsaw and heavy equipment), clerical help, phone staffing and case management.
- If you or someone you know can help in any way, contact Janice Mann.

Projects in central Arkansas ready for VIM teams

Malvern: Our teams repaired the roof of this house some time back—the new damage is a delayed effect from the winter storm that dropped a tree on the house. This project includes building a storage shed; moving belongings out of the house into the storage shed; and making interior ceiling repairs.

Little Rock: Flooring and bathroom repairs are needed after a tree fell on a home's roof. Some of the damage comes from other problems with plumbing, etc. Our teams have completed the roof, ceiling and fascia repair. Three dead trees also need to be removed; seeking professionals for that task, as the trees are in precarious locations.

East End: Grace UMC needs volunteers to help with finishing drywall and painting in their new building.

Committee of First UMC Conway, member of the Animals and Theology Working Group of the Centre for the Study of Theology at the University of Essex, UK, a member of the American Academy of Religion and member of International Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies.

The Ethel K. Millar Award for Religion and Social Awareness recognizes persons whose lives have been distinguished by a passion for social justice and a commitment to the general welfare of all people. The award is given in memory of Miss Ethel K. Millar, a long-time Hendrix College librarian whose passion for peace, commitment to a variety of social organizations and work as a role model inspired Hendrix students to devote their lives to the pursuit of the highest ideals of peace and justice.

Stewart earned his Master of Divinity degree at The Interdenominational Theological Center, Turner Seminary, at Atlanta University in Georgia. He later taught at Shorter College Theological Seminary.

Stewart now serves as a pastor, teacher and lecturer in his community. For 14 years, Stewart has served as the pastor at Moody Chapel AME Church. In addition to his pastoral service, he has been involved with Mt. Nebo Church Advisory Board to College Station Boy Scouts of America, a Social Action Consultant for Little Rock Ministerial Alliance 12th District Episcopal AME church and the Interfaith Hunger Task Force, among other roles.

The award recipients will be honored at a banquet Thursday, April 23, at 5:30 p.m. A lecture by author Dr. Lauren Winner will follow the banquet. For tickets, contact the Rev. J. Wayne Clark, 501-450-1263 or clark@hendrix.edu.

New DS

(continued from page 1)

been set for the Annual Conference, and that we are ready for that challenge."

He succeeds the Rev. William O. "Bud" Reeves, who has been appointed senior pastor of First UMC Fort Smith, also effective July 1.

The Northwest District includes United Methodist congregations and ministries in 17 counties: Benton, Boone, Carroll, Crawford, Franklin, Johnson, Logan, Madison, Marion, Newton, Polk, Pope, Scott, Searcy, Sebastian, Washington and Yell.

Kaleidoscope Grief Center offers healing space, common ground for those touched by loss

BY JANE DENNIS
Special Contributor

Sadness, despair, uncertainty, even anger are among the emotions that can rain down following the death of a loved one.

The comfortable routine of life is jolted into a different pace. A heavy numbness sets in. Things change... forever.

Death is a reality of life. But that makes it no less painful or challenging for both adults and children.

After the death of her husband, Joel, in December 2013, Erica Sorrells of Maumelle realized she couldn't get through her grief alone. "I knew that we needed to seek help as soon as possible." Her "we" included five-year-old daughter Emily Kate.

A quick online search turned up Kaleidoscope Grief Center (KGC), a Methodist Family Health program designed specifically to help children and families cope with the loss of a loved one. KGC is part of the Methodist Counseling Clinic located at 1600 Aldersgate Road in Little Rock.

"Kaleidoscope Grief Center has made the difference in my life and Emily Kate's life throughout our grief journey," Sorrells says. "It has helped me connect with others who have lost loved ones and who can relate to my role as a parent or guardian while dealing with the significant loss of my spouse and a grieving child. We cry together. We laugh together. We share. And we learn

that we are not alone."

The Sorrells family is doing better emotionally, and continues to attend KGC sessions to support others in the grief process.

"At Kaleidoscope we teach families that you can find healing through sharing yourself and your story and promote hope for others, as well by your active group presence," says therapist and KGC director Janet Breen.

Because the program is focused on children, many Kaleidoscope activities are artistic in nature, providing a grieving child an outlet for creative expression. For example, the peer support group has activities that include memory boxes, balloon

Club activities that include an Easter Egg Hunt, Fall Fest and a Christmas caroling event.

Although there are many similarities between adult and child grief, there are differences as well. Both adults and children need to express grief openly and have their grief acknowledged by others. They need extra support through the grief process, assurance that it was not their fault, and assurance that they are not "going crazy," Breen says.

When it comes to differences, "children's grief is intermittent and sometimes seemingly absent, while adult grief is a continual awareness and experience of loss," Breen says. "Children's understanding of death is

Kaleidoscope Grief Center programs include:

- **Peer Support Bereavement Groups.** Grief groups meet twice a month and provide age-appropriate peer support for children ages 5-18 and their adult caregivers. Trained volunteers facilitate the ongoing groups, which offer a safe place to explore and express feelings.
- **Camp Healing Hearts.** A free 24-hour family grief camp that facilitates the grief process for bereaved children and their families through therapeutic and recreational activities. Children ages 5-18 and family members have the opportunity to reconnect, strengthen coping skills and experience fresh hope for the future. Camp Healing Hearts 2015 is coming up May 15-16 at Camp Aldersgate in Little Rock.
- **Kids Club.** Social and emotional support is offered to children ages 5-18 who are being served by Kaleidoscope Grief Center.

releases, pet therapy, grief games and candlelight memorial services. In addition, children and families in the Kaleidoscope program are eligible to take part in quarterly Kids

limited to their age and cognitive development, while adults are more mature in their understanding of death and loss."

Children's ability to remember



Erica Sorrells and her daughter Emily Kate turned to Methodist Family Health's Kaleidoscope Grief Center after the death of Joel Sorrells, Erica's husband's and Emily Kate's father.

COURTESY PHOTO

the deceased can be limited before puberty, and they may need help remembering, while adults have fully developed memories of the deceased, Breen adds. Children grow up with the loss and have to incorporate it into all their developmental milestones, while adults do not. Children may talk more openly about a death, while adults have preconceived notions about how people will respond and may not share their feelings.

"A child depends on an adult caregiver to be consistent in meeting their basic needs," Breen says, "including being an advocate for the child in times of loss and seeking grief support for them as needed."

KGC counselors and staff have been "tremendous through our healing process," Sorrells says. "The staff members are so patient with the children and have a genuine passion to help restore the brokenness that

their little hearts are feeling."

As for Emily Kate, now 6, her mother says she has transformed into "a little girl who has learned how to channel her energy and emotions into positive memories of her father. Her smile has returned and it's refreshing to see that she is healing one day at a time from Kaleidoscope Grief Center's strong support group."

To learn more about Kaleidoscope Grief Center, visit www.methodistfamily.org; email jbreen@methodistfamily.org; or call 501-537-3991.

Dennis, a former editor of the Arkansas United Methodist, serves as director of communications for Methodist Family Health, which was founded in 1899 and today provides comprehensive psychiatric and behavioral healthcare to children and families in Arkansas.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reactions to Duke Chapel controversy

I was disappointed when Duke University opened their chapel to the Muslims for prayer. We cannot conform nor compromise our belief in Jesus Christ. We cannot water down our doctrine of faith.

Paul says in Romans 12:2 "Be not conformed to this world..." John 3:36 "He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life but whoever rejects the Son will not see life. God's wrath remains on him." John 11:25-Acts 16:3 "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. Also John 5:24-16:47.

I have always loved John 17—for we future believers also—17b "I pray also for those who will believe in me."

We are to love one another and respect one's beliefs but cannot conform.

I have been in Bible studies with other faiths. We were all there for one purpose, to learn more about Jesus and God and how we could serve Him better.

I enjoy the *Arkansas United Methodist*.
Hettie Van Patten
First UMC Searcy

I applaud the decision of Duke University to honor the protests of thousands of Christians who strongly opposed the use of the Duke Chapel tower to call Muslims to prayer to Allah.

I agree that in dealing with those of other religions, we should go beyond tolerance to love, respect, and cooperate when possible, but there are limits to interaction when we start

promoting worship of a false god.

As a Christian, I accept the Bible as the fully inspired Word of the only God in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There is no other beside Him. The Duke Chapel was dedicated to the worship of this one God and has always lifted up the name of Jesus Christ as the divine Savior of the world. Muslims do not exalt Jesus as divine Lord and Savior. In fact, their writings say that Jesus as a lesser prophet will return with their "messiah" Al-Mahdi, and will seek to convert others to Islam.

The scriptures clearly show us the consequences of bringing syncretism into the Temple in Jerusalem before the exile, and during Jesus' earthly ministry.

Duke Chapel and the Christian community on campus shouldn't compromise

on this doctrine.

Joallen Moose
First UMC Siloam Springs

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.

Annual Conference-related information now available online

Visit <http://ac2015.arumc.org> for a number of documents relating to this year's Annual Conference:

- Petitions and resolutions forms (due by March 15)
- Denman Evangelism Award applications (due by March 16)
- Self-nomination form for the delegation to the 2016 General and Jurisdictional Conferences (due by April 15)
- Forms already completed by self-nominees
- List of Hot Springs lodging options
- Vendor application packet

More forms will be added as they become available.

Registration for Annual Conference 2015 opens May 1 at <http://ac2015.arumc.org>.

A Call to Spiritual Revival



Beyond! Conference equips children's ministers

Beyond! keynote speaker Mark Burrows addresses some attendees of the event at Mount Sequoyah.

COURTESY PHOTO



More than 80 participants took part in Beyond!, a children's ministry conference sponsored by the Arkansas Conference Council on Children's Ministries, held Jan. 29-31, 2015 at Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center in Fayetteville. Attendees came from across the Arkansas Conference, as well as from churches in the Great Plains Conference (Kansas and Nebraska), Southwest Texas, Texas and Louisiana.

Participants learned about

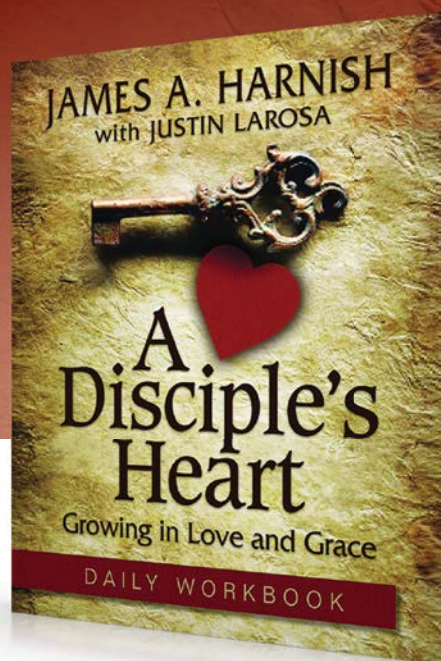
various aspects of children's ministry, including family worship from keynote speaker Mark Burrows, who provided ideas that attendees could take back to their local churches and ministry settings. Workshops covered a variety of topics from curriculum to special needs ministries to missions. The Rev. Mackey Yokem, director of mission and ministry for the Arkansas Conference, presented a message on Saturday morning and shared about the Arkansas

Conference mission plan, as well as served Communion with the help of children who were present; and the Rev. Carl Palmer of Central UMC Fayetteville led worship through song. Burrows led the closing service on Saturday afternoon, which featured a children's choir doing a hand jive call to worship.

For information on other children's ministry opportunities, visit the Arkansas Conference Children's Ministry website, <http://kidz.arumc.org>.

A Transformed Heart is a Work in Progress

John Wesley was really all about the "spiritual journey"—taking steps and continually walking a path that transforms the heart and helps us grow into the likeness of Christ. This six-week study for small groups or a churchwide experience reinterprets Wesley's idea of "Christian perfection," helping participants develop a pattern of daily Scripture reading, prayer, and personal reflection.



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2015 WILLSON LECTURE AND STEEL-HENDRIX AWARDS



Dr. Lauren F. Winner

Dr. Winner is the author of numerous books, including *Girl Meets God* and *Mudhouse Sabbath*. Her recent memoir *Still: Notes on a Mid-faith Crisis* has been named a "Best Book of 2012" in the religion category by *Publishers Weekly* and a 2013 Book Award winner in the spirituality category by *Christianity Today*.

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The 30th Steel-Hendrix Awards

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and the Reverend Hezekiah David Stewart, Jr.

Banquet & Awards at 5:30 p.m. • Worsham Performance Hall

The banquet cost is \$20 if registered before April 14 or \$25 at the door. For more information or to register, contact Rev. J. Wayne Clark at 501-450-1263 or clark@hendrix.edu



\$60,000 UMFA grant helps refurbish three United Methodist camps



**ARUMC Camping Ministries
Camps & Retreat Centers**

The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (UMFA) announced in a Feb. 10 news release that it has provided a \$60,000 grant to refurbish camping facilities at Shoal Creek Camp, Bear Creek Camp and Wayland Spring Camp through the Outdoor Ministries Committee of the Arkansas Conference.

A 2013 strategic planning report by Run River Enterprises, commissioned by the Arkansas Conference and funded by UMFA, recommended a coordinated effort for outdoor camping ministries that included all five of the Conference camps. Camp Tanako and Mount Eagle Retreat Center, which have year-round staffing, were in good shape. But the three other camps needed work to meet American Camping Association standards.

“Our UMFA Grant Committee is happy to follow up the Run River report with funding that will allow

these three camps to meet the needs of Arkansas Conference outdoor ministries,” said Jim Argue, Jr., UMFA president.

Shoal Creek United Methodist Camp near Dardanelle, Bear Creek United Methodist Camp near Marianna and Wayland Spring United Methodist Camp near Imboden all previously served as district camps in the North Arkansas Conference (which included approximately half of the current Arkansas Conference). The Run River report determined steps that needed to be taken to prepare the camps for more frequent and fruitful use.

“Contractors were identified, the work was started, and we expect it to be completed in March,” said the Rev. Mackey Yokem, executive director for mission and ministry with the Arkansas Conference. “The camping ministry targets a critical part of our mission field—children

and youth.”

The Rev. Cleton Vaughan, a member of the Outdoor Ministries Committee, said the UMFA grant is essential for outdoor and camping ministries of United Methodists in Arkansas. He explained that each of the local campsite boards could not finance the improvements without the generosity of the Foundation.

“We can’t develop ministries in the smaller camps until they are updated,” he said. “By late spring, all five of our camping sites will be ready.”

“The Conference values the support, insight and generosity of the Foundation,” said Yokem. “Our partnership with UMFA is so rich and deep that Arkansas Methodism is blessed beyond description.”

The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas, one of the largest such foundations in the country, manages \$133 million in endowment funds and other charitable assets that benefit local churches and other United Methodist ministries. UMFA is responsible for over 730 funds that support United Methodist ministries.

Lonoke church’s UMCOR involvement leads to gift of mowers



Concord United Methodist Church Lonoke has developed a new enthusiasm for mission, particularly surrounding Sager Brown Depot, part of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). The depot in Baldwin, La., ships emergency relief supplies around the world in the wake of disasters; church teams help prepare those supplies and maintain the facility.

Last July, 16 members of Concord UMC Lonoke traveled to Sager Brown, and 20 members of all ages have signed up for this July. “I’m a firm believer that a mission trip is one of the greatest things you can do for the laity,” said the Rev. Larry Hughes, the church’s pastor. “They really got fired up.”

Two of the men who traveled to Sager Brown last summer spent time mowing the acreage there. They noticed the equipment was aging, and came back telling their fellow church members about a potential need for a new mower. The United Methodist Men began fundraising, and Hughes talked with Sager Brown about what equipment would be the most practical.

On Jan. 26, representatives from Concord UMC Lonoke drove to UMCOR Sager Brown Depot to deliver two riding mowers with four-year extended warranties for maintenance, plus a check for \$1,000. Pictured at the presentation are, from left, Jimmy Eucope, manager of maintenance and grounds for Sager Brown; Leroy Akridge of Concord UMC; Elizabeth Graham, director of operations for Sager Brown; Lynn Sample of Concord UMC; and Alvin Collins, groundsworker for Sager Brown.

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Monetary donations may be sent to: Methodist Family Health Foundation, P.O. Box 56050, Little Rock, AR 72215 (put “Get Up & Give” in memo line).

MethodistFamily.org

For information: contact Jane Dennis at 501.906.4210 or jdennis@methodistfamily.org.



200K Reasons (continued from page 1)

year. These goals will be shared as soon as they are reviewed by the Extended Cabinet.

The task force also is talking with the Rev. Maxine Allen and the Conference Board of Global Ministries to coordinate efforts involving the fight against childhood hunger as part of Ingathering 2015.

Whitney plans to use social media extensively to share the message with youth and young adults.

“It is going to be very exciting to be able to connect United Methodists of all ages in so many ways,” said Whitney, “With the help of the Center for Technology, we’re going to have a strong online presence where anyone will be able to learn about the progress toward reducing childhood hunger in Arkansas and how they can help.”

Whitney added that a video produced by the CFT will be launched online and shown at events such as Annual Conference.

Connect with 200K Reasons

Some connection points for local churches will include:

- **Resource Room:** The task force has acquired space at Faith UMC Little Rock for a resource room. Whitney and Caldwell envision the room as a place for materials and resources to be shared and as an educational center, perhaps for programs on how to start a community garden or Cooking Matters.
- **Website:** www.200KReasons.arumc.org—a website devoted to sharing activities, toolkits on community gardens, feeding and backpack programs, recommended reading, Bible studies, volunteer and educational opportunities. Caldwell is finalizing a county-by-county resource guide.
- **Facebook:** [Facebook.com/200KReasons](https://www.facebook.com/200KReasons)—this page will be where local churches can share stories and images of how they are fighting childhood hunger. Friends of the page will also be able to tap into resources and volunteer opportunities and will hear about the strides the 200K initiative is making.
- **Twitter:** #200KReasons—use the hashtag #200KReasons to connect on Twitter for posts about what’s happening live at gleanings, food drives and more.
- **Text Updates:** To receive text messages about 200K Reasons volunteer opportunities and updates, text “200KReasons” to 888777.

Here are just a few ways United Methodists of Arkansas have worked recently to help feed their hungry neighbors:



Work as worship for ‘Super Bold Sunday’: Lakewood UMC North Little Rock spent Sunday, Feb. 1 working in partnership with The Pack Shack, a Rogers-based non-profit that helps provide food for hungry Arkansans. The Pack Shack hosts parties where crowds of people pack thousands of delicious, nutritious meals that go straight to local organizations that feed the hungry. After an abbreviated 30-minute worship service, participants moved en masse to Wesley Hall, where The Pack Shack’s tables and equipment were ready to go! The energy was contagious, with all ages working together to assemble the meals. The end result: 16,700 meals for Gardner UMC North Little Rock’s Food Pantry in less than two hours.

—submitted by Joseph Roitz



College students pitch in: The University of Arkansas Wesley Foundation United Methodist campus ministry on Feb. 12 worked alongside other Fayetteville campus ministries to pack more than 20,000 meals to stock food pantries in northwest Arkansas. Like Lakewood UMC North Little Rock’s event pictured at left, this project relied on resources from The Pack Shack.

—submitted by Holly Daste



Honoring a memory by providing help to others: Dontaye and Dorminita Frazier, members of St. Mark UMC Pine Bluff, in late 2014 delivered an abundance of canned goods, dried food products, and toiletries given through the newly established Annie Mae Frazier Foundation. Because of this extravagant giving, the congregation was able to bless several families in need in Pine Bluff. The church worked in partnership with House of Levi, a non-profit organization providing social services to families in the Jefferson County area, to share these gifts with the community.

The new foundation was named for the Fraziers’ grandmother, who died in October 2014 at age 89 and was known for her passion for helping others.

—submitted by the Rev. Edna Morgan

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The Center for Technology is confident that Datamax can bring complete and cost-effective solutions to local churches and other entities in the Conference. If you are in the market for any of the services that Datamax can provide, contact Datamax representative Josh Patterson at 501-603-3000 or jpatterson@datamax-lr.com.

—Mark Epperson, director,
ARUMC Center for Technology

Training teaches service members to save lives



U.S. Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Ronald Feeser from the 70th ISR Wing, an elder in the Arkansas Conference, instructs a class during Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training Jan. 16 in Argonne Hills Chapel. The course is held monthly and teaches participants how to help people struggling with suicidal thoughts and apply those skills in mock situations.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. DILLON WHITE

BY STAFF SGT. DILLON WHITE
70th Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing Public Affairs

Editor's Note: This story features the Rev. Ronald Feeser, an elder in the Arkansas Conference serving as a U.S. Air Force chaplain.

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md.—Every month, the Fort Meade garrison hosts Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training to increase safety on post and provide participants a lifelong, lifesaving skill. For those interested, the free two-day course is a phone call away and open to all branches, military and civilian.

“This is the best suicide prevention program out of all the

different programs I’ve ever seen,” said Marissa Pena, Fort Meade garrison Suicide Prevention Program manager. “I’ve been a social worker for 15 years and I’ve seen a lot of different programs.”

Pena hosted the first ASIST course on post in August of 2013, with an initial training course for instructors. From there, those initial instructors have helped teach the course.

“It’s amazing,” she said. “This program is working and making a difference. I encourage people to come. ASSIST makes it easy for anyone to be that caregiver. It’s like a CPR class; hopefully you won’t need it but if you do, you can help someone.”

Among participants at the

January course was U.S. Air Force Capt. Lee Feldhausen, from the 70th ISR Wing.

“This far surpasses what you can learn sitting at a computer,” he said, during a group intervention simulation session. “It’s more than just a workplace skillset, it is a life skillset. At any point in your life you may be involved in a situation where you can fall back on the training that we received over the last two days and potentially save somebody’s life.”

Feldhausen said he was skeptical about the training prior to attending but that it was much better than he had expected. He intends to share his experience in the course with his squadron to increase awareness about suicide and how to prevent it.

“If anybody is slightly interested in participating with the program, they should,” he said. “Every unit should be interested in the program.”

Among the trainers of the two-day course was U.S. Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Ronald Feeser, from the 70th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing.

“On day one we spend the morning talking about what experiences and attitudes toward suicide do we bring with us in the door; you never really fully check your attitudes and experiences when someone comes in,” he said. “So we help people connect and be aware of those—so if you have certain thoughts about it you know how

those may influence or affect your ability to help somebody.”

During the afternoon, the needs of a person struggling with suicide are discussed so caregivers can meet them. The course’s second day includes mock interventions with the students.

Participants put the lessons into action during the afternoon of the second day in scenarios. Students pair up to practice their intervention skills as others watch. At the end of the scenario, classmates give one another feedback.

Feeser said this hands-on application sets the training apart from other suicide prevention courses.

“We’re constantly reinforcing things,” Feeser said. “When you sit in that seat and you apply it you say, ‘OK, what do I say now? Now what do I do?’ It forces you into using those tools and realizing how you would react in that situation.”

Feeser said knowing that more service members in the community are comfortable with discussing suicide and alert to the signs of someone struggling with thoughts about suicide makes him feel like his community is safer.

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Apportionments (from page 1)

of their pastors’ pensions directly; they will pay 75 percent directly this year, and the full amount will be paid directly by the local church beginning in 2016.

While this change lowers apportionments, some churches see an overall increase in expenses because their pastor’s pension wasn’t fully covered by their apportioned giving under the previous system.

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) will review the details of the payout at its next meeting in preparation for building the 2016 Conference budget.

CFA aims for a tithe-based budget, in which 10 percent of a local church’s operating income supports ministry at the district, conference, jurisdictional and general church levels of the denomination, and the local church keeps 90 percent of its offering for ministries of its choosing.

Some churches pay more than is required of them by the apportioned giving formula. The Center for Administrative Services credits this extra mile giving toward the balance of churches that were unable to pay their apportioned giving in full. For a list of churches that made extra mile gifts in 2014, see the online version of this story at www.arumc.org/category/headlines.


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The First United Methodist Church of Batesville is actively seeking to hire a church organ accompanist. Interested persons may contact Teresa Brown, Administrator, in the office Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. by phone, 870-793-3803. Resumes may be submitted via email to fumcbatesville@gmail.com for consideration by the Staff Parish Relations Committee of First UMC Batesville. A brief job description is available to interested persons.

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For more information, contact Rev. Melissa Malinoski, mmalinoski@MemphisSeminary.edu, 901.334.5857.



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COMING UP

March

Nominations open for Denman Evangelism Awards through March 16

The Arkansas Annual Conference is now accepting nominations for the Harry Denman Evangelism Award for Clergy, Laity and Youth.

The Harry Denman Evangelism Award recognizes a person whose life and ministry exemplifies the teaching of Christ and the Great Commission. Recipients of these awards, nominated by individuals, churches or districts and selected by the Annual Conference, live their call to "Offer Them Christ" daily as modeled by Dr. Harry Denman, founder of the Foundation for Evangelism that sponsors these awards.

To learn more about the award or to download nomination forms, visit <http://ac2015.arumc.org>. Send nominations to Rev. Carlton Cross at cncross@salemumc-benton.com or 1647 Salem Road, Benton, AR 72019-8344. Nominations must be received no later than March 16.

Food for the Heart and Soul at Mount Eagle March 26-28; register by March 20

For anyone who wants to learn new cooking skills, create healthy recipes and make a stronger case for cooking as a spiritual practice, Mount Eagle Retreat Center near Clinton, Ark., is hosting Food for the Heart and Soul from Thursday, March 26 through Saturday, March 28.

Retreat leaders include Susan Jett, a professional chef, Mount Eagle staff and dedicated United Methodist Lay Servant; the Rev. Mary Jane Cole, an ordained deacon in the Arkansas Conference, trained spiritual director and lover of cooking; and Joy Rockenbach, Ginny McMurray and Linda Ball, lovers of cooking and retreat planners and organizers.

Space is limited to 16 participants. The registration fee includes lodging, meals and kitchen supplies. To learn more, contact Cole at mjcole@arumc.org, or download the registration form and event description at www.mounteagle.org/events.htm. Registration deadline is March 20.

April

Nominations for Steel-Hendrix, Youth Minister of the Year awards due April 1

Hendrix College is now accepting nominations for the annual Steel-Hendrix Awards. The Mary and Ira A. Brumley Award recognizes outstanding religious education, and the Ethel K. Millar Award honors outstanding religion and social awareness.

Hendrix is also accepting nominations for the Youth Minister of the Year Award. Full- or part-time, paid or unpaid youth workers who have exemplified outstanding leadership are eligible. Nominees should be a member of and work in a United Methodist Church in Arkansas; must be

involved with the connectional system and participate in district and conference youth events; and be intentional on making disciples of Jesus Christ through missions, Bible studies, outreach, evangelism and Christian fellowship. Nominees must also have participated in some type of continuing education in the area of youth ministry.

Recipients will be selected by the Steel-Hendrix Committee, and all three awards will be presented in the 2015-2016 academic year. All nominations should include a letter detailing the individual's career highlights and reason for nomination. Send nominations to the Rev. J. Wayne Clark, Hendrix College, 1600 Washington, Conway, AR 72032, or to clark@hendrix.edu, by April 1.

VBS mini-grants available; applications due April 10

Need some additional funding for your congregation's Vacation Bible School this summer? Apply for a VBS Mini-Grant. Two VBS mini-grants of \$200 each will be awarded in all five districts of the Arkansas Conference. Grants are awarded on the basis of need, and are to be used for curriculum and/or supplies for a local congregation's 2015 Vacation Bible School.

The grant application deadline is April 10; recipients will be announced April 20; and funding will be in the mail to the 10 grant recipients by May 1.

For information about mini-grants, including the application form and planning resources, visit <http://kidz.arumc.org/vacation-bible-school-2015>.

Crisis counseling workshop at Hendrix April 11

Hendrix College on Saturday, April 11 will offer a free workshop on crisis counseling led by Dr. Terry Parsons (www.drterryparsons.com). Some United Methodists of Arkansas may know Terry from his work with Perkins School of Youth Ministry.

This informative and engaging workshop will equip participants with essential tools to effectively minister and counsel in crucial times. Topics will include depression, suicide prevention, drug and alcohol abuse, cutting, bullying and others raised by attendees. The event will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Hendrix's Student Life and Technology Center, and lunch will be provided.

Though the workshop and lunch are free, registration by April 6 is required. To register, contact the Rev. J. Wayne Clark at 501-450-1263 or clark@hendrix.edu.

Creative Worship seminar with Midnight Oil Productions' Jason Moore April 25

Jason Moore of Midnight Oil Productions will share ways to make worship more relevant and exciting—all without breaking the bank—in Creative Worship, a day-long seminar sponsored by the Arkansas Conference Center for Clergy & Laity Excellence in Leadership (CCLEL). The Creative Worship seminar will be held at First UMC Hot Springs on Saturday, April 25, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

While audiovisual technology is in place for many congregations, there's a big difference between technology and culture. The real story in worship now is not the use of screens, but how screens and other forms of creativity come together to create powerful God experiences. This seminar teaches techniques and methodologies that churches of any size can use to make big things happen in worship and beyond. Many of the techniques are suitable for small churches.

Creative Worship invites participants to explore what happens next with the latest thinking on culture, art, teams and technology. Learn how to create worship that is deep, meaningful, memorable and that makes disciples.

Tickets are \$10 per person, or \$25 for a group of three from the same church. To register, visit <http://arumc.org/events/creative-worship-workshop>. Registration deadline is April 20.

May

Lay Servant Academy at Mount Sequoyah set for May 13-16

Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center in Fayetteville will host the next Lay Servant Academy, May 13-16, 2015. Sponsored by Arkansas UMC Lay Servant Ministries, the academy provides opportunities to equip laity in areas of Scripture, doctrine, organization and ministries of the church.

Certified Lay Servants are leadership among the laity who work to be better equipped for service. They serve the local church or charge in any way in which their witness or leadership inspires the laity to deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship. The basic course serves as a platform, and the advanced courses build upon it.

All students must order their own materials through cokesbury.com and complete two hours of required homework before arrival to successfully complete the class.

This Academy will offer the basic course, as well as advanced courses on leading worship, evangelism, preaching and United Methodist heritage. Instructors for this academy include the Rev. Pat Bodenhamer, Jodi Cataldo, Liz Curtis, Susan Jett, the Rev. Shane Pair and George Rhoades. To learn more or to register, visit www.mountsequoyah.org.

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OBITUARIES

BETHLEHEM

Jerry Dale Nipper

The Rev. Jerry Dale Nipper, 79, passed away Jan. 25, 2015 at his home in the Bethlehem community east of Cabot.

He was born in the Antioch community April 12, 1935. He graduated from Cabot High School in 1953 and attended Hendrix College. He married Jeaneane on Nov. 4, 1955.

He was devoted to God and his family. After surviving a major heart attack at the age of 59, he entered the ministry as a licensed local pastor in the United Methodist Church, pastoring the Hebron and Providence United Methodist congregations. Bethlehem UMC, where he spent his retirement, was also his home church since childhood.



Jerry Nipper

He was well known in the community as a man of love, gentleness and kindness. He continued a small back flow business after retiring from Arkansas Automatic Sprinklers, and saw this as a ministry, as well.

One of his greatest joys was working on "The Christmas Road to Bethlehem" annual display on the road leading to Bethlehem UMC; it marked its 27th year this past Christmas.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Frances Jeaneane Nipper; his parents, Rotha and Elmer Nipper; and his brother, Lawrence Nipper. He is survived by his children, Brenda and Rickey Phillips, Pamela Nipper, and Lisa and Kelly Brooks; grandchildren Christy and Mark Hollingshead and Rickey Phillips, Jr.; great-grandchildren Ella and Everett Hollingshead; brothers and sisters Willene and Charles Nipper, Martha Sue Plummer, Linda and Jerry Stevens and

Kathy and Larry Nipper; and a host of nieces and nephews.

A funeral service was held Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2015, at Bethlehem United Methodist Church, with burial in Salem Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the Bethlehem UMC Building Fund, 1281 Bethlehem Rd., Austin, AR 72007.

CONWAY

Joseph J. Horton II

Joseph J. Horton II, 78, of Conway passed away Jan. 25, 2015.

He was born in Memphis, Tenn., on Nov. 7, 1936, to the late Joseph Julian and Nina (Williams) Horton. He earned his Associate's degree from Lon Morris College, a Bachelor's degree in history from New Mexico State, and a Ph.D. in economics from Southern Methodist University.

Joseph served as the dean of business at multiple universities and most recently worked at the University of Central Arkansas as an economics professor. He had also attended a professional meeting on every continent except for Antarctica.

He is survived by his loving wife of 50 years, the Rev. Linda Langley Horton, a retired local pastor who served at Wye, Greenbrier, Grace UMC Conway and Wesley UMC Conway; their three children, Joseph Julian Horton III and his wife, Joanna; David Douglas Horton and his wife, Stacey; and Anne Gaponenko and her husband, Vadim; nine grandchildren; one brother, Dr. Douglas Horton; and numerous friends.

A funeral service was held at Wesley United Methodist



Joseph Horton

Church Conway on Thursday, Jan. 29, 2015.

LITTLE ROCK

Margaret Rose Ault

Margaret Rose Black Ault, 84, of Little Rock, passed away Jan. 30, 2015.

She was born Sept. 28, 1930 in Floresville, Texas, to Robert Roy Black and Ina Mae Woolsey Black

A member of Asbury United Methodist Church Little Rock, she served as an administrative assistant in the church at the local church level; in the District Office under numerous district superintendents; and completing her 33-year career as administrative assistant to Bishop Richard Wilke.

She is survived by her husband, James B. Ault; two daughters, the Rev. Pat Ault-Duell and her husband, Tim, of Salina, Kan., and Nanci Kaye Nunnally of Little Rock; a son, Jim Allen Ault and his wife, Marcia, of Seattle, Wash.; a sister, Sue Wright of Grapeland, Texas; grandchildren Charlie Ault-Duell (DeMay Grunden) of Salina, Margi Ault-Duell of Wichita, Kan., Parker Ault of Belize, Hunter Ault and Robin Nunnally, both of Seattle; and a great-grandson, Solomon Ault-Duell of Salina.

Services were held Monday, Feb. 2 at Asbury United Methodist Church, officiated by the Rev. Mary Hilliard. Interment followed at Pinecrest Memorial Park in Alexander. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Asbury United Methodist Church, 1700 Napa Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR 72212.



Margaret Ault

A message for alumni and friends of the U of A Wesley Foundation: Join the U of A Wesley story

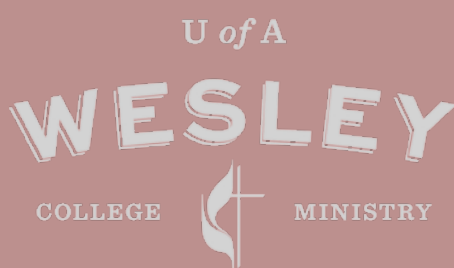
The U of A Wesley college students in Fayetteville are making a difference and spreading God's love and compassion, and we'd love for you to join our story!

The U of A Wesley is growing into its future as a new college ministry partnership of Central United Methodist Church and the Arkansas Conference, and we are looking to rebuild our Alumni and Friends database. We are eager to reconnect with you and others from the U of A Wesley family who have a heart for what God is doing at the University of Arkansas.

So that we may share our continued story of helping students connect, grow and bear fruit in their walk with Christ, we are launching a new Alumni & Friends monthly e-newsletter. Sign up online at uawesley.com for updates from Wesley and the Razorback Nation.

Visit www.uawesley.com and scroll down to the purple and orange rectangle on the right-hand side of the page, "Sign up for our Alumni & Friends Newsletter." Click on it and fill out the online form provided. Don't forget to hit the red "send" rectangle at the bottom once you've finished. You will then be added to our newsletter list so our monthly e-newsletter will arrive straight to your email inbox.

Help us reconnect you with the U of A Wesley and its ministry at the University of Arkansas. Join our story!



United Methodist Museum of Arkansas announces new hours

The United Methodist Museum of the Arkansas Conference (UMMAC) is now open **every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**, for those who prefer to drop by rather than schedule a visit in advance. The museum is located at 723 Center Street, on

the lower level of First UMC Little Rock.

The UMMAC still offers advance appointments on other days for viewing and for guided tours. To schedule an appointment, book a tour or request information about the

museum, call curator Linda Baker at 501-680-1089.

Stay up to date on museum happenings by joining the new UMMAC Facebook group—visit <http://goo.gl/cvNF97> or search for "Arkansas United Methodist Museum" on Facebook.

New scholarship available for Arkansas UM young women

Applications for a new \$3,000 scholarship for Arkansas United Methodist young women are now being accepted.

The scholarship, named for Nancy McDonald Wood, was established and funded last fall through the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas. Wood, a lifelong Methodist and former high school teacher, hopes scholarship winners will become strong lay leaders in United Methodist churches after completing their college education. Any young

woman who has been a member of an Arkansas United Methodist Church and has demonstrated a commitment to historic Methodist values is a candidate for the scholarship. She must also have shown sound academic ability, leadership qualities and exceptional character. She should have been accepted by an accredited college and plan to begin classes the following fall semester.

Interested applicants may obtain a copy of the Nancy McDonald Wood Scholarship application through their local United Methodist youth minister, or from Michelle Moore, Conference youth and young adult ministry coordinator, at michelle.moore@arumc.org.

Completed applications should be mailed to Nancy M. Wood, P.O. Box 7404, Little Rock, AR 72217 and postmarked by March 15, 2015. Finalists for the scholarship will be invited to attend a NMW Scholarship luncheon early in April.



Youth from Bryant church receives nationwide volunteerism award

COURTESY PHOTO

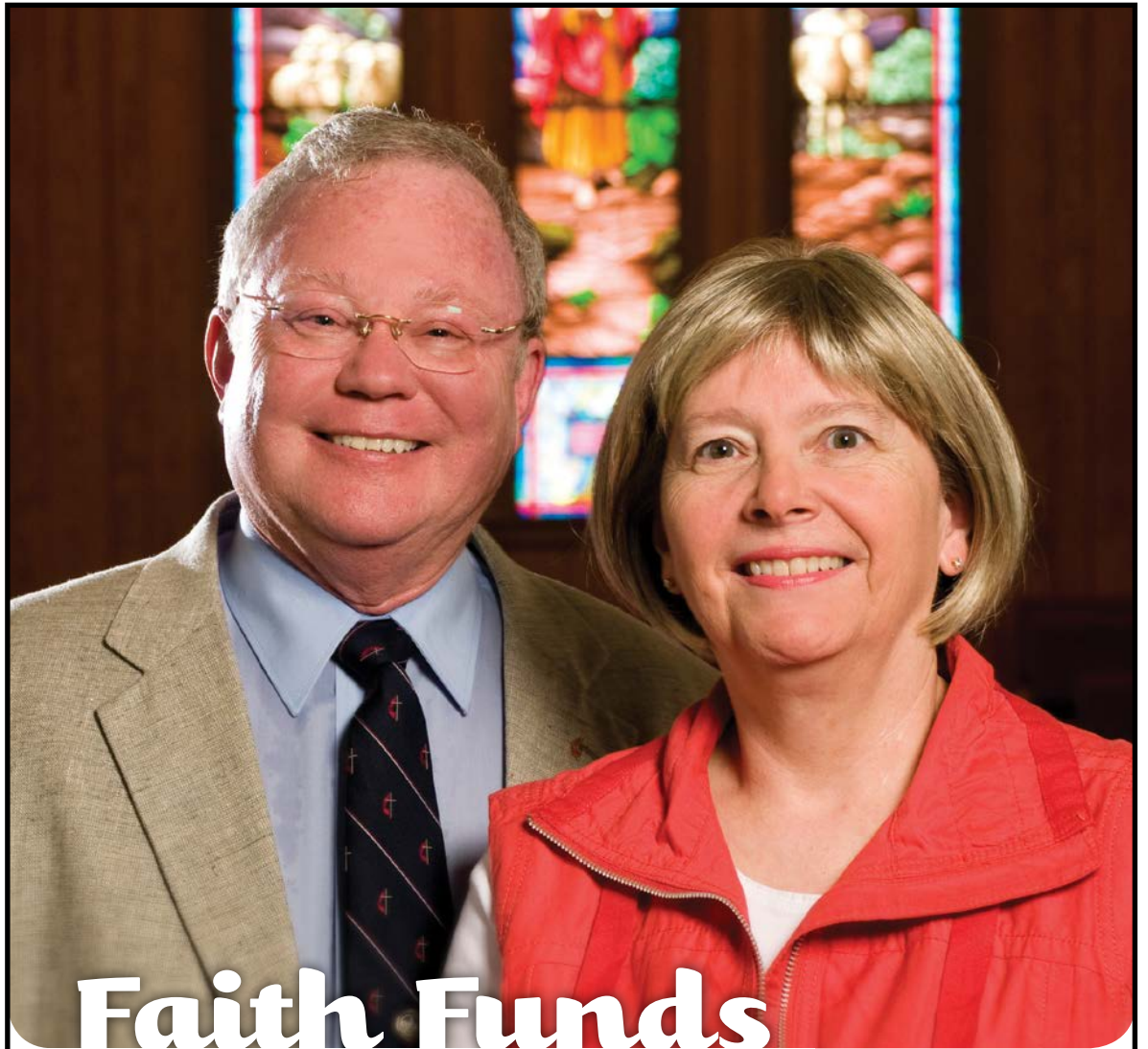
Colbe Cortez, 12, a member of First UMC Bryant, was named one of Arkansas' top two youth volunteers of 2015 by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism.

The seventh-grader used his Christmas gift money to rent a plot in First UMC Bryant's community garden, then grew vegetables that he sold to benefit Our House, a shelter for working homeless families.

"In talking with my parents and a family friend about my decision, it was suggested that instead of just giving my Christmas money to a charity, I could invest that money and try to double my investment to help those in need," Colbe said.

Colbe rented a garden plot, then bought seeds, plants and tools he had "no idea how to use." At first, he doubted he could coax food out of the ground. But with the help of his family, he readied the soil and planted his vegetables, watered, fertilized and pulled weeds. A few weeks later, he harvested his first crop. Each Sunday, he sold vegetables at a church produce stand, and by the end of the summer, he was able to present the director of Our House with \$584.06 from his vegetable sales. He plans to double the size of his garden next summer.

For information on all of this year's honorees, visit www.nassp.org/spirit.



Faith Funds

Peace of Mind

Rev. Tony and Barbara Hill want to make the transfer of their estate to their four children and five grandchildren as easy as possible during what they know will be a difficult time in the future. "I've seen lots of families torn apart because there was no will, and we've seen for ourselves the difference it makes," said Tony, senior pastor at Osceola United Methodist Church.

"My mother did it the right way. She had a will, a living will and plans for her burial," said Barbara. "It made things much easier in a time of grief." Barbara and Tony want to do the same, and a tool that is helping them gather information to work with an attorney on their estate plan is the will planning document from the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas. The will planner is available online at www.umfa.org. A free printed will planner is available by calling Janet Marshall at the Foundation at 501-664-8632 or by emailing her at jmarshall@umfa.org.

"Using the will planner made us think about a lot of things we would not have considered," Tony said. "We've talked about how to make the division of our property fair for our children and what charitable gifts we may be able to make."



The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas

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The Last Stop on Your Life's Odyssey.

Announcing the opening of Hendrix Memorial Garden – a columbarium designed to be the final resting place for individuals and families who feel a spiritual connection with Hendrix College. Located next to Greene Chapel in the heart of the Hendrix campus, our Memorial Garden is as convenient for family and friends as it is peaceful and beautiful.

Pricing is lower than you'd expect and amenities are included. For more information, contact Hendrix Chaplain Rev. J. Wayne Clark by phone at (501) 450-1263 or email him at clark@hendrix.edu.

Advance planning for any journey makes good sense. So contact us today.



1600 Washington Ave
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www.hendrix.edu/memorialgarden