

# The Arkansas United Methodist

LIVING OUR FAITH

August 2019 | Volume 167, Issue 8

## Saving History at Emmet UMC



**Tapestry  
Home**

Goshen UMC's  
Free Health Clinic

**The Shoe  
That Grows**



# UMFA Grant Aids Camp Tanako

By Haley Walker Klein  
*UMFA Contributor*

**K**im Carter recently found herself in dire need of a new truck. Carter, Executive Director of Camp Tanako, was forced to haul away the camp's 1992 Chevy S-10 work truck. "The truck, nicknamed 'Lil' Blue,' would be able to tell some stories if it could talk," said Carter. "The camp staff used it for everything, including hauling trash and helping with the major upkeep our grounds required. We have generations of Tanako campers with memories of Lil' Blue."

Camp Tanako, located on Lake Catherine near Hot Springs, provides children, youth, and adults with outdoor experiences to grow in their faith through nature. The extensive Tanako facilities include camping and cabin areas, a conference center, and chapel, all which create opportunities to encounter the Holy Spirit in a beautiful setting.

After the old truck finally gave out, Camp Tanako staff contacted supporters in hopes of locating a reliable vehicle. "We were busy preparing for summer camp [when the truck died] and resorted to using personal vehicles," Carter said. "We were moving trash around in a Honda CR-V. It was not a fun experience."

The Rev. Mackey Yokem, Director of Leadership Ministries and Grant Administration for The United Methodist Foundation, heard about the camp's need and encouraged them to apply for a grant offered by the Foundation. "Camp Tanako serves a unique role in the development of young disciples in our Annual Conference," said Yokem. "The Foundation supports the work done by the Tanako Board, staff, and volunteers in creating an Outdoor Ministry that leads our young people to an appreciation of God at work in the world." The Foundation's Grant Committee awarded Camp Tanako funding to cover the full price of a new truck.

"We are just overwhelmed by this gift and the Foundation's continued support," said Carter. "Without this truck, we would not be able to operate our ministry."

Camp Tanako's grant was made possible through financial gifts invested with the Foundation. For more information about The United Methodist Foundation and how you can support grant ministries, visit [umfa.org](http://umfa.org) or call 501-664-8632.



Camp Tanako campers and their new camp truck. || Photo provided by UMFA

## HELPING ATTORNEYS CALLED TO CHURCH WORK

Michelle Ator, an attorney at Friday Eldredge & Clark, LLP, and a member of Asbury UMC in Little Rock, is Chancellor for the Arkansas Conference, providing pro bono legal assistance.

"I do volunteer legal work that is different from my practice representing doctors and hospitals in litigation," Michelle said. "It could be about real estate claims or human resources issues. The same goes for the five district chancellors and many attorneys throughout the state who serve their local churches."

That's why it's important that United Methodist attorneys get together each year for the UMFA-sponsored Lawyers Conference, which provides Continuing Legal Education credits to those who attend. Conference education makes sure attorneys who volunteer for their church are well prepared to do the best possible job.

"Another reason for the conference is to minister to the attorneys. Lawyers often have hard jobs, helping others to resolve problems and conflicts in difficult situations. The lawyers who attend benefit from encouragement and support they receive from others there," said Michelle.

The 2019 event will be held in September. Contact Haley Klein at [hklein@umfa.org](mailto:hklein@umfa.org) if you are a United Methodist attorney interested in participating.



**The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas**

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Caleb Hennington, Digital Content Editor

Amy Ezell, Director of The Center for Communication

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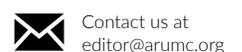
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## STORY IDEA?



# It Doesn't Take A Village to Help A Village

By Caleb Hennington  
*Digital Content Editor, [@arumceditor](#)*

**T**his past month, I've had the privilege of hearing the stories of small churches doing big things.

In Emmet, Arkansas -- a tiny community between Hope and Prescott -- a small congregation at the Emmet United Methodist Church seeks to save their historic church building from collapsing under the weight of severe structural damage.

The congregation -- made up of no more than 10 people on any given Sunday -- needs hundreds of thousands of dollars to save their church, but they've already raised a quarter of what's needed in less than a year. They are a dedicated group of faithful Methodists who are seeking to save a church that means so much to so many people.

East of Fayetteville, in rural Goshen, Arkansas, the Goshen United Methodist Church is serving their community in ways that even our largest Methodist churches have struggled to do. With fewer than 50 regular attendees, the church has managed to open a 24/7 food pantry, a blessing box, a community garden, and a free health clinic. And they are still searching for more ways to give their time, energy and commodities to their community.

In the Bible, we see countless examples of God using individuals or a small group of people to carry out monumental, sometimes impossible, tasks.

Think about Joseph, David, Esther, and Jesus; what do these people have in common? They were seemingly ordinary people who God used in order to accomplish huge, life-changing,



history-altering things.

In the Arkansas Conference, we have a lot of small, rural churches. These churches should not be forgotten in favor of churches with more people, more money, popular clergy, or more youth.

Our churches with 50 people can accomplish just as many amazing, outstanding things for the Lord as our churches with 500 people.

So when you're reading the stories this month from Goshen and Emmet, and stories from our larger churches like Central Rogers and First Bentonville, remember that every one of them, no matter the size, can do big things.

It doesn't take a village to help a village.

# What Words Will I Choose?

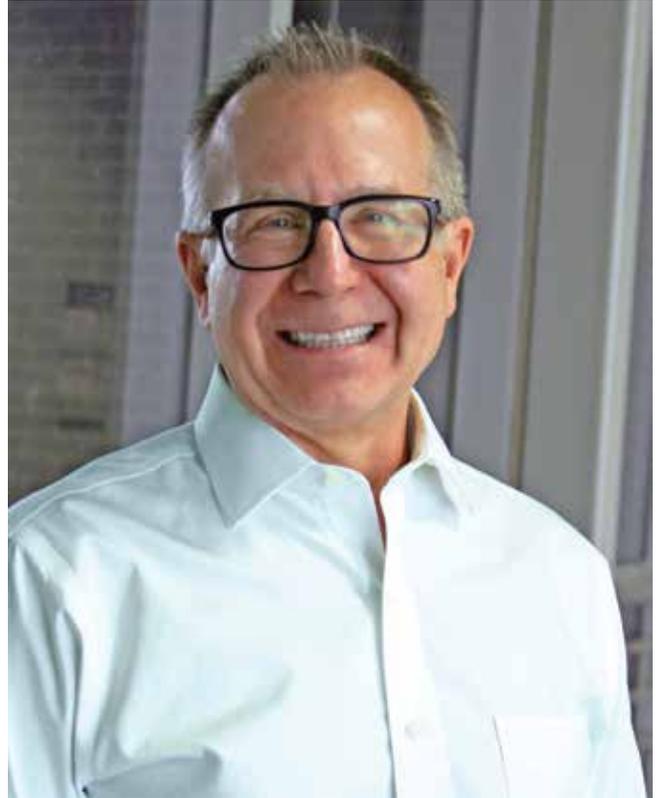
By Bishop Gary E. Mueller  
*Bishop of the Arkansas Annual Conference*

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I've been thinking a great deal about the power of words. The Book of Genesis describes how God created the earth, all that is on it and humanity by uttering words. Throughout history, the right words have brought hope in the darkest moments and the wrong words hatred and destruction. My own words have made a greater difference, for good or ill, than I ever imagined possible.

Sadly, we live in a time when the destructive force of words far outweighs their positive impact. This inescapable fact confronts me every day through social media, our political discourse and in our deeply divided United Methodist Church. Something has tragically changed. We have made the weaponization of words a routine part of our discourse.

When we choose to use words as weapons against others, we like to think we are speaking truth and rightly putting those who are wrong in their place. But the fact of the matter is that these words say far more about us than the people we are speaking about. This is because words provide a window into our soul. Choosing words that tear down, divide or inflict harm points to the reality that we are fundamentally out of kilter with God. In other words, it is sin.



**Gary E. Mueller**  
 Bishop of the Arkansas Conference

This is especially true when we choose words we know will harm others. It is not acceptable to say that we do not mean what others clearly hear us saying. In fact, it only makes things worse. Quite simply, these are the very moments we need to come to grips with our need to repent and change how we speak about those with whom we disagree, those who are different and those whose life experience differs from ours.

This is true for every single human being. It is all the more so for those of us who know Jesus as Savior and Lord. And while the words we choose should never be an issue for those of us who seek to follow how Jesus teaches us to live, the reality is that it is. So we must address it. And we can - one person at a time and one word at a time. The next time you deal with that disagreeable person who doesn't get it, ask yourself a question. What words will I choose that best reflect that I am a disciple of Jesus Christ?

# A Reflection on the 2019 Hendrix Youth Institute

By Phoebe Sanders  
*Episcopal Collegiate School Junior*  
*& Member of Pulaski Heights UMC Youth*

**H**aving the opportunity to participate in the Hendrix Youth Institute for two weeks this summer was one of the most exciting, influential, and reassuring things I've ever done. Whether it was allowing myself to be vulnerable within small groups about troubles or doubts with my faith, taking classes in the morning to learn about the historic importance of each aspect of worship, or visiting churches around Arkansas and learning from their purpose and mission, HYI quickly became a place where I was able to confidently explore my faith and discern my call to ministry.

The most crucial and formational part of HYI for my faith journey was being surrounded by a community of like-minded peers who are going through the same thing I am. A lot of the time in everyday life, I focus on how to convey my faith in God through everyday actions and conversations, and how these things make the world a better place. However, HYI allowed me to make deeper connections with others while I was doing these things because everyone else had felt the warmth and presence of God's calling in their lives, just like I had.

Because of this, a strong sense of community quickly formed within our group. We relied on each other to be vessels of God's work in the world and push each other to new levels in our faith journeys. There is rarely a time when I am surrounded with more than 30 other like-minded individuals to nurture and support me in my faith, and how that conveys my call to work in ministry even more in the future.



Even though we are called to be leaders in the church in the future, we are also called into action right now. Planning worship services, complete with mini-sermons, was one of my favorite ways to exhibit this call. Each one of us had experienced God in our lives and yearned to work with others who feel the same way, but now we're faced with the difficult task of creating concrete ways to make that happen.

Despite some nervous laughter, these services allowed us to open up in a way I had never gotten to before. Every person had a role in the service, whether it was praying, giving a benediction, or reading scripture. We each brought our own unique personalities and perspectives into our roles, further showcasing our distinct spiritual gifts and how they work together to make the world a better place. This, in itself, was an unforgettable experience.

HYI gave me the opportunity to open my mind while discerning my call to ministry. I've known for a while that I want to intertwine faith, politics, and social justice in my career, so going to Washington, D.C. to meet with senators and attend a poverty and homelessness seminar in the United Methodist Building right next to the Supreme Court building was right up my alley.

I came into HYI being absolutely set on pursuing the deacon track in the future, but now being an elder is a possible option for me as well. Even though I am less certain of what I want to do in ministry after I completing HYI this summer, I have grown to a new understanding of trusting God with my future and just trying to do the most good I can along the way.



## Back to School Means Back to Change for Children – and Adults

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” - Jeremiah 29:11*

By Kelli Reep  
*Director of Communications, Methodist Family Health*

**D**idn't kids just get out of school for the summer? Immediately after the red, white and blue bunting and sparklers leave the shelves, stores pack them full of pencils, paper and markers to prepare both students and parents for the new school year routine.

It always depressed me. Even now as an adult, seeing the sales on school uniforms and packages of glue sticks makes my stomach knot. Was it the switch from obligation-free days to ones regimented by a schedule that makes me feel this way, or the existential dread of change itself that overwhelmed me then; I'm not sure. Regardless, these feelings fused into a funk that held on so strongly that I sought counseling just before turning 40 to help me unknot all the kinks in my mental circuitry.

It's something I used to be ashamed of sharing. No one should admit to not feeling or thinking of being 100 percent happy and content (and, if you do? Certainly, don't tell anyone! That's not what "good" or "nice" people do. What would others think? And you have so much to be grateful for, and there are so many others who are so much worse off than you. Did you think about that? Just don't think about being unhappy!)

All of which is bunk. Everyone – toddlers, children, adolescents, 20 and 30-somethings, mid-lifers, empty nesters and the elderly – struggle with depression, anxiety and trauma. Just like aging, this is the nature of being human.

Realizing this – that I am not alone in my struggles – is what

I think helped me the most in healing. Talking with someone I trusted, who I knew would maintain my confidences and not judge me for them, helped me as much. Understanding that God did not intend for my time on Earth to be riddled with self-flagellation for my perceived inadequacies? Helps me every day. Working for an organization like Methodist Family Health that sees children and families in crisis every day and provides the best possible care to them reinforces to me that there is help for all of us.

If you are at a time in your life where you feel like living is nothing but struggle, please seek out help from a therapist or counselor. I know you feel like no one would understand, that you think your worries really aren't that big of a deal in the bigger picture, that you really just need to get a grip on your life and soldier through. I am here to tell you this: what you are feeling is valid. You are not wrong or damaged for feeling like you do. What you're feeling is a big deal, and as scary as it seems, talking with someone who wants you to get through this time and has the training to show you the way is a necessity for you. You can do this.

For 120 years, Methodist Family Health has rebuilt the lives of Arkansas children and their families who are abandoned, abused, neglected and struggling with psychiatric, behavioral, emotional and spiritual issues. Now in our Little Rock counseling clinic, we are accepting adults for counseling and therapy sessions. When you are ready to talk, we will be ready to listen.

For more information about the Little Rock Methodist Counseling Clinic, e-mail Dao Ward at [DWard@MethodistFamily.org](mailto:DWard@MethodistFamily.org), call 501-537-3991 or visit [MethodistFamily.org](http://MethodistFamily.org).

# Paulina Webber Named Nancy McDonald Wood Scholarship Recipient

**P**aulina Webber, a member of Wesley Chapel UMC in Little Rock has been named the 2019-20 Nancy McDonald Wood Scholarship recipient. Mrs. Wood and her daughter, Bryn Bagwell, announced the award during the Palm Sunday church service. The daughter of Mrs. Jo Webber, Paulina will receive \$5,000 toward her freshman enrollment at Dillard University in New Orleans, a Historically Black College and University.

Webber, a 2019 graduate of Parkview High School with a 3.9-grade point, has had strong leadership roles in several extracurricular activities including Beta Club, Dance Ambassador, and NHS. She began her community service as a young child when she and her mother often fed hungry homeless people under the bridge in Little Rock. In more recent years, Paulina was active in a weekly food pantry at her church and in The Great Giveaway which distributes school supplies and uniforms to children.

After experiencing Girls State last year and being elected to the Arkansas Supreme Court there, Paulina became even more interested in how the legal community could help poor disenfranchised people. She plans to enroll in Dillard in the fall with the goal of becoming a lawyer. In her application, Paulina recalled Galatians 6: “..as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone.”

The NMWood scholarship, established in 2015, is administered by the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas and is open to a young woman who has been active in her home church and who carries her Christian values out into her community. The scholarship was established by friends and family of Nancy M. Wood to honor her interest in strong female lay leadership in the church. Harper Purifoy, the first Wood Scholar, graduated from Hendrix College in May 2019.

2019-20 applications for the scholarship will be available in the fall at [arumc.org](http://arumc.org).



From left to right: Bryn Bagwell, Paulina Webber, and Nancy M. Wood.  
|| Photo Provided by Nancy Wood

# Mission u is a Transformative Event That Every Methodist Should Experience



Members of Village UMC in Hot Springs Village had a wonderful time attending Mission u this year. || Photo by Michelle Morris

By Michelle Morris  
*Lead Equipper of the Center for Vitality*

Last year we talked about money. This year we talked about Mark. Both years we went to places few, maybe none of us, expected.

Mission u is one of the most transformative experiences I have had the past two years. Mission u provides space for spiritual renewal, deep theological reflection, and faith sharing opportunities that build community with people all across the state.

I am stunned every year that there aren't thousands of people present. Perhaps the issue is that either people have a misconception of what happens at Mission u and who can and does attend.

As a second time facilitator of studies there, I can share my experience in hopes of encouraging others to carve out the time for this extraordinary encounter.

The studies offered through Mission u will challenge you to think differently about things that may feel routine in your faith. Last year, when I led what was somewhat affectionately (and somewhat derisively) called the money study, people showed up assuming that we would learn how to calculate tithing and

balance a personal or church budget. Instead, the study urged us to reflect on our economic systems and whether they more closely represent the systems of oppression like the Pharaoh of Egypt, or whether they release us for participation in God's creative activity in the world.

We examined how our own personal experiences around money, from our earliest memory of using money all the way through what jobs we have worked in our lives, have shaped our faithful responses to needs around us. The result of these collective conversations was a deepening in our own understanding of what it means to be called to faithful stewardship of God's world, not just what clinks around in our pocketbooks.

This year, we studied the Gospel of Mark from the perspective of radical discipleship. We confronted very real divisions among God's people around issues of privilege, particularly asking who has privilege and who doesn't, but also when we have privilege and when we do not.

We had frank conversations about the intersections of race, class and gender. Then, as we turned to engaging the biblical text in ways that involved artistic representations, we not only got to experience the giftedness of the people in the room, but we also got to see Scripture with new eyes.

We closed our time together discussing what it means to bring resurrection to our communities - bringing life into spaces of

death - and began to make concrete plans to do exactly that.

All of this takes place in the most diverse room I will find myself in a typical year. We were young and old. Male and female. White, African American, Native American, Hispanic. Clergy and laity. Rich and poor. It is a glimpse of the reign of God that we see too infrequently in our churches for sure, and perhaps also in our day-to-day lives.

I close this reflection with the words of the Rev. Andrew Suite, pastor of Salem UMC in Conway, who was in my class and has returned to Mission u for the second year in a row. "I used to think of United Methodist Women as circles and salad-o-ramas, but Mission u, with all due respect, showed me just how much UMW 'ain't your grandma's Bible study"! I went last year because I heard 'strongly suggested' from the Board of Ordained Ministry as 'required,' and now I am hooked! The studies offered are second to none, classes are anything but lecturer/listener based, and I've had some of the most robust spiritual and theological conversations I've had post-seminary at Mission u. This is why I will encourage women and men from my church, as well as fellow clergy, to participate. There is also enough free time or flexible time for this to be a personal or ministry planning retreat too."



A group of Mission u attendees gather for a discussion time. || Photo by Michelle Morris

If Andrew's words and my offered experience have intrigued you, make the time to attend Mission u next year. I dare say you will be inspired and surprised!



Mission u attendees take time to worship as well as learn during the annual event. || Photo by Michelle Morris

# Saving History

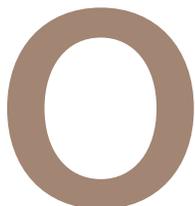


Members of Emmet UMC. From left to right: Charles Trexler, Steve Halliwill, Dianne Halliwill, John Mohon, and the Rev. Wayne Chambers. || *Photo by Caleb Hennington*

**Emmet United Methodist Church is in Danger of Collapsing.  
Its Congregation is Trying to Save the Building and Their Town's History**

By Caleb Hennington  
*Digital Content Editor, [@arumceditor](#)*

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n a long and remote stretch of U.S. Route 67 South, situated at the halfway point between Prescott and Hope, sits the small railroad town of Emmet, Arkansas.

Emmet looks like any other small town in Arkansas: quiet and sleepy, with hints of its former heyday as a railroad junction and agricultural town speckled throughout the community of about 500. The day I came into town, a young man on a camouflaged ATV was driving through his neighborhood, the only moving vehicle anywhere in sight.

Unless you were visiting family or happened to live in the town, no one would blame you for passing through without stopping and exploring.

But just across the railroad tracks, in a quiet area of town, sits a little piece of Methodist history; one that is in serious danger of being lost to time and erosion.

The Emmet United Methodist Church, 209 S. Walnut St., is an odd little church building. The church was first organized in 1855. The building where the church now sits was constructed in either 1917 or 1918, according to documents provided by the National Register of Historic Places, and features design elements that seem out-of-place for a small, Southern church.

Rather than having a gorgeous steeple that reaches high into the sky or intricate castle-like towers that are common among many Methodist church buildings in the Conference, the Emmet church is a one-story square brick building with stark white columns that greet you as you approach the entrance to the sanctuary.

The entrance is affixed to a corner of the building rather than a side, creating an extra wall on the exterior that gives it a pentagonal, rather than a box, shape. It more closely resembles a former county government building or a post office than a church.

According to John Mohon, a member of Emmet, the church's interior layout is based on the Akron-style church, and the outside of the church resembles the Colonial Revival style. As far as Mohon and the other members of Emmet know, this is the only Akron-style church in the Arkansas Conference. It certainly stands out among churches in the South.

Akron-style churches originated in Akron, Ohio and are identified by the unique layout of the sanctuary. They were popular in the late 19th century into the early 20th century but started fading out of style around World War I. The stage and



The back of Emmet UMC shows the beauty of the stained glass inside and the deteriorating corner of the building on the outside.  
|| Photo by Caleb Hennington

pulpit are centered in a corner of the building, with curved pews that arch out and to the back of the sanctuary. On either side of the pews are sliding panels that resemble garage doors. These doors were used to expand the seating in the sanctuary if more pews were needed.

Emmet UMC has both the curved pews and the wooden sliding doors, making it a classic example of an Akron-style church.

But as the church enters into a new century, it is beginning to show its age in ways that could seriously damage its future viability.

On the back right corner of the building, the foundation that has supported the church for more than 100 years is beginning to buckle and risks collapsing if repairs aren't made to it soon.

Dianne Halliwill, a member of Emmet whose family has been attending the church for decades, said the congregants began to realize the church was in need of serious repairs more than a decade ago.

In 2009, a team of people at Emmet worked to get the church listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They were successful in getting the designation that same year, but although being on the Register gives merit to the church's historical value, it gives no guarantee of grant money for repairs or protection

from deterioration. That task has been left up to the members of Emmet.

Years went by before any action was taken to repair the church; people in Emmet didn't quite know what to do to save it.

In 2018, Charles Trexler, who travels from Magnolia every Sunday to attend church in Emmet, began speaking with the newly appointed pastor of Emmet, the Rev. Wayne Chambers, on a way to secure funding for the repairs.

They had heard that another church in Arkansas on the National Register of Historic Places, Hamburg First United Methodist Church, had written up a proposal and applied for a grant from The Department of Arkansas Heritage to make similar repairs to their church building.

They called up Gary Clements, an architect at Clements & Associates in North Little Rock who had surveyed the Hamburg church, and asked him to come by and survey their church as well. Once the survey was completed, a proposal was written and submitted to the Department of Arkansas Heritage.

Chambers said they were one of 44 buildings in Arkansas in 2019 to receive a grant.

"I attribute that highly to God because there were many things



The back corner of Emmet UMC, where the stage is located inside, is beginning to crumble and is in desperate need of repair.  
|| Photo by Caleb Hennington



Underneath the church, beams that are more than a century old are beginning to rot due to water and termite damage.  
|| Photo Provided by Charles Trexler

that could have prevented us from getting this grant,” Chambers said.

Trexler estimates that repairs for the building’s foundation, as well as replacing part of the damaged roof and repointing the original brick masonry, will cost around \$200,000.

To date, the church has been able to raise \$15,500 through fundraising and donations which was matched by a grant of \$31,000 from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, a division of The Department of Arkansas Heritage, bringing the total to around \$46,500. But in order to receive grant money from the state of Arkansas, the church has to first raise money.

“Whatever we raise, the state can match that amount twice. But even though we’re on the National Register of Historic Places, we can’t receive any grants unless we raise money,” Chambers said.

Steve Halliwill, Dianne’s husband, said that when spending the grant money, they also have to use it in a way that repairs the building as close as possible to its original design.

“That includes the foundation, brickwork, lights, everything,” Steve said. “We can’t just go buy some lumber and sheetrock and get it fixed on a budget.”

One of the first parts of the building that will be replaced is the foundation. Underneath the church, termites and water damage

have eroded many of the beams that support the church's structure.

After the foundation is fixed, the roof, downspout, and some interior work will need to be repaired, including the fragile stained glass windows on the walls.

The church has an average weekly attendance of eight, 11 on a good Sunday. Even though the faithful members of Emmet are generous with their time and money, there's only so much they are able to raise on their own.

The good news is that Emmet can reapply for the grant every year, as long as they continue to raise money.

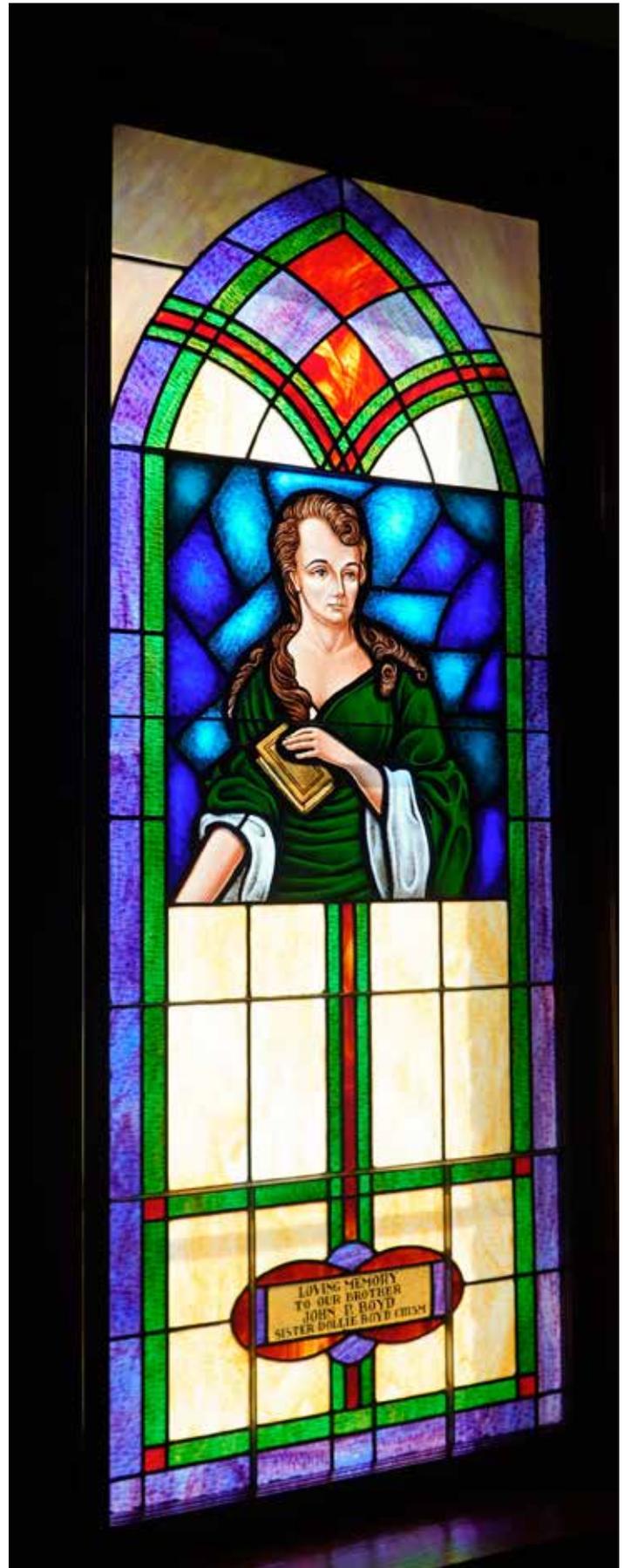
Much of the interior of the church remains intact and showcases the beauty and thought that went into every detail of its design.

Inside the sanctuary, the beautiful stained glass windows tell the story of not only the gospel of Jesus Christ and John Wesley -- the founder of Methodism -- but also the many families who have loved and raised their families there.

Names like Garland, Boyd, McSwain, and others adorn the bottoms of the stained glass that were created in honor of these families.

There's also a stained glass image dedicated to Susannah Wesley, the mother of John and Charles Wesley -- a unique addition that's not unheard of but certainly uncommon among Methodist churches.

The brick that was used to build the exterior of the building can even be traced back from current members of the church to past members; Dianne Halliwill's family, the Boyds, were sharecroppers in the early 1900s. The Boyds harvested and traded their grain to a brick masonry in Hope that needed food



Inside the sanctuary is a stained glass window of Susannah Wesley, mother of Charles and John Wesley. The windows bears a marker that reads "Loving Memory to our brother John P. Boyd. Sister Dollie Boyd Chism." || Photo by Caleb Hennington



Stained glass windows adorn the inside of the sanctuary, dedicated to the many families who have lived and worshiped in Emmet UMC over the last century. || Photo by Caleb Hennington

for their mules, leading to a partnership that allowed the church to acquire bricks for their church building.

There are deep ties to Emmet UMC that continue to push the Halliwills, Mohon, Trexler, Chambers, and others to preserve their church.

“If we don’t do anything to the church, we know that it will collapse. And then there won’t be a church here anymore,” Dianne said. “And once you lose a church in a small town like this, you lose part of your town as well.”

At this point in their fundraising, the members of Emmet have realized it will be very difficult to raise the money they need on their own.

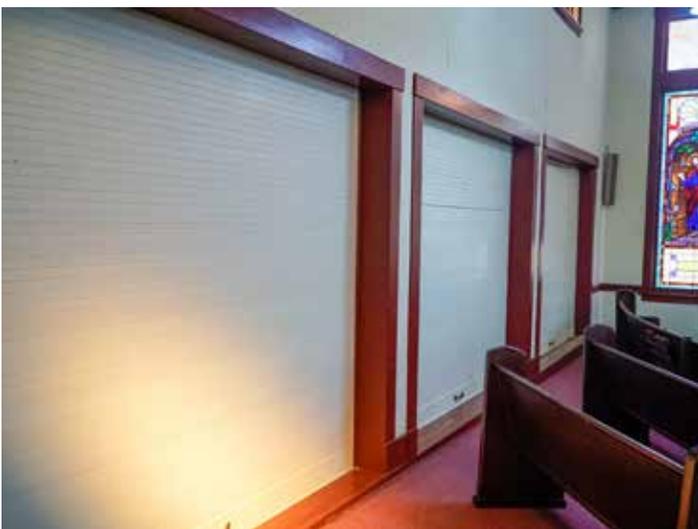
With so many expenses required to get the building back to the



Most of the windows on the exterior of the church feature uncommon yellow-tinted windows, like the one seen in the picture above. When the sun shines through the windows, it gives it a golden glow, no matter what time of the day it is. || Photo by Caleb Hennington



A tattered and worn guest book greets visitors at the entrance to the church. || Photo by Caleb Hennington



The church's sliding wooden doors, pictured above, are a unique feature of the Akron-style church. These doors were used to expand the seating in the sanctuary if needed. || Photo by Caleb Hennington

way it was and the small size of the church membership, they are now reaching out to their United Methodist Church family to help them out.

“Whatever anyone could give would be very much appreciated,” Dianne said.

If you would like to make a donation to the church for their building repair fund, you can mail it to Emmet United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 22, Emmet, AR 71835.

For Dianne, Emmet UMC is part of her life story. It’s worth it to save the building in which she grew up and spent countless Sundays in the pews of that unique, Akron-style sanctuary.

“When I’m sitting in the church on a Sunday morning and the light is shining through the stained glass and filling the room, that’s what reminds me that this church is important. Because those names on that stained glass are my family and many other people’s family as well. This church is home to me.” ✝





Volunteers from churches in the Rogers area have joined together to build a home, Tapestry Home, for homeless teen and young adults in the area. || Photo Provided by Tapestry Home

# Four Churches Join Forces, Provide a Home for the Homeless

By Sam Pierce  
Featured Contributor, [@sjamespierce](https://twitter.com/sjamespierce)

About two years ago, four United Methodist churches in Rogers -- Central UMC, First UMC, Oakley Chapel UMC and Grace UMC -- came together to find the biggest needs not just in Rogers, but Benton County. The Rev. Les Oliver said the Methodist churches, along with St. Andrew's Episcopal Church of Rogers, came to recognize that teen and young adult homelessness was a major issue in their community that no one was addressing.

"Eighteen-year-olds were aging out of the foster care center or were kicked out of their parent's homes and living in cars," Oliver said. "It really touched our hearts. About a year ago, we started doing fundraisers and different things to try to figure out the best way to have a home for homeless young adults and teenagers in the area."

Oliver is the minister of Missions at Central United Methodist

of Rogers, and he said the three other churches decided to model their new home after Christopher's House in Springdale. Christopher's House is a partnership between First United Methodist Church Springdale and Teen Action Support Center, or TASC, to provide a home for families needing transitional housing, according to the website at [firstchurchspringdale.org](http://firstchurchspringdale.org).

Oliver said at first, the group struggled to find the money to purchase a house. They tried having bake sales and other similar fundraisers, but it wasn't enough. It wasn't until an anonymous donor wanted to purchase the house that they really got started.

"They wanted information on what we were trying to do, and this person came to me and I told them, 'Why don't you come to our monthly meeting?'" Oliver said. "After the meeting, he said he wanted to buy a house for the ministry."

Oliver said the name of the house, the Tapestry Home, refers to the weaving together of the churches and the community, with the goal of ending young adult homelessness.

"We looked at several houses here in the Rogers area and we



Tapestry Home, located in Rogers, Arkansas, provides a shelter for homeless teens and young adults in the Northwest Arkansas area. The home is a partnership between Central UMC Rogers, First UMC Rogers, Oakley Chapel UMC, Grace UMC Rogers, and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church of Rogers.  
 || Photo Provided by Tapestry Home

looked at a brand new house that served as a model home in a subdivision,” Oliver said. “We met with the builders and they said that was the way to go – to start fresh and clean out a brand new home.”

Oliver said the mission group closed on the house on July 23 and had an open house on July 28. TASC is in the process of finding suitable clients that will move in shortly after the open house. Oliver said the family unit will most likely feature a young couple with children or older siblings with little siblings. He said, at this point, he has no idea who the clients would be, but they will stay there for 18 to 24 months.

He said another church member donated \$8,000 to Tapestry Home to do with as they please, so the group purchased a refrigerator, washer and dryer. He said they also bought a couch and chair for the living room.

“We also have a ton of stuff that has been donated,” Oliver said. “We are just getting a ton of free stuff from different vendors and a ladies’ sorority has taken on the kitchen, purchasing pots, pans, silverware, and small appliances.

“We have had different community support in helping to furnish the house in different ways. Just tons and tons of people making new friends and five churches working together. That has been a blessing beyond measurement.”

Dawn Spragg is an ordained deacon at Central United Methodist Church and is also a co-founder of TASC. The non-profit focuses on teen homelessness in Northwest Arkansas.

“When the collective group made the decision to purchase the home, we talked to them about the numbers and teen homelessness in the community,” Spragg said. “We discussed

the relationship that we have with Springdale FUMC and it currently features a teen family with a mom, dad and an infant.

“That’s the model that we looked at and what we needed in our community. We had a donor willing to purchase the home and place young adults and teens in housing with the Tapestry Home.”

Spragg said she and her husband founded the non-profit 15 years ago. She said has been on staff at the church as one of the pastors for 12 years, including serving as the youth pastor for two years.

“Teenagers have always been the place I felt God calling me to serve,” she said. “There weren’t a lot of support services for teens in our community. So we founded TASC, and I have been working with them either part or full-time since we opened.

“I work with families and teens, providing mental health.” Last year, TASC worked with 64 teens who were housing unstable. Either their families were homeless, or they lost a parent and didn’t have someone to live with.

“There are 2,000 children who are considered homeless and I don’t know how many of those are teens,” Spragg said. “That’s the most recent number, and it doesn’t include children living with friends, or what we call ‘couch surfers.’”

Spragg said the city of Rogers doesn’t have a lot of low-cost housing.

“We have a lot of working poor,” she said.

“They are earning minimum wage, and then a family has a death or divorce and the economic stabilization is cut in half,” she said.

“It creates an environment where they can’t afford housing or transportation, that kind of thing.

“It causes a lot of instability in housing and they suffer struggles in the family, including trauma, mental health or substance use – those are some of the key factors.”

She said Oliver and the Micah 6:8 ministry reached out to several agencies and several people in the church community to see what some of the needs were in the area.

“And then they landed on this one,” she said. “We have a partnership and we do the casework for the family in the home, and make sure they are following the guidelines of being in the home and have the resources and education they need.

“My agency makes sure all of that gets managed and Micah 6:8 makes sure the house is in order. We work with the family that is in there and they have volunteers to help them.”



Volunteers survey the work that has been done so far to the Tapestry Home. The home had an open house on July 28 and should be accepting its first residents soon. || Photo Provided by Tapestry Home

Oliver said some of the guidelines for the residents include employment and paying a small stipend each month as if it were their rent. The money the leases pay towards the stipend will be put into a savings account and will be given back once the family moves out.

“They are also responsible for cleaning the house and making sure the house is left nice,” he said. “We are going to teach them how to balance a checkbook and simple maintenance, and parenting skills and counseling if they need it.

“Mostly, everything in life that so many of us take for granted. In the end, the four United Methodist Churches in Rogers, plus Andrew’s Episcopal, jumped into this and do whatever we can to answer the need of homelessness in Benton County for young adults.”

Spragg said the family has to be able to live on their own and cannot invite other people to live with them. She said they have to participate in the education and casework and TASC sets that up when they set the agreement. She expects the family to be moved in within 30 days of the closing.

The plan, and the hope, is by the end of the two years, the family has learned the skills needed to step out and be on their own as young adults.

“It is not likely that we would renew an agreement after the

period of time, but the goal is to train these young adults or whoever goes in, to be self-sufficient and learn skills needed.”

Oliver said the small stipend will probably be no more than \$300 and will give the lessees the impression that they are paying for living expenses and rent for the house.

“When they get to the end of their lease, they will have the money to help with deposits, that sort of thing, when they get out on their own,” he said. “We don’t keep any of their money.”

Only one family will be living in the house at a time.

“For example, the first family that went into Christopher’s House was two young kids, under the age of 20, with two children,”

Oliver said. “So let’s say, a 25-year-old, an 18, 19, and 20-year-old siblings have no place to live, this will give them some sort of family unit.”

Oliver said the long term goal is to, first of all, create enough enthusiasm to have the funding along the way, which includes earning grants, HUD money and other donations.

“This first model will serve as a catalyst,” Oliver said. “And if we see the success that we have this first home, hopefully, we can buy a second home or a third home. Ultimately, our goal is to have as many as we think we can manage.” 🌱



# Feeding the Hungry, Clothing the Naked, and Healing the Sick in Goshen

Goshen UMC has Found a Way to Provide Many Free Services Despite its Small Size

By Caleb Hennington  
Digital Content Editor, [@arumceditor](#)

**M**ost people assume that if you want to impact your community in a major way, you're going to need a large congregation to do it. That way of thinking doesn't seem to apply to Goshen UMC, a small congregation in the Northwest District that has managed to start a free health clinic, a food pantry, a community garden, and a blessing box to serve their small-town community.

The idea to offer these free services to the Goshen area came about after another initiative took off in the church to feed hungry children.

Becky Neighbors, District Administrator for the Northwest District, was invited by the Rev. John Humphries to come to the church and talk about how they could get involved in 200,000 Reasons, the Arkansas Conference's initiative to end childhood hunger in the state.

"It was actually Andy Lowry who brought up the idea for a food pantry at one of our church board meetings. He said all we need to do is break down the walls between the people and food," said Humphries, senior pastor of Goshen UMC. "Because there is

plenty of food."

Lowry has been attending Goshen UMC since 2012 and is currently on the Board of Trustees at Goshen.

"We had a food pantry before but we were having problems figuring out when we needed to keep it open so that people could take from it. We had a lot of food that went bad because of that.

"So we eventually decided to keep it open 24/7. You can come in at any time of the day and get something you need," Lowry said.

The church began to keep the pantry stocked at all times for the community. They soon noticed that the food was quickly disappearing, which made them realize how needed this service was for their area.

"Pretty soon we got to know the people who were coming by to get food. They would leave us thank you notes and it turned into a really good deal for Goshen," Humphries said.

One day, Humphries encountered an older woman who was coming by the pantry and taking lots of food back with her; more than she would need for just one person.

"I had no idea why she seemed to be taking so much food. It

turns out she was taking food for her three daughters as well as her seven granddaughters that were living with her. She said they were going to bed hungry every night until the church started doing this.”

Humphries brought up this story to the Goshen congregation, which sparked inspiration in the congregants to start another initiative gathering socks, underwear and other clothing necessities -- as well as feminine hygiene products -- to provide to the community.

“I know the Bible is clear on feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. So I thought if we can start healing the sick, well then I’m going to retire again!” Humphries jokingly said.

What must have seemed like a lighthearted comment at the time quickly became a reality when Russell Stroud, a nurse practitioner who attends Goshen UMC, came up to Humphries after a meeting and offered to check patients for free.

“He had been looking for a way to offer a free health clinic for people in Goshen. And I said well, alright, let’s start healing the sick.”

On the second Tuesday of each month, from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Goshen UMC holds a free health clinic for anyone that needs to come in and get checked out by Stroud.

The church doesn’t advertise the health clinic -- they simply display a sign on the front lawn of the church that says “Free health clinic” on Tuesdays -- yet the response so far has been amazing.

“We’ve had people tell us, tell Russell, that he is an angel sent from God because of this health clinic and the work that he is doing for this community,” Humphries said.

Judi Sartwell, chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee at Goshen, got involved with the free health clinic because of her experience as a nurse for almost 30 years.

Sartwell helps with patient admission history, physical exams, and vital sign readings before the patients see Stroud.

She said that a common problem with people who have low or no income is that they don’t have insurance and are afraid of visiting a health clinic and being rejected. The purpose of the clinic is to give them the help they need at no cost.

Stroud can even write prescriptions for patients or refer them to an emergency room if they are having a serious health issue.

“We just started last month, but I have a feeling that when the word gets out, this is going to grow by leaps and bounds,”

Sartwell said.

Humphries said the reason the church has been able to provide so many free services is that they didn’t go into any of these projects worrying about how they would pay for it all.

He said they have a few fundraising events throughout the year, such as an annual crawfish boil, that help pay for some of the expenses, but most of the funding for these projects comes from the generosity of people in the church.

Lowry said they are able to accomplish so much because they have a congregation that is eager to get involved in anything they can.

“We have a lot of natural leaders and self-starters in our church. They are people that see a need and then take care of it,” Lowry said. “It’s not just a place where you come a few Sundays a month and then leave and aren’t heard from again; well over half the church is involved in some sort of volunteer or mission work.”

Stroud, who has a fulltime job as a nurse practitioner in Northwest Arkansas, donates his time to the free health clinic; Humphries said the church doesn’t pay him anything to run the clinic.

**“This is a little church but it’s a very loving church. Everybody wants to help.”**

“He said that’s his time to give back. He doesn’t want anything in return.”

That’s also the way Humphries looks at these ministries; it’s not about getting something in return -- like increasing the number of people you have in the pews on Sunday mornings -- it’s about

servicing your community in any way you can.

“We are trying to become an active part of our community. And I think that, in itself, will bring more people to Christ.”

Sartwell said she’s constantly amazed at the willingness of her church to get involved and help their community.

“If we have 50 people on Sunday morning, that’s a good Sunday for us. This is a little church but it’s a very loving church. Everybody wants to help,” Sartwell said.

For Humphries, the size of the church isn’t a barrier to accomplishing big things. He said all you need is people who are willing to start somewhere.

“Start small and start with what you can actually do. Start with a food pantry and if that works out, see what else you can do. We didn’t say we were giving out free medical care every day forever. We said we’d start with one day a week. But you know we’re still going to help somebody in a big way that one day,” Humphries said. 🌱

# The Shoe That Grows

Kids at First UMC Bentonville Raise Thousands for New Shoes, Heifer, Rice Bowls

By Sam Pierce

Featured Contributor, [@sjamespierce](#)

Three years ago, Sadie Stratton Wohlfahrt, the Minister to Children and Families at First United Methodist Church in downtown Bentonville, began writing her own Vacation Bible School curriculum.

“I felt strongly that we could use this huge momentum of the biggest event of the children’s ministry year, to really make an impact in the world,” Wohlfahrt said. “Rather than playing games that are only loosely related to a theme, and making crafts that end up on the floor of the car or in the trash – I thought we could spend the same amount of time, energy and money, being in the service to our neighbors.

“In the process, VBS participants learn about what mission means, and about the needs of their neighbors near and far.”

The goal for the participants is to understand faith in action, Wohlfahrt said.

“They will know we are disciples by our love and learn about the kinds of needs that kids their age have across the world; things that we might take for granted like food, clean water, shoes that fit, an education, medication and a safe place to sleep,” she said. “The goal for our beneficiaries was that they would have a sign of God’s love through the gifts we provided.”

This year, Wohlfahrt and First UMC Bentonville’s VBS partnered with The Shoe That Grows, Heifer International



The Shoe That Grows is shoe with five buckles that can be expanded as the person’s foot gets larger, making it last for years.  
|| Photo Provided by First UMC Bentonville



and RiceBowls.org. She said they raised enough money for 60 pairs of shoes -- equivalent to about \$1,200.

“Our own youth group will be taking these shoes on their next mission trip to Haiti later this year,” Wohlfahrt said. “So we will get lots of pictures of our actual donations being given. We also raised \$1,100 for Heifer International and \$1,213 for RiceBowls.org as well.”

For the Heifer International fundraiser, she said the kids painted cows on canvas which were then sold to their families and to the church for \$5 each. That money was donated to provide heifers and chickens for families in needs.

“The kids learned about the benefit of the gift of an animal and the amazing work that Heifer International does,” Wohlfahrt said. “The kids also collected loose change in little plastic ‘rice bowls’ to provide meals for orphans in India.

“They learned about Indian culture and about what it means to be an orphan and to be a caretaker. We also worked with Meals on Wheels of Benton County, and our middle school group went on a full route one morning, delivering meals. That was very impactful for them.”

Elizabeth Emis is a children’s minister teacher at FUMC Bentonville, under the direction of Wohlfahrt.

“These kids will actually see the fruits of their labor and it really cements what Jesus was going for in the first place,” Emis said.

“We are looking at the face of someone and responding to that – it was really special.”

Emis said the church’s VBS program is very different than most in the state as they are pretty mission-minded.

“We stress that, no matter how old you are, you can find a place to offer grace throughout the day,” Emis said. “You don’t have to go overseas or get on a plane. You can be as young as a first grader and find a way to help someone.

“The Shoe That Grows ministry is one of the organizations that we partnered with this year, and in doing so, as a station leader, I was in charge of the learning projects and why this mission exists and in what ways it seeks to serve others and put others before ourselves the same way Jesus did.”

Emis said they had a video that showed a husband and wife couple from Haiti that had their own kids but were also fostering and seeking to adopt other children in their neighborhood. She said the area they lived in didn’t have sewer systems and so all the rain would run off into their homes.

“In order to negate the problems that came with it, you needed good shoes, but it is very difficult to purchase that many shoes,” Emis said. “You can pass shoes down from one sibling to the next, but it is not always the best way to go about it because every



One of the elementary groups at First UMC Bentonville that helped raise money for various charities. || Photo Provided by First UMC Bentonville

foot is different.

“So it was costing a ton of money and had become really problematic. This shoe, given by the mission, grows five sizes and it expands through buttons and snaps and can also be wider. They can also wear them with or without socks.”

Wohlfahrt said the mission work that the VBS programs do is important because she wants children, both in the church and the community, to understand the meaning of mission and service. This year’s VBS had more than 200 children in attendance.

“It is important to me that kids growing up in the church understand that being in the church means working hard, not just receiving,” she said. “We give and work hard. We tend to entertain kids throughout their time in children’s ministries, and then when they get to be adults, they are disillusioned and disappointed by a church that all of a sudden needs them to work.”

“My personal opinion is that we live in such a segmented society, and for various reasons, it can be really easy to feel pressure or feel persecuted, and feel as though things are super hard. And they may be,” Emis said. “But it’s important to have the understanding that there are other people who clearly have a need no one is addressing. They seem to have it all together, but only when you get to know them do you realize they do not.

“We get to see what Christ has been asking us to do for ages. The world really tries to segment people into ‘what’s like me’ and ‘everything that’s not.’ If it is like me, it is correct and just, and

nothing to be afraid of. If it is not like me, it might not be fair and might be something to be afraid of.”

She said only when you begin to read scripture can you bridge that gap.

“God’s true kingdom was never intended to be as separate as it is now. And with these children, it is easier to teach it to them than adults, because they have a natural aptitude for it ... They don’t know any different unless it is taught.”

Maribel Vizcarra is the director of communications for FUMC Bentonville and she said her two kids, Sebastian, 9, and Juliette, 6, absolutely loved participating in the mission work.

“I have to admit, I was surprised by how much they had absorbed after only a few short hours at VBS,” Vizcarra said. “They eagerly emptied their piggy banks onto their beds to help.”

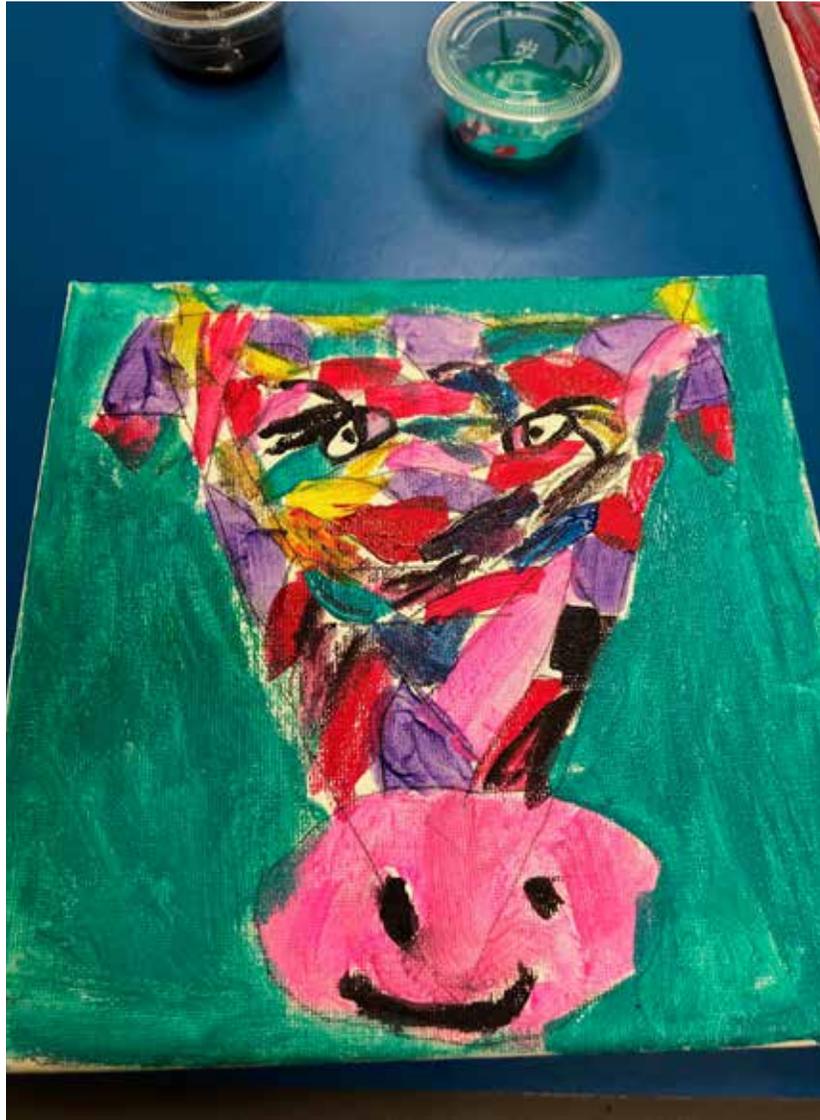
She said leveraging innovation to fight poverty is crucial and “teaching our children to think outside the box, to find meaningful and impactful ways to help others is one way to define us as a missions station church.”

“Our goal at FUMC Bentonville is to give kids hands-on opportunities for mission work so they can become messengers for Christ,” she said. “Children are natural helpers. It is up to us adults to foster love and empathy in them toward others.

“We sincerely believe involving children in missions through our church has a direct impact on how active they’ll remain as adults.”

Wohlfahrt has been the children’s minister at FUMC Bentonville for five years and has been writing her own VBS curriculum for the past three.

“Each year, I choose 2-3 global partners, so that the kids can learn about needs that kids have around the world,” she said. “Last year, we learned about kids who don’t have access to clean water and raised money for FilterofHope.org to provide water filters to those who need them. We also learned about the risk of malaria, and the importance of mosquito nets for many children – we raised money for those nets through SweetSleep.org. “Mission Voyage is just the name I came up for this year’s VBS. Our first year, was ‘Mighty Missions’ which had a superhero theme, and last year was ‘Mission Station,’ which had a train theme.”



A sample of the “cow art” which was sold to benefit Heifer International. || Photo Provided by First UMC Bentonville

Wohlfahrt said since she writes all the curriculum, she gets to come up with the themes, and the scripture outline. And one of the church members, who is a graphic designer, designs all of the logos and décor.

“We want the kids to seek out places where you can be of service and do service for Him,” Emis said. “We want to receive just as much as you give, and build a relationship with anything else that you’ve encountered.

“Children already see uniqueness around them, but what we want to drive home is that uniqueness doesn’t mean scary or wrong.

“That’s going to foster a completely different sense of adult leadership.”

Next year’s VBS theme will be “Mission Olympics” and will be held the third week in July.

“Mrs. Wohlfahrt has a heart for Children’s Ministry,” Vizcarra said. “Through her work and the work of her volunteers and staff, she has laid the foundation of spiritual development for our kids through an engaging, hands-on, mission-focused VBS.

“She’s passionate, loving, strategic and, most importantly, has a strong relationship with Jesus Christ. She deeply yearns to share her love for Christ with others.”

# A Month Full of Youth Events

This month, youth groups from across the Conference at home and abroad for amazing weeks full of fun, worship and growing in faith. Youth 2019 was July 10 - 14 in Kansas City, Missouri and the theme this year was Love Well. Groups of teens from the Central District gathered together for this annual UMC youth event. Junior and Senior High Assembly took place July 22- 24 and July 24 - 27. Pictures from both events can be found below and on the ACCYM Facebook Page.



Conway First UMC's youth group for Youth 2019 in Kansas City. || Photo provided by Michelle Moore.



Left to right: Kinsey Boone, Lydia Schallenberg, and Phoebe Sanders voted on SCJC youth observers for the 2020 conference. Phoebe Sanders was elected to be a youth observer at the 2020 SCJC in The Woodlands, Texas. || Photo provided by Michelle Moore.



Top: The Jacksonville First UMC youth have some fun at Youth 2019 in Kansas City. || Photo provided by Michelle Moore. Bottom: A junior high student gets wrapped like a mummy during a game at Junior High Assembly. || Photo by the ACCYM Media Taskforce



Top: a senior high student raises her hands in joyous praise during Senior High Assembly. Bottom: Danny Shivers was the featured speaker at this year's Junior High Assembly. || Photo by the ACCYM Media Taskforce



# Messy Church Helps All Ages Feel the Love of God

By Melinda Shunk  
*Children's Ministry Coordinator*

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**I**t is the dog days of summer! Vacation Bible School is done. It is not quite time for promotion Sunday. Families seem to be hit and miss on Sunday due to traveling for summer vacation. Travel teams are finishing up those last summer games. Kids are at Tanako for a week of camp! What does a Children's Minister do to reach out to those that may never come to church or know that one even exists in their neighborhood?

Well, I'll tell you what an eight-year veteran of Children's Ministry like Jessica Butler of Sardis United Methodist Church would do: she gets messy!

Two years ago, Jessica came across the book *Messy Church* by Lucy Moore and Jane Ledbetter. *Messy Church* is a combination of a lot of things you may already have and do at your church, but it is combined to become a multigenerational outreach blend of fun, shared experience, worship and food into one unique time of day. See, I told you it was everything you already do in ministry, just blended together!

Jessica made a fun social media graphic called *Mess-tival*. She blasted it around town as well as went old school and put some posters in community establishments. She made sure to have members she knew would be at the event share the *Mess-tival* invite publicly for all who may want to join in the fun.

Then with the help of Karen Guinn, they dug out tables and old supplies from every event they had over the last year. They set up a slime station, a tinkering station, water play station, and a few more tables all staffed with



A young lady plays with some homemade slime during a Messy Church event at Sardis UMC. || *Photo Provided by Melinda Shunk*

youth helpers. Overall the supplies cost little to nothing, but she did purchase plastic table cloths when she set the tables up outside to help with easy clean-up at the end.

On a hot July evening, Jessica welcomed in a few faces she knew and a lot of new faces from the community. Parents didn't think of dropping off their kids as they did for VBS or Sunday school. Parents and grandparents knew it was a time for all of them to have Messy Church.

As families arrived, they were offered snacks and drinks at tables together. Once she gave them 20-30 minutes to all arrive and have a snack, she shared a short lesson. She shared that life can be messy. Sometimes messy means bad and sometimes messy can be good. No matter what Jesus loves messy people!

In fact, Jesus loves to take messy people and make something beautiful from the mess. She then shared some scripture and closed in prayer. From there, she walked them to the tables set up outside for the families to go make a mess. Parents and grandparents shared experiences with the children as they moved around to each table set up for their mess.

The casual, light-hearted environment gave way to conversation. Jessica was able to move around to the different groups to have caring conversations. One family said they never go to church but they could get into this kind of church! Some grandparents shared that they had their grandchildren for the week and thought this was something they could all do together when they saw the Mess-tival invite. Church members who were used to dropping off their kids for events asked when the next Mess-tival would be held.

As of now, this was Jessica's second Mess-tival. She had thought of it as a supplemental outreach for those slower times in the church schedule. However, she says due to its success, she would love to start doing more for her community. Messy Church helps all ages hear God's words of love and literally feel God's love through each other as they have a messy experience together. 🌿



Messy Church is a great way to do something different at your church, and get both parents and children involved. || Photos Provided by Melinda Shunk



# OMP 101

OMP 101 is an annual event organized by the Ozark Mission Project that lets youth, grades 5 and 6, learn the ways that OMP helps communities in need. Kids learn how to use power tools, build simple wooden structures, and have fun in the process. Check out some of the photos of this year's OMP 101, held at St. Paul UMC in Little Rock.



OMP 101 is not only a time for learning and serving, it's also a time for fun and games! Before the week's events begin, campers get to play some fun team building games. These games are meant to teach kids how to work together as a team. In the photo above, teams line up in two lines across from each other. One side throws a marshmallow to their teammate, who tries to catch it in a small plastic cup.

Left: An OMP 101 camper plays a game where you try to unstack and then stack cups as quickly as possible.

*|| Photos by Caleb Hennington*



Left: a volunteer with OMP teaches kids about some of the tools that are used to build and repair houses, ramps and more. While at OMP, kids will learn valuable skills that will help them get a head-start if they decide to volunteer with OMP in the future.

|| Photo by Caleb Hennington



Top: A volunteer from the Society of St. Andrew teaches kids how to cut mesh rope to make into bags for gleanings. Gleaning is the process of gathering food together, which the Society of St. Andrew does for groups like the Food Bank and others.

Left: Two young girls concentrate while cutting rope for gleanings bags.

|| Photos by Caleb Hennington



