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300 volunteers labor during milestone 40th Ingathering



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More than 300 volunteers turned out to sort, package and label food and load disaster recovery supplies during the 40th anniversary United Methodist Ingathering.

The Nov. 18 event was held at the Arkansas Foodbank warehouse in Little Rock. In just four hours, volunteers of all ages and abilities packaged 14,000 pounds of pinto beans, boxed 30,000 pounds of sweet potatoes and loaded tons of flood buckets, kits and cleaning supplies. The food is earmarked for Arkansans facing food insecurity, while the supplies will be ready to help when a disaster strikes.

"I am filled with hope because of the hundreds of Methodists who come together in one morning, ready to work and full of compassion for the hungry," said Mary Lewis Dassinger, program coordinator for 200,000 Reasons to Fight Childhood Hunger, the Arkansas Conference' initiative to reduce childhood hunger in the state. "Ingathering is a message of hope

[See Ingathering, page 4]



Ingathering volunteers sort and repackage pinto beans and sweet potatoes.



Little Rock congregation seeks new church home

BY JANE DENNIS
Interim Editor

The historic Gothic Revival building that is home to Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church in downtown Little Rock is large. No, make that massive. Built between 1921 and 1926, the imposing structure contains more than 44,000 square feet of space on three main floors, basement and attic levels. The regal sanctuary, surrounded by more than 50 Tiffany-style stained glass windows, Gothic trusses and a quartet of bas relief plaster angels, seats more than 700.

In its heyday in the 1940s, the building at 1601 Louisiana St. was home to the largest Methodist congregation in the state, with a membership of about 3,400 people.

Today, within this rambling giant of a building gathers a loyal but small congregation.

"We're worshipping about 50 people now," says the Rev. Keith Coker, who was appointed pastor of the church in July. "And we have a 90-year-old building with the

problems of a 90-year-old building. The burden of keeping the building up is just too great for a congregation of this size and resources."

The conversation around what the small congregation might do with such a large building began long before Coker arrived. However, the final decision was made at a called church conference on Dec. 17. The 29 members in attendance, some with tear-filled eyes, voted 28-1 to put the property up for sale.

Since word has spread about the decision, Coker notes that "a common misconception is Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church is closing. We are not closing," he adds emphatically. "We are simply moving."

Where that move will take the congregation has yet to be determined. Two teams have been formed, according to the pastor. The Sale Team is charged with working with real estate representatives to find a potential buyer for the existing building, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Meanwhile, a Search Team is developing a profile of the needs of

the congregation "and what kind of facility, as far as location, size, parking and other issues, we'll need to consider," Coker says. Ultimately, members of the Search Team will be tasked with working with real estate professionals to find a suitable new

church home.

"The church is still vital and has vital ministries," observes the pastor, "but needs a new location."

The Quapaw Quarter congregation hosts three food ministries that

[See Quapaw, page 3]



PHOTO BY WENDY KELLEY

The historic building that houses Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church in downtown Little Rock features a brick and stone exterior, pointed arched door openings and more than 50 stained glass windows.

Spiritual revival in Cuba witnessed by Arkansans

BY ANDREW C. THOMPSON
Special Contributor

Sí, que lindo!

That is Pastor Guillermo Leon Mighty's favorite phrase. He uses it anytime there is reason to rejoice at what God is doing: at the beginning of a worship service, after a beautiful song in praise of God, or when the Holy Spirit falls upon worshipers in prayer.

For him, all of it is a reason to proclaim the beauty of what God is doing. (The phrase means, "Yes, how lovely!")

Pastor Guillermo is the district superintendent of the Havana District in Cuba. He's also the senior pastor of the Havana Central Methodist Church. Together with his wife Pastora Adria, they lead a large and growing congregation in one of the poorer parts of the city of Havana.

Seven members of my congregation, First United Methodist Springdale, and I were fortunate enough to travel to Cuba in January for mission work in Pastor Guillermo's district. We were part of a trip organized by Dr. David Watson of United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

The Methodist Church of Cuba is undergoing a powerful spiritual revival that dates back to the "Special Period" in Cuba's history when its economy collapsed following the breakup of the Soviet Union. As Pastor Guillermo told me, the scarcity and suffering that happened in the wake of the economic collapse caused many to look towards God for strength. Soon revival was breaking out all over the country.

Statistics of the Methodist Church of Cuba tell the story in one way: roughly 46,500 members and perhaps twice that many actively involved



LEFT: The mission team from First United Methodist Church, Springdale, is joined by Pastor Guillermo and his wife Pastora Adria, and Pastor Diosmaney and his wife Yusdelkis, at the Methodist church in the community of Regla, near Havana. RIGHT: Andrew Thompson and Guillermo Leon Mighty, senior pastor of Havana Central Methodist Church and superintendent of the Havana District.



in ministries. There are 410 local churches and 927 mission locations. Growth is happening everywhere, from the number of believers having their lives transformed by the Holy Spirit, to the number of pastors called into ministry, to the number of congregations being planted.

But to really understand the Cuban revival, you have to see it. I was invited to preach at a church in a community called Santiago de la Vega, near Havana. When our group arrived at the church, it was packed. Both the floor and the balcony were full of people. A crowd stood outside the church, looking in through the doors and windows. Walking into the church felt like walking onto holy ground. The Holy Spirit's presence was palpable. When worship began, the people sang, danced and prayed. It was remarkable.

When Dr. Watson was preparing me for what Cuba would be like, he said, "You have to understand that anything can happen in Cuban worship. I mean, *anything*."

It is certainly true that worship in a Cuban Methodist Church is a full-bodied experience. There is singing, dancing, playing and preaching. The shortest worship service I attended was about an hour and a half. The longest was almost four hours. Yet, despite that length and intensity, I never found myself looking at my watch and wondering when it would be over. The power of the Holy Spirit in the midst of worship is such that you find yourself simply wanting to be close to God. I tended to think of worship as revolving around and around in successive stages, where each stage grew in intensity and rose up closer and closer to the heart

of God. Most worship experiences would end with the laying on of hands and intense prayer, with people asking for healing and blessings.

The Cuban people are incredibly receptive to the presence of the Holy Spirit. That has made them also receptive to the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit brings. I spent some time on one Saturday of our trip teaching on Wesleyan theology to a mixed group that included pastors, seminary students and teenagers. When we discussed sanctification and the role that spiritual gifts play in our maturation as believers, everyone there was enthusiastic about the way the Spirit was moving in their lives and developing their gifts. In that sense, the Methodists in Cuba excel in a way that I think we often struggle in America—they are willing to claim the spiritual authority that Jesus has given them for ministry.

Pastor Guillermo is well aware of the struggles that his people face. His own family faces those same struggles. In Cuba, people often skip meals because there is simply not enough food to eat. It is a resource-poor country, with an underdeveloped economy and a government that has not served its people well.

Yet, he says *Sí, que lindo!* with gusto because he sees the beauty in the way that God is at work all around him: Men and women are being called to faith in Jesus Christ, the poor are being cared for, and disciples are being made.

I would take every member of my congregation to Cuba if that were possible. The Holy Spirit is at work there, and the way that the people are responding to the Spirit's presence has much to teach us. Who knows? Perhaps revival will break out in our own country next.



People stand in the churchyard and peer through doors and windows during a service at the Methodist Church in Santiago de la Vega, Cuba.

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Submission Deadlines

Issue Date	Submission Deadline
March 2	Feb. 10
April 6	March 10

GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST: A word from the Bishop



BY GARY E. MUELLER

Sinning in an Age of Facebook

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, I cannot conceive how anyone who calls himself or herself a Christian can think it is acceptable to go through life with a callous heart or fail to care about what happens to those who struggle to survive. Further, I cannot understand why we continue to elect political leaders who signal these things are acceptable in order to ensure the ongoing support of their political base. Hard hearts and callous indifference to those who suffer is absolutely, totally and completely contrary to God's Will.

Because I feel this way, I must admit it's tempting—oh, so tempting—to rail against those I'm convinced are sinning on Facebook, Twitter and whatever other social media platform I've figured out how to work. But even as I ponder how good this might make me feel, I'm acutely aware how careful I must be not to be swept up in a phenomenon that is occurring right now. It is our penchant to criticize—even demonize—others for their actions, and think we've done everything we need to because we've said something on social media.



The fact of the matter is that my real first priority needs to be to deal with my own heart and callousness to injustice. And so is yours. Not just in generic terms, but by being willing to name it for what it really is. Sin.

But there's good news. Our sin doesn't have to be the final word. We can change, not because of our own heroic efforts, but because of Jesus Christ's unconditional, transformational and invitational love that has the ability to do what we struggle to do on our own—enlarge our hearts and unleash passionate care for every single human being we meet.

This deep spiritual reality, I am convinced, is at the heart of our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. It will not happen magically or easily. We have to be willing to give ourselves fully to Jesus' grace that shapes and molds us into the people Jesus longs for us to be.

My prayer for all of us is that we will be courageous enough to be God's salt and light in a world that needs it so desperately. Not just when everyone is talking about it, but every single day—in every single way.

Gary E. Mueller

Gary E. Mueller

Quapaw (from page 1)

primarily serve homeless and displaced persons. A food pantry and a pet food pantry disburse supplies twice a month, on the first and third Tuesdays. A free community breakfast is served each Sunday. The church also hosts a Sunday afternoon meal program called Stone Soup. The two meal programs each serve up to 120 persons each week.

"We have no plans to stop these ministries," Coker says. "But at the same time we continue doing what we've been doing, this is an opportunity to remake ourselves and decide some new directions."

Coker is a licensed local pastor who was an attorney "in a previous life," he quips. Before his appointment to Quapaw Quarter UMC, he served churches in Plummerville and England.

In similar fashion the storied church building was previously home to Winfield Methodist Church. In the late 1980s, the congregation opted to move to a new location in west Little Rock and took the Winfield name with it. In 1998, the Quapaw Quarter congregation was chartered at the historic downtown building designed by noted architect Charles L. Thompson and Thomas Harding Jr.

Coker remains focused on helping

members of the congregation plan for the future. "Beyond that, my job is to help them stay focused on mission and to encourage them to not only continue what they've been doing but also to stretch and reach out to new possibilities."

For many, the recent developments have been accompanied by sadness and a sense of loss, Coker says. "But there is also a sense of 'we know we have to do this.' There is a determination to carry on and optimism about new chances, a new future."

Would you Like to receive daily reflections from Bishop Mueller? facebook.com/arkansasumc

Churches urged to 'Get Up & Give' during Lent

With the holidays behind us and the 40 days of Lent just ahead, Methodist Family Health (MFH) has a way for Arkansans to honor the Lenten season by contributing to Arkansas children and families managing psychiatric, emotional, behavioral and spiritual issues.

The 9th Annual Get Up & Give collection project asks Arkansans to contribute necessities to the children and families in MFH's care. The project is during the 40 days of Lent—Feb. 14 through March 29—and both children and adults can participate by donating personal hygiene items, clothes, shoes, school supplies, bedding, funds and other necessities to the Methodist Counseling Clinic in their community.

"We often think of Lent as a time to give up or fast from something in our lives, but it also can be a time to take on something that renews our spirit and connection to our neighbor," said Kelli Reep, director of communications at MFH. "Get Up & Give is an easy project to take on and makes a tremendous impact on the children and families we serve."

Many of our kids are in the foster care system or have families with few monetary resources. Providing them things like new underwear, soap, their own school supplies—even books and toys—demonstrates to them that someone they have never even met cares about their well-being."

MFH asks that all items contributed through Get Up & Give are new. Monetary donations are also accepted. Contributions may be delivered to any Methodist Family Health Counseling Clinic in the state after April 1. There are clinics located in Alma, Batesville, Fayetteville, Heber Springs, Hot Springs, Jonesboro, Little Rock and Magnolia.

For more information, visit <https://www.methodistfamily.org/get-up-give> or contact Kelli Reep at kreep@methodistfamily.org or (501) 906-4210.



People of all ages can renew their spirit by donating items during Lent.



Message from the editor

BY JANE DENNIS

I am honored to have the opportunity to return to the Arkansas Conference and serve as interim editor of the *Arkansas United Methodist*



for the next few months. It's kind of like putting on a favorite pair of comfortable old shoes. It feels like I'm back home again.

Quite a bit has changed in the methods of production and distribution of this venerable publication since I was editor from 1988–2009. But what hasn't changed are the faithful United Methodists, the good people of this conference, who are continuing to bear witness to the grace, mercy and compassion of Jesus Christ in towns and cities, urban and rural spots all across the state. I look forward to this second chance to tell more amazing, inspiring stories of the Church and her people right here in Arkansas.

Want to bend my ear or put me onto the scent of a good story? You can find me at jane.dennis@arumc.org.



ABOVE: Youth help by labeling boxes at Ingathering. RIGHT: A team of volunteers works to organize more than 30,000 pounds of sweet potatoes for distribution.



Ingathering (from page 1)

with every bag of beans, box of sweet potatoes and disaster relief kit sent out to make a difference in the life of the hurting.”

Matthews Farm in Wynne donated the potatoes. The harvest and gleaning, made possible by the Arkansas Department of Corrections, was coordinated by the Society of Saint Andrew. The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance plays an instrumental role in bringing together these partnerships.

“There are so many hands that are part of Ingathering,” Dassinger added.

In addition to covering Ingathering expenses such as purchasing the beans, boxes and packing supplies, and covering staff overtime, the total of which comes to approximately \$10,000, the Arkansas Conference made a \$2,600 cash donation to the Arkansas Foodbank.

At the end of the day, 17 United Methodist food pantries returned home with an abundance of items to stock their shelves.

Also at Ingathering, local churches reported on the past year’s mission and service activities. According to the Conference Center for Administrative Services, of the churches that reported, more than 222,000 hours have focused on mission and service activities in the past year.

Fill-a-bag Ministries: local churches urged to fight childhood hunger

Looking for a new mission challenge?

The Arkansas Conference’s 200,000 Reasons To Fight Childhood Hunger Initiative encourages participation in its “Fill-a-bag” Ministries. Here’s how it works:

- Church members fill a reusable grocery bag once a month and bring it to church on a specific Sunday. All the items collected will be shared with a local food pantry or distribution ministry.
- The Conference’s 200,000 Reasons To Fight Childhood Hunger program will supply the bags free of charge to churches with 50 or fewer in worship. Bags may be purchased at cost plus postage for churches with more than 50 in worship every Sunday.

Congregations are asked to follow these five easy steps to get started feeding children and families:

1. CHOOSE A PARTNER: A local partner can be any church or organization that is providing food to children and their families as part of their feeding ministry or program: a food bank, food pantry or backpack program, or a food distribution service that includes children.

2. WORK OUT THE LOGISTICS: With your partner, determine if specific food items are needed for each collection and how to communicate this with your congregation. Arrange how the food collected will get to the distribution site.

3. COMMUNICATE YOUR COMMITMENT: Email Mary Lewis Dassinger at mdassinger@arumc.org and briefly state your commitment to support the agency with food collections as part of the 200,000 Reasons Initiative.

4. RECEIVE THE BAGS: Expect delivery within one month from the time your request is made. If the bags wear out, 200,000 Reasons will replace them at no charge for churches with fewer than 50 in worship.

5. KEEP US POSTED: Let the Conference know how it is going and once a year we will ask you to find out from your partner agency how many children they think were served the past year.



Mary Lewis Dassinger displays an example of a reusable grocery bag suggested for Fill-a-bag Ministries.

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OBITUARIES

LESLIE

Peggy Lann

Peggy Joy Miles Lann went to be with her Lord and Savior on Jan. 1, 2018. Peggy was born to Ina Pearl Miles and J.B. Miles on March 14, 1942, in Leesville, Louisiana. She is preceded in death by her parents and her brothers, Rev. John Miles and Warren Miles.

Peggy is survived by her husband, retired local pastor Rev. James Lann, and their children, Cindy and John Reister, Andy Lann, Debbie and Andy McDade, Audrea and Greg Duckworth; grandchildren, Amber and Billy Quick, Nikki and Tommy Taylor, Taylor and Ana Byrd, Karyn and Eric Sanders, Jimmy and Erin Lann, Katie and Lucas Hancock, Jessica and Sergeant David Lambert, Emily McDade and Theodore Goodwin, Jessie Green and Shelly Green; great grandchildren, Harley Kozak, Caleb Kozak, Lucas Quick, Gage Quick, Brice Quick, Hayden Quick, Mason Quick, Cade Quick, Ashlyn Taylor, Madilyn Taylor, Kinley Brooke Sanders, Eli Lann, Nathaniel Lambert and Mason Porter; and sister-in-laws, Sarah Jo Murphy and Joy Miles; her nieces and nephews, Deborah Miles, John Miles, Rebekah Miles, Heather, Martin, and Michael Miles, Shannon Vickers, Kayla Hatcher, and extended family and friends. She was loved by all.

A memorial service was held Jan. 20 at Marshall United Methodist Church, with internment at Leslie Cemetery.

TEXARKANA

Martha Elizabeth Margrave

Martha Elizabeth Smith Margrave was born on August 13, 1926, to Elmer W. and Irene Chrisp Smith in Little Rock, Ark. She was a graduate of Little Rock High School and attended Little Rock Junior College, where she met the love of her life, Fred Nicholas "Nick" Margrave, Jr. Her parents had always stressed the importance of a college education, so in 1948 Martha graduated with a BA degree in Home Economics from Arkansas State Teachers College. Days after their graduations, Martha and Nick married at Asbury Methodist Church in Little Rock.



From that day on they devoted their family life to the local United Methodist Church. Always in the center of Methodist activities, Martha

served her churches as Sunday School teacher, education director, member of the United Methodist Women, weekday preschool teacher, and as a lay member to the Little Rock Annual Conference. Of all the time that she devoted to the church, her service on the Little Rock Conference Board of Ordained Ministry was where she felt she made her most meaningful contribution.

She touched the lives of many as she taught Home Economics at Camden High School. She made virtually every garment their three daughters wore and enjoyed quilting, knitting and teaching her grandchildren to sew.

Her faith never wavered even

as she endured the death of her cherished youngest daughter, Susan Elizabeth Margrave Bonner; her adored eldest grandchild, Charles Patrick "Chuck" Weber, MD; and her loving son-by-marriage, Patrick Lowry Weber, MD. Her brothers and their wives, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer W. Smith Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. Edward F. Smith Sr., and her brother-in-law, W.A. "Buddy" Margrave Sr. also went before her. After 70 years of marriage, her beloved Nick graced her with an answer to prayer when he preceded her in death by four months.

She leaves the following legacy of love: from Texarkana, TX, daughter, Mary Katherine

Margrave Weber; grandchildren, Katherine Weber (Texarkana), and Dr. Michael Andrew "Drew" and Mary Elizabeth Weber (Tyler, TX); great-grandchildren Evelyn, Jackson and Martha Patterson and Chuck, Smith and Andrew Weber. From Nashville, TN, daughter and son-in-law Marti Margrave and Fred Artibee; grandchildren Jamey and Jen Campbell-Girten (Gallatin, TN), Becca and Quentin Watkins (Raleigh, NC), Madeline and Staša Artibee-Bakliža (Urbana, IL), and Kate and Nick Artibee-Smallwood (Oakland, CA); great-grandchildren Mason and Miller Campbell and Tenny Smallwood. From Denton, TX, grandchildren Anna and

Preston Fuqua, great-grandchildren Elizabeth and Sadie Fuqua. From Shreveport, LA, Tiffany and Stephen Bell and Charlie, Kate and Samantha Bell. From Little Rock, Mrs. W.A. Margrave Sr. In addition, she was loved by nieces, nephews and four generations of friends.

Memorial contributions may be made to Opportunities Inc., 6101 N. State Line, Texarkana, TX 75503, or to TeamMercy.org at 1079 W. Round Grove Road, Suite 200-504, Lewisville, TX 75067.

A celebration of life was held Jan. 11, at First United Methodist Church, Texarkana, AR, followed by a graveside service at Crestview Memorial Park in Hot Springs, AR.

9th Annual

Get Up & Give

February 14 - March 29

Methodist Family Health invites church groups, families, friends and neighbors to collect much-needed items during the season of Lent. Your generosity will aid Arkansas children in our hospital, alternative schools, group homes, clinics and other programs throughout our state.

See our wish list and donation locations at:
methodistfamily.org/get-up-give
 Or contact **Kelli Reep** at **501.906.4210** or
kreep@methodistfamily.org

Methodist
 FAMILY HEALTH

Groundbreaking signals expansion at Paragould First UMC

Members of Paragould First United Methodist Church broke ground Dec. 3 for construction of a new addition that will house a fellowship hall and gymnasium, contemporary worship space, kitchen and community rooms. The existing fellowship hall will be transformed into a two-story educational building for children and youth. Construction is anticipated to take 12–15 months.

The congregation views the new building as important to the growth of the church, where space has become a premium. The existing sanctuary and educational building were built in 1926. A fellowship hall and chapel were completed in 1979, followed by a Welcome Center in the early 2000s. Continued growth in membership has resulted in the need for additional

space for a variety of needs and ministries.

“These are exciting times for our church,” said Rev. John Fleming, senior pastor. “We believe that this building is not something that we are building for ourselves but for this community. We envision community ministries happening in it, like Boy and Girl Scout meetings, AA meetings, basketball leagues, community concerts, reading programs, Bible schools, testing facilities for local schools, a place to have programs and banquets, and a shelter for any storm. We will continue to have our Witt House Food Pantry and to minister to our mission field through it.”

Joining Fleming at the Paragould church is Rev. Pat Bodenhamer, associate pastor.



Members of Paragould First UMC turn the first spades of dirt as construction on a new addition to the church begins.



Pastors John Fleming and Pat Bodenhamer kick off the “More Than Bricks” groundbreaking ceremony at Paragould First UMC.

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Many of us go through our days with ear buds in place, listening to our favorite songs or podcasts to the exclusion of everything going on around us. What if we did the same thing when living our lives, choosing to listen to Jesus' playlist and tuning out the anxiety, disruptions, and schedule overloads of the world?

Jacob Armstrong's new book, *A New Playlist*, examines this very idea. You'll discover how to cut through the distractions of life to hear God more clearly. You'll learn that saying “no” to the demands of the world is often the best “yes.”

Additional components for a six-week study include a comprehensive Leader Guide and a DVD and a guide to small groups titled *The Connected Life: Small Groups that Create Community*.



Abingdon Press
Growing in Life, Serving in Faith

COMING UP

Ecumenical spiritual formation retreat planned

With the theme "Journey to Wholeness," the Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation retreat will take place April 15–20 at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center, 1820 Ferncliff Road, Little Rock. Co-sponsored by the Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi Annual Conferences, the ecumenical retreat is designed to deepen clergy and lay participants' relationships with God through a daily rhythm of prayer, worship, study and reflection. Retreat leader is Pat Luna, a writer, speaker, teacher and consultant in the areas of spiritual formation, stewardship and fundraising.

Elise Eslinger, editor of the Upper Room *Worshipbook* and a leader in worship, music and spiritual formation, will be retreat worship leader. Jerry Webber, a pastor at Chapelwood UMC in Houston and spiritual director of the Center for Christian Spirituality, will focus retreat participants on the topic "Unfolding: Scripture, Stories and Poetry for Uncovering the Self in God."

Retreat cost, including a single

room, board and tuition, is \$625. Shared accommodations, board and tuition is \$525. A non-refundable deposit of \$75 is required. Space is limited; register at: <http://academy.upperroom.org/events/34>.

Mount Eagle to host Women's Retreat in April

"Seaside Escape," a beach-themed women's retreat, is planned for April 20–22 at Mount Eagle Retreat Center, 935 Beal Road, Clinton. Amy Machen, director of adult ministries at First UMC, El Dorado, will lead the retreat, which costs \$125 and includes accommodations, meals and study materials. For information, contact Mike "Sarge" Leonard at (501) 757-1875 or director@mounteagle.org.

Relationship enrichment workshop set

Forget the candy and flowers this Valentine's Day. Instead, give the gift of compassion. The Couples Center at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) is

conducting a four-part relationship enrichment workshop, to be held on Tuesday evenings from 7–9 p.m. The workshop will be held in the UAMS Hospital Lobby Gallery Feb. 13, 20, 27 and March 6. The series is designed for couples that are at any stage in their relationship and are motivated to make their bond stronger, happier and healthier. The series will be led by Dr. Chelsea Wakefield, Ph.D., LCSW, director of the Couples Center.

For more information, contact thecouplescenter@uams.edu.

Additional 'Leadership Unleashed' sessions available

Three new "Leadership Unleashed" dates and locations have been announced by the Arkansas Conference Center for Vitality. The sessions are designed for laity, particularly those in local church leadership roles, interesting in making

new disciples and leading new ministries in the midst of a changing world.

The additional sessions will be held April 5 at Greenwood UMC, April 10 at Trinity UMC, Fayetteville, and April 24 at Clinton First UMC. Other dates and locations are available in February, March and April. For information and to register, visit <http://vitality.arumc.org/leadership-unleashed>.



Celebrating the Blue and You Foundation grant to Ozark Mission Project are (from left) Rev. Greg Gibson of Fayetteville, OMP Advisory Board member; Nicole Ross of Jonesboro, OMP summer staff; Mallory Lindsey, OMP Recruitment and Logistics Director; Faulkner; Patrick Sullivan, Executive Director, Blue & You Foundation; Amy Shores, OMP Training Chair; and Daniel Curry of Benton, OMP Camp Director.

Grant funds more materials for home repair projects by OMP

Ozark Mission Project (OMP) has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas, a charitable foundation established and funded by Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

The funds are allocated for materials for home repair projects in communities across Arkansas, according to OMP Executive Director Bailey Faulkner.

"Being a small nonprofit that completely relies on donations through camper participation and our individual donations, this is a huge blessing," Faulkner said.

As one of 40 Blue & You grant recipients selected from among 226 applicants, OMP leaders learned of

the gift in December. Faulkner called it "a Christmas miracle."

The Foundation awards approximately \$2 million in grants annually to nonprofit or governmental organizations and programs that positively affect the health of Arkansans.

OMP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit mission of the Arkansas Area United Methodist Church, organized for ministry to persons in need in response to Jesus Christ's call to servanthood. OMP brings church youth groups to campsites around Arkansas where the youth, in turn, engage in the surrounding communities.

In the spirit of Christ, youth and

adults serve others who are in need of minor construction and yard work. In addition to the physical service projects, participants strive to meet social and emotional needs by spending part of their time visiting, sharing lunch and, if the neighbor so chooses, a devotional.

OMP was launched in 1986 by a group of United Methodist clergy and laity, with one camp and 35 participants. Today OMP hosts 12 camps each summer, serving all parts of Arkansas. More than 1,000 youth and young adults participate in OMP camps each summer.

For details about upcoming camp dates and participation, visit ozarkmissionproject.org.

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CLASSIFIEDS

PLACE A CLASSIFIED AD in the *Arkansas United Methodist* for 60 cents per word, no limit. Call 501-324-8035 or email editor@arumc.org. Deadlines appear in page 2 of this issue.

Mayflower UMC in Mayflower, Arkansas, seeks energetic part-time Youth Director for its youth group. Must be able to lead youth to Christ through a scriptural based atmosphere of love and youth activities, and maintain a good Christian relationship with the youth. Candidates with a Methodist background would be beneficial. Duties include Sunday school, children's church worship and youth fellowship on certain evenings through out the year. Part time position on average three to five hours per week. May be ideal for a college student or young adult. Salary is \$100.00 per week possibly more depending on experience. To apply for position or for more information please email: brazlewood@yahoo.com or revrickwilkins@sbcglobal.net.

Wesley United Methodist Church, Conway is seeking a part-time administrative assistant (18 hours/week). Job duties include typical secretarial activities and requires the individual to be self-motivating, work with minimal supervision, friendly, and proficient with various computer programs. A resume is required; for more information, please call (501) 327-7629.

WE NEED SPONSORS! The 20th Annual Arkansas Retired Pastor Day will be held Monday, October 22, at 12 noon at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion. All Arkansas UM retired pastors, spouses and surviving spouses are invited to attend. Our speaker will be Dr. Dennis Swanberg! If you would like to be a sponsor of the 2018 event, contact Dr. David W. Bush, First UMC, Stuttgart, at (870) 673-1131.



Faith Funds

A Lifetime of Serving and Giving

Brigadier General Bill Webster, USAFR, knows more about trusts and annuities than most of us will ever know. After 25 years of serving in the military, including in World War II, he led trust departments in Texas, Kentucky, founded the Trust Company of Florida and then moved to Little Rock to head the trust department at Union Bank. After a second retirement he worked for the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas for 25 years.

So when he says that charitable gift annuities from UMFA are a good buy, people listen. “Most people will want to provide for their church through their will. However, there are many advantages to purchasing a charitable gift annuity now or during your lifetime. The benefit of higher income and receiving an immediate income tax deduction are two pluses,” said Bill. “And if you use appreciated securities to purchase it, you can avoid capital gains taxes. It benefits both you and the Church.”

Now retired for a third time and living at Andover Place in Little Rock, Bill takes his own advice. He has two gift annuities at UMFA, one that benefits his church, St. Paul UMC in Little Rock, and one that benefits both the Foundation and his church.

“I saw the fantastic yields and investment return,” said Bill. “It was too good to pass up.” If you are interested in a charitable gift annuity, contact Janet Marshall, VP of Development, at jmarshall@umfa.org or call the Foundation.



The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas

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501-664-8632 • Toll free 877-712-1107 • Fax 501-664-6792 • www.umfa.org

UM Foundation grant helps complete chapel at Malvern correctional unit

The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas (UMFA) recently made an additional \$10,000 grant to the help complete the \$225,000 chapel at the Ouachita River Correctional Unit in Malvern. Previously, UMFA made a \$25,000 grant to the program.

“The UMFA Board of Directors are pleased to have a part in the building of the chapel,” said Jim Argue, UMFA President and CEO. “John Wesley’s dedication to prison visitation and significant contribution to prison reform inspires today’s Arkansas United Methodists to continue his work.”

The chapel was dedicated Dec. 4 and will be used by the men incarcerated at the Ouachita River Correctional Unit for religious services, training, and more.

“Our programming speaks to

building character, cultivating a work ethic and strengthening the ability to re-enter society,” said Rev. Norma J. Gillom, chaplain at the facility and pastor in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Gillom said fighting recidivism, the tendency of those convicted to return to prison, is one of her primary goals at the unit. Her experience in prison ministry has shown many men who participate in programs like those to be housed at the new chapel have returned to the workforce and are doing well.

“God calls his people to do his work,” Rev. Gillom said. “We have to be able to go where God calls us. We are each other’s keeper. I thank the Foundation for its help in our ministry.”

April event to focus on congregational care model

Congregational care is critical in every local church, and no one person can address all the hurt of a congregation or community. With that in mind, the Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kan., will host an event April 19–21 focusing on networking with other local church leaders regarding congregational care best practices and standards. The seminar is designed to train volunteers to become partners in ministry with pastors and staff to provide care for a congregation.

Several years ago, Church of the Resurrection developed a program transforming the way care is provided for the congregation. The church equipped volunteers to be Congregational Care Ministers (CCMs) and deployed them to work alongside pastors and staff to minister to and holistically care for the congregation. This partnership between lay and clergy has enabled Resurrection to provide a more consistent and deeper level of care to the church family. The ministry of Congregational Care is deliberate in connecting the church with people during difficult times.

A Pre-Conference is offered April 19 from 9:30–11:30 a.m. as an opportunity to dig deeper into particular topics. Participants may choose from three class options:

How to Start a CCM Ministry, Ministry to the Aging Community, or Depression, Anxiety and Addictions.

For more information, visit www.cor.org/ccm-seminar, or contact Kathy Carter at kathy.carter@cor.org or (913) 544-0272.

Registration is limited. Super Early bird rate of \$159 for the seminar and \$25 for the Pre-Conference is available through March 8. The regular registration fee is \$199 for the seminar and \$35 for the Pre-Conference.

The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection is located at 13720 Roe Avenue, Leawood, Kan.

Our Trajectory

Creating vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped to transform lives, communities and the world.

