

Special Issue

News from the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church

Arkansas

United Methodist

Final Edition

July 13, 2018

Volume 165 Issue 7

IN THIS ISSUE



New Conference staff welcomed

3



2018 Annual Conference in photos

8-9



Camp meetings held this month

15



Bound volumes of the *Arkansas United Methodist* dating to the 1880s are part of the United Methodist Archives collection.

Print era ends

Newspaper's pages tell the church's story for 138 years

BY JANE DENNIS
Interim Editor

The year is 1880. America's post-Civil War Era is giving way to the Gilded Age. Thomas Edison just invented that marvel of illumination, the light bulb. Rutherford B. Hayes is president. Annie Oakley is getting more famous every day for her sharp shooting. The United States is a nation with 38 states criss-crossed by train tracks for bellowing steam engines. And Arkansans,

it seems, are hungry for news.

After several attempts at newspaper publishing by Methodists, Rev. John W. Boswell expands a small paper he had been publishing in Morrilton, moves it to Little Rock, and renames it the *Arkansas Methodist*. Soon it is adopted as the official conference paper, with this pledge just below the masthead: "Devoted to the Interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Arkansas."

A newspaper is born.

[See Newspaper, page 4]

Annual Conference seeks 'Pathways to Hope'

Uncertainty, questions linger as 2019 General Conference nears

BY JANE DENNIS
Interim Editor

HOT SPRINGS—While the business-related nuts and bolts of doing ministry were tended to during the 2018 Arkansas Annual Conference here, an undercurrent of concern about the future of the United Methodist denomination accented the three-day gathering.

United Methodists from across Arkansas gathered June 17–20 at Bank of the Ozarks Arena at the Hot Springs Convention Center. The conference drew more than 1,200 voting clergy and lay members from more than 600 local churches, and guests.

Many conference presentations



Youth who are members-at-large to Annual Conference pray during the Way Forward update led by Bishop Gary Mueller.

centered on the official theme of the gathering, "Pathways to Hope." Yet, in light of the special General Conference on Feb. 23–26, 2019, in

St. Louis, which will deal with how the denomination views human sexuality, particularly in regard to its

[See Conference, page 3]

GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST: A word from the Bishop

Tough questions about our future

BY GARY E. MUELLER

What's going on in the Arkansas Annual Conference? A number of you have shared with me that you have seen a substantial shift



over the last couple of years. You're absolutely correct. The fact of the matter is that we are at a place we have not been before. First, we have significant divisions among us over issues of human sexuality. Second, the closer we draw to the February 2019 Called Session of General Conference, the more our anxiety, fear and uncertainty about the future gets lived out in our actions. Third, our personal political/cultural/theological ideology seems to have become more important than almost anything else, including our identity as Christians, relationships with each other, and covenant connection as United Methodists.

Is it really as bad as it seems? Probably not, but it is a very difficult time. I would hope our basic core Christian doctrine could hold us together, but that doesn't seem all that important in our current climate. I would like our relationships with each other to be transformed into something wonderful because Jesus is the head of the Body of Christ, but I don't see a lot of evidence of this actually happening. I would love for us to be connected by our deep commitment to creating vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped to transform lives, communities and the world. But these points of linkage are all very tenuous, but we can't even seem to agree on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

How do we navigate the coming months? Let's concentrate on walking God's four pathways to hope: Holding tight to the belief that God is still God, and God's not finished with us yet; Believing with heart, soul and

[See Questions, page 15]

Proud to be an American and a United Methodist

BY WILLIAM O. "BUD" REEVES
Special Contributor

The Bible clearly warns about idolatry of nation: "Put not your trust in princes..." (Psalm 146:3). Though Jesus and Paul both counsel respect for governing authorities (Matthew 22:21, Romans 13:1-7), it is the clear Biblical teaching that people of faith are subject to a higher authority and citizens of a greater Kingdom than any nation on earth. (Philippians 3:20)

Still it is customary around the birthday of our nation to thank God for our country, and I do, even more than once a year. I love our vast and beautiful nation, our history of democracy, our values—when we're at our best—of democracy, liberty, openness, and generosity. Jon



William O. "Bud" Reeves

Meacham, in his recent book *"The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels,"* writes, "In our finest hours, ... the soul of the country manifests itself in an inclination to open our arms rather than to clench our fists."

We have seen many clenched fists of late. Though our country seems wracked by conflict, turmoil and division at the moment, I still believe the fundamental values of our nation transcend our present difficulty.

We are still a nation in which the people rule. Recently, when a policy was enacted to separate immigrant children from their parents in detention centers along the Mexican border, there was a massive outcry, particularly from faith groups across the nation. The policy was soon reversed. (Although who knows what will happen by the time this column is published?)

Americans are a decent people, by and large. And despite the decline of regular church attendance across the nation, religious faith is still a key factor in our national consciousness. Religion is almost always a factor in

our political discourse, which can be problematic at times. But even if the politicians misquote Scripture or misinterpret our beliefs, there is still the assumption that at some level, faith is the foundation of America, and ultimately, everyone has to answer to God.

Our recent national travails have been likened to another period of disruption: 1968, the year both Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy were shot. The country was "coming apart at the seams," Walter Cronkite said, with race riots, protests over Vietnam, political violence—and hippies!

Also in 1968, the United Methodist Church was born. For 50 years, United Methodists have been making a witness to God's transforming grace in lives, communities, and the world. For 46 years, United Methodists have been arguing about issues of human sexuality, resulting finally in 2016 in an intractable, stalemated conflict which has resulted in prognostications of the schism or demise of our denomination.

But at our recent Annual Confer-

ence, the gathering of United Methodists from across the state, I saw hope for a different future. Petitions to General Conference to advocate for positions on either end of the spectrum—traditionalist and progressive—were voted down. There was significant support for a unifying, centrist vision of the church. There was hope expressed for the "Way Forward" that will be considered next year by General Conference. It seemed that the conference was willing to let those in leadership who have been intensively involved in the conversation for the last two years—the Commission on the Way Forward and the Council of Bishops—do the work the General Conference called them to do.

Above all, it was a good annual conference (and maybe this is the perspective of one who has been doing this for almost four decades) because we got to be with the family. In Arkansas, we know one another. We respect one another. Some of my best conversations at conference were with folks who disagree with me. But when all is said and done, I am still glad we are all related through our common

bond in the United Methodist Church.

Make no mistake, there were still disagreements. No consensus miraculously appeared. Our unity is still fractured. Like America, the UMC has had rough patches. But also like America, if we cling to our fundamental values, we will find a way. The future grows out of the past, and we are celebrating 50 years of vital mission and ministry across the globe and a theological heritage that goes back over 250 years. Again to quote Meacham, "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith."

Bishop Saenz in the ordination sermon called us to work for peace—the wholeness of *shalom*—because the God who transcends both the United States and the United Methodist Church is a God of peace, and God's will ultimately and undeniably will be done.

The Rev. Dr. Reeves serves as senior pastor of First United Methodist Church, Fort Smith. Email: breeves@arumc.org

GUEST COMMENTARY

Shifting attitudes at odds with truths found in the Bible

BY ROGER E. GLOVER
Special Contributor

An article in the May 4 *Arkansas United Methodist* suggested that since we have developed a more

liberal position on divorce we should develop a more liberal attitude toward homosexuality. There are several problems with this approach, with the first being Scripture. There are 20 references to human sexuality in

the New Testament. Not one of them approves any relationship outside of heterosexual, monogamous marriage.

Secondly, the Bible gives justifiable grounds for divorce; that is, "unfaithfulness." I worked for eight years as a volunteer in the field of domestic violence. If a spouse is being abused verbally or physically, that is a form of unfaithfulness. If one spouse has wrecked the finances of the couple with irresponsible spending, that is another form of unfaithfulness.

Thirdly, we must look at the Greek word used in Mark 10:11 and Matthew 19:10. The easiest way to do this is to get a copy of the Amplified Bible. The editors look at the key words in the passage and then give the

preferred translations, with several alternatives. They chose the English words "dismiss" and "repudiate." The last translation is "divorce." Although these words are sometimes used as synonyms, in practice, they were very different.

Jesus was addressing a serious social problem of his day. The liberal rabbis at the time had decreed that a man could send his wife away without divorcing her. He could recycle wives and not have the financial burden of the divorce. She was trapped in legal limbo. What Jesus actually said was "you cannot send your wife away."

Being politically correct is not always the Christian thing to do. Sometimes Christian love requires

that we confront people with the truth, as plainly laid out in the Bible. Grace can cover just about any sin but unrepentance.

Divorce is a failure to live up to God's perfect will. Yes, that would be a sin. However, not the unpardonable sin.

Rev. Glover is a retired elder in the Arkansas Conference who lives in Benton.

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Arkansas
United Methodist

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Jane Dennis, Interim Editor

www.arumc.org

The *Arkansas United Methodist* is the newspaper of record for the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church. It is issued monthly, on the first Friday of every month, in digital format. July 2018 will be the final issue available in newsprint.

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Advertising

We will no longer be accepting advertisements after the July 2018 issue.

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NEW CONFERENCE STAFF

Social Media Specialist joins Conference staff

Day Davis has joined the Arkansas Conference Center for Communication as Social Media Specialist. She is a University of Arkansas graduate, where she received a bachelor's degree in journalism with a focus on advertising and public relations.



Day Davis

Davis grew up in the First United Methodist Church of Monticello and has attended Central United Methodist Church in Fayetteville.

"She's bringing her love for God, her passion for others, and her strong work ethic to the Conference staff," said Conference Director of Communication Amy Ezell.

Bishop Gary E. Mueller shared, "We are so happy to have Day join the Center for Communication. Her expertise in social platforms and growing audiences will enable us to reach a critically important audience so we far more effectively can carry out our trajectory of creating vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped to transform lives, communities and the world."

Davis' primary responsibilities will include creating effective marketing campaigns for the Conference as well as managing engaging social media campaigns.

Arkansas Conference adds digital content editor to staff

Caleb Hennington has been named Digital Content Editor of

the Arkansas Conference Center for Communication.

"We are very pleased to have Caleb join the Center for Communication. His experience in publishing along with his fresh perspective brings excitement in sharing the stories of our Conference," Bishop Gary Mueller stated.

Hennington's responsibilities will include creating, editing, constructing the layout, and publishing the strategic content of *The Arkansas United Methodist: Living Our Faith*. He will also work closely with the rest of the communications team to create engaging and informative content for the Conference.

A native of Hamburg, Hennington earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism from Arkansas State University, with a minor in English.

Previously, he worked as a content strategist for a networking company, as well as a page designer for *The Saline Courier*. Hennington has also written freelance articles for various online publications. In college, he served as the editor-in-chief for the university's student newspaper, *The Herald*.

Merriwether named Developer of Ethnic Faith Communities

Rev. Rashim M. Merriwether Sr., pastor of Hunter United Methodist Church in Little Rock, has joined the Arkansas Conference staff as Developer of Ethnic Faith



Caleb Hennington

Communities.

A native of Milwaukee, Wis., Merriwether is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. He received his Master of Divinity Degree degree from Saint Paul School of Theology. In addition to the conference post, he will remain the pastor of Hunter UMC.

"Rashim brings a passion for the gospel and the local church. His dynamic leadership will enhance the ministry of creating more ethnic and multi-ethnic churches in the Arkansas Conference," said Bishop Gary E. Mueller.

Gretchen Simmons of the Hunter UMC executive team added, "We see this appointment as an opportunity to actually sow seeds into the church, the community, and the congregation."

Merriwether and his wife Andrea, are the parents of four sons: Aaron, Rashim Jr., Mathias and Isaiah.

Moore takes on duties as Developer of Clergy Recruitment

Michelle Moore has been named Developer of Clergy Recruitment for the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church. She began work in this new position July 1.

Moore's responsibilities in this part-time position will include developing and directing a coordinated system of clergy recruitment and tracking; working with the Cabinet, Conference Youth



Rev. Rashim Merriwether

Committee, Board of Ordained Ministry, Campus Ministries, Center for Vitality and other groups to develop an effective support system for persons exploring or pursuing their call into ministry; and developing and implementing an intentional system promoting a culture of call within the Arkansas Conference.

While Moore will be taking on new duties, she is not new to the Conference staff. She served as Director of Program and Marketing for Camp and Retreat Ministries since 2015, a position that was eliminated by the 2018 Annual Conference due to restructuring. She will continue to serve as the Conference Youth and Young Adult Ministries Coordinator, a position Moore has held since 2012.

"Michelle's previous experience working with youth, young adults and local church leaders, along with her familiarity with both our conference children's ministry and campus ministries makes her uniquely qualified to promote a call to ministry and create a unified system for clergy recruitment," Bishop Gary E. Mueller said. "Knowing that all clergy begin as laity, I am excited to have a lay person as qualified as Michelle to develop this important work."

A 2006 graduate of Hendrix



Michelle Moore

College in Conway with a Bachelor of Arts degree in religion, Moore also holds a master's degree in specialized ministry with an emphasis in youth ministry from United Methodist-related Southwestern College in Winfield, Kan., and certification in youth ministry from Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology.

Assistant Director of the Center for Administrative Services named

Megan Rugg has been hired as the new Assistant Director for the Arkansas Conference Center for Administrative Services. She is a certified public accountant with a specialty in auditing.

Rugg's primary responsibilities will be to maintain an internal audit plan for the Conference and district offices, provide training opportunities for church treasurers, and perform limited financial reviews at the direction of Council on Finance and Administration.

"As a United Methodist, I am passionate about helping others and believe that this position is an opportunity to carry out the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ," Megan said. She is a Hendrix College graduate and is a member of Little Rock's Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church.



Megan Rugg

Conference (from page 1)

clergy, uncertainty and confusion were also expressed alongside the hope-filled messages. Even Bishop Gary E. Mueller addressed concern in his Episcopal Address, saying, "I wish I could tell you that we have settled issues around human sexuality and everybody is happy. But the reality of what I must say to you is that the way forward is still going to be a confusing journey, with an uncertain ending."

The special General Conference is a response to an increasingly vocal division over homosexuality going back decades within the denomination. The 2016 General Conference closed with heightened

rumblings about a possible split over the human sexuality issue.

Pray for the church

Mueller gave a brief update on the Commission on a Way Forward—a 32-member, bishop-appointed group that has advised the Council of Bishops leading up to the General Conference—and the Council of Bishops' response, which he admitted did little but "muddy waters that were already muddy."

The bishop told the Arkansas body, "I understand your confusion, frustration and skepticism."

Mueller led conference members

in discussing in small groups the strengths and values of being a United Methodist Christian, praying and "remembering who we really are."

He concluded the exercise by asking the body to continue to be in prayer for the delegates to General Conference. He called on members to "fast, pause and pray for our church's mission and way forward during the 2019 General Conference."

Mueller added, "I know this: the day after General Conference, regardless of what happens, we still need to be about the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ."

[See Conference, page 6]

VITAL CONGREGATIONS



Members of Corning United Methodist Church have been collecting "Jesus Bucks" to donate to the local school weekend backpack food program. Here, children gather in front of the altar during a recent worship service to present their collection to Central Elementary School Principal Heather Clifton. Jesus Bucks are \$1 bills that have a "J" to the left of the picture of George Washington.

Newspaper (from page 1)

Boswell is remembered in history as the father of church journalism in Arkansas.

In the ensuing decades, the *Arkansas United Methodist* did surely grow, shrink, thrive and have an abundance of ups and downs, all while surviving and serving the church for 138 years.

This issue, July 2018, is the final edition of the *Arkansas United Methodist* to be produced as a traditional newspaper in printed form. Thus, this special commemorative issue is the last produced with the intention of holding it in your hands. Beginning in August, the Arkansas Conference will shift to producing a monthly online magazine called *Arkansas United Methodist: Living Our Faith*.

The early volumes of the *Arkansas Methodist*, and issues for decades to come, were as avidly received and read in Arkansas homes as any secular statewide newspaper in the state. The *Arkansas Methodist* competed for subscribers with other statewide papers such as the *Arkansas Gazette*, founded in 1819, and the *Arkansas Democrat*, founded in 1846.

Competition for advertisers existed as well. In the *Arkansas Methodist* of Jan. 8, 1890, for instance, advertisers included Union Sewing Machines, Hendricks, Cook & Co. Wallpaper and Window Glass, Carl & Tobey Wholesale Grocers, and M.M. Cohn & Co. Ayer's Cherry Pectoral promised "whooping cough prompt relief." The Iron Mountain Route was touted as "the only line running 3 daily trains between Little Rock and St. Louis," as well as routes to Galveston, Laredo and El Paso in Texas. For those considering higher education, there were large ads for Nashville College for Young Ladies in Tennessee, Logan Female College in Kentucky and Arkansas' own Quitman College (Male and Female).

The abundant news and feature stories and commentaries crammed onto the pages with hot type were not limited to church topics but documented noteworthy events that were eagerly consumed by readers regardless of church affiliation. Articles were about war, farming, books, travel, temperance, gambling, government, preaching, education, death, business, family or, deliver our souls, "a game of base ball on Sunday."

Opinion pieces, personal columns and editorials were penned by editors, bishops and laity, and voraciously consumed by an

audience of readers who, for many decades, relied on the *Arkansas United Methodist* for welcome bits of news outside their usually small sphere of daily life.

Walter N. Vernon, author of "Methodism in Arkansas, 1816-1976," devoted an entire chapter to the church's publishing efforts and the *Arkansas Methodist* in his comprehensive church history. Vernon chronicles in detail the work and impact of editors through the years, including Dr. A.R. Winfield (1884-1887), George Thornburgh (1889-1994), Dr. A.C. Millar, who served for 27 years (1904-1907 and 1916-1940), the father and son team of Edward T. Wayland and Ewing T. Wayland (1942-1960), Alfred A. Knox (1961-1973) and John S. Workman, who began in 1973 and was editor at the time Vernon's book came out.

For the first 100 years, the editor's post was filled by clergy under appointment. Then newspaperwoman Georgia M. Daily of Texarkana came along in 1983. Not only was she the first layperson to serve as editor, she was also the first female. Those who followed Daily's groundbreaking footsteps

were Jane Dearing Dennis, editor for 21 years, then Heather Hahn and Amy Forbus, followed more recently by interim editors Martha Taylor and Jane Dennis once again.

Each editor stamped the paper with a distinct style and reputation. Some were known for controversy, some for humor, others for approaching difficult issues with grace, grit and gumption.

Early on, Winfield set the tone for the popularity and influence of the paper, noted church historian Nancy Britton in her 2000 church history "Two Centuries of Methodism in Arkansas, 1800-2000." Britton writes:

"Indeed, it was Winfield who established the popularity and influence of the paper. 'Many of our people only take one paper,' he wrote in the issue of July 5, 1884, and he intended the paper to serve as more than just a religious organ. He included national and world news, state news, items of general interest, market news, correspondence from readers, editorials, and what he termed 'notes from the

field'—reports from pastors and churches throughout the state. ... The paper also included obituaries, book reviews, notes on temperance and even railway schedules for those planning to attend annual conferences. There were reports from district and quarterly conferences and revivals."

The influence and impact of the *Arkansas Methodist* was emphasized by Britton:

The Arkansas Methodist continued its popularity during Z.T. Bennett's tenure as editor. In 1891 the statement was made that only 165 newspapers in the United States issued more than 10,000 copies each week. The Arkansas Methodist was one of them and the only one in Arkansas. This figure is amazing considering the fact that the preachers were counted on to sell subscriptions.

Workman was at the helm in 1974, a crucial year in the history

of the *Arkansas Methodist*. The Board of Managers assumed greater responsibility for the paper and lobbied for increased support from the state's two Methodist bodies, the Little Rock Conference and North Arkansas Conference. The Board concluded "that the two conferences ought to consider the paper as one of its essential services to the churches, as well as a channel for accomplishing many of the aims of the conferences and their agencies." Ultimately, both conferences bolstered the paper with \$45,000 annually "so every Methodist in the state who desired the paper would receive it without additional cost." The infusion of funds and support led to an increase in the newspaper's circulation, from 17,000 to 31,000.

Workman went on to serve as a highly regarded and much-loved columnist and religion editor for the *Arkansas Gazette*.

Vernon noted that sermons and other inspirational articles have often filled the pages of the *Arkansas Methodist*.

"At times sermons or sermon series have been printed. One such series was in 1941 when there appeared sermons by the Rev. (now bishop) Aubrey G. Walton, James E. Major, Joel Cooper, and Fred G. Roebuck. In the same year, the Rev. (now bishop) Paul V. Galloway provided a series of articles on pastoral work; and Dr. O.E. Goddard had an article on



“Preparing for a Revival.” Two articles on the educational program were printed—one by pastor C. Ray Hozendorf of Mena and one by church school superintendent J.R. Henderson of Winfield Church, Little Rock.”

Over the years, the newspaper’s galleys have featured an abundance of topics and stories, including book reviews, “Christian issues,” Women’s Missionary department news, Hendrix College Happenings, Laymen’s Forum, Obituaries, For the Children/Little Helpers, International Sunday School Lesson, Benevolences, Arkansas Methodist Orphanage Report, Quarter Conference schedules, Personal and Other Items, Church News, Notes from the Field and more.

Here’s a sample of State News from 1884:

The prettiest house in Searcy is the jail, and the finest the court house—but Searcy has few criminals, because they have but few saloons.

History and geography were frequently celebrated as well. The Jan. 17, 1906, issue included this report from editor A.C. Millar, with the heading “In the Indian Country”:

We had time to run up to Pryor Creek, about 100 miles up the “Katy,” where a brother according to the flesh lives, whom we had not seen for about a dozen years. His wife is a Washbourne, whose grandfather, Rev. Cephas Washbourne, preached in Little Rock, and whose uncle, Mr. E.P. Washbourne, drew the famous sketch “Arkansas Traveler,” the scene being on Illinois Bayou, in Pope county. Both the preacher and the painter now lie buried in Little Rock. ...

The Indian Territory is rapidly changing. The vast expanse of prairie, where the wild flowers bloomed a few years ago in the richest profusion, is now largely fenced and cultivated. Towns are springing up like magic—the world moves. Let it move!

More recently, a Dec. 1, 2017, story by Martha Taylor provided this sample of inspiring local church ministry:

Jesus was pretty clear that no matter what people were hungry for—forgiveness, healing or a full stomach—it was the believers’ job to feed

them. The Rev. Jody Farrell, pastor of Genesis Church, a satellite campus of Central UMC Fayetteville, takes that teaching pretty seriously.

Any Sunday you’ll find members and the neighbors of the south Fayetteville campus serving up coffee, fruit, bacon, eggs, pancakes and the like with a side of genuine interest in one another’s lives.

The idea of providing a meal has been around for years, and the campus was already a haven for homeless persons living nearby and who often came for a meal. But Farrell sought something different. He envisioned worship incorporated into the meal, a breaking of bread between members of the same community. ...

Regardless of the era, the newspaper arrived as an “old friend” that consistently offered direct and outspoken opinions and inspirational stories that reflected the times and served to strengthen the faith of its readers.

The United Methodist Archives, located at Bailey Library on the campus of Hendrix College in Conway, is home to more than

130 years of bound volumes of the *Arkansas Methodist*. The earliest issue is 1884; there are no available copies of the publication from 1880–1883. A duplicate set of the newspaper volumes is housed at Donald W. Reynolds Library on the campus of Philander Smith College in Little Rock.

The archive staff is also in the process of scanning back issues of the publication, making them available for downloading, and developing a comprehensive index. These resources are available at www.arkansasumcarchives.com.

Looking back, this newspaper’s ink smudges on newsprint have documented a rich, colorful and important history over the past 138 years. The printed newspaper format may be changing, but the legacy of the *Arkansas United Methodist* remains forever.

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Walter N. Vernon, “Publishing Glad Tidings,” *Methodism in Arkansas, 1816–1976*, p.169–184.

Nancy Britton, “Methodist Publishing in Arkansas: 1851–1916,” *Two Centuries of Methodism in Arkansas, 1800–2000*, p.139–144

Arkansas Methodist back issues, United Methodist Archives, Hendrix College.

Online option replaces conference newspaper

This issue of the *Arkansas United Methodist* newspaper is the final print version of the monthly publication, according to Amy Ezell, director of the Arkansas Conference Center for Communication.

“The decision to move from a monthly newspaper to an online magazine has not been taken lightly,” Ezell said. “Our goal is to reach as many people as possible in the Conference, and an overwhelming majority of our people use email to communicate. Along with the ease of using interactive links and videos to gain more information, the online version will be easier to share and can be utilized from a smartphone.”

The new Digital Content Editor is Caleb Hennington. His responsibilities will be to oversee the editing, layout, story gathering and publication of the new online magazine.

“I’m excited to have the opportunity to continue sharing the stories of the amazing folks who live in our state, as well as the wonderful work that is being done by the Arkansas Conference,” Hennington stated.

The first issue of the new digital-first *Arkansas United Methodist* will launch in August and will feature a cover story on the Rev. Maxine Allen.

The magazine will be distributed through email addresses for those who have signed up for it, as well as being hosted on the Arkansas Conference website, arumc.org. Paid subscriptions will continue to be honored indefinitely, however new paid subscriptions will not be accepted effective immediately.

To accommodate those who want a print copy, there will be a new print-friendly link on the website, and this link will also be sent to each local church.

For details about how to subscribe to the new *Arkansas United Methodist*, contact Hennington at caleb.hennington@arumc.org or Ezell at amy.ezell@arumc.org.



Back issues of the *Arkansas Methodist* dating to the 1880s are housed at the United Methodist Archives.

Conference (from page 3)

Guest speakers

While travel and other delays caused a slight shake-up in the order of the three-day meeting agenda, Mueller took over preaching duties for the Sunday night opening worship service, trading his Tuesday evening preaching spot during the Service of Commissioning and Ordination with guest preacher Bishop Reuben Saenz Jr. of the Great Plains Area (Kansas and Nebraska), who arrived at the conference later than expected. After a delay caused by a health concern, guest speaker

Rev. Junius B. Dotson, General Secretary of the denomination's Discipleship Ministries, managed to squeeze in three energetic teaching presentations on discipleship in less than 24 hours.

Recalling his days of playing sports and coaching, Saenz advised the new class of pastors, as well as laity, that forming a huddle can be an important tool in the setting of ministry, to analyze the past and plan for the future. Consider "huddling up" in the face of fear "that causes despair and capitulation, when sin has

created separation from God, when you want to quit," Saenz said. "You will find yourself in lots of huddles in your ministry. It is your role to dispel fear with the peace and hope that only Christ can bring."

Saenz advised the new ordinands to "never take your ministry lightly and never take it for granted ... You've got to speak hope to God's people."

Dotson's teaching sessions focused on tools for understanding and strengthening discipleship, both individually and corporately. "Discipleship is not a class you graduate from, it's not a series of studies you attend and then you are done," Dotson said. "Discipleship is a lifelong journey ... a passion every day for knowing, growing, serving, sharing Jesus."

But most important, he said, "In order to make disciples, you must first BE a disciple."

People lead as they experience being led, he added. "It's more than just a function. It's also relational. Discipleship is a lifelong process. ... Intentional discipleship helps us remain focused, helps us keep the main thing the main thing."

Episcopal Address

In addition to preaching during the opening worship service, Mueller delivered his sixth Episcopal Address

before the Arkansas Conference on Monday morning. Signs of hope are evident throughout the state, he said, pointing out the conference's vibrant ministry with youth, impactful mission and outreach efforts such as Ozark Mission Project, local pastors responding to the call to ministry, quality of education at United Methodist colleges Philander Smith and Hendrix, and more.

He expounded on the conference theme, "Pathways to Hope," and encouraged United Methodist clergy and laity to take hope in these four truths: 1) God is still God and God is not finished yet; 2) We've still got Jesus and that's all we need; 3) We can experience the fullness of God's unconditional, invitational and transformational love in Jesus Christ that changes everything; and 4) It's not how "successful" we are, it's what Jesus' power can do.

Resolutions

Two resolutions were adopted by the conference.

A Resolution to End Child/Parent Separation was sponsored by the Conference Board of Church and Society and presented by chairperson Jay Clark. Drafted in response to recent U.S. government policy of "zero tolerance" for illegal immigrants entering the country

that has resulted in children being separated from parents, the resolution urges the U.S. Department of Justice to discontinue separating children from their families and called on "leaders and policymakers" to ensure that laws affirm "the inherent worth, dignity and human rights of all immigrants."

A Resolution Regarding Native American Ministries was sponsored by a group of 10 clergy and laity and presented by George Odell and Angela Gage. The resolution reinstates the Committee on Native American Ministry in the conference structure and calls on the body to actively work toward the awareness of and the inclusion of Native Americans within all aspects of the Annual Conference, including worship experiences.

In addition, a Resolution Affirming Women in Ministry was sponsored by a group called Arkansas Connection of Orthodox Wesleyans. The resolution called on the conference to "earnestly and enthusiastically endorse the full inclusion and equality of women as ordained elders and deacons, diaconal ministers and licensed local pastors among us." During discussion of the resolution, a group of about 50 lay and clergy women walked out the bar of the conference after



Eighteen persons were recognized during the 2018 Arkansas Annual Conference for completing Local Pastors Licensing School. They are: Jerrod Bachuss, Trinette Barnes, Dazzle Burns, Max Daugherty, Clayton Ferrell, Tonya Hancock, Terry Hughes, Phillip Jackson, William James, Bobby Jones, Regena Mason, William Nowell, Tyler Rushing, Andrew Smith, Renee Willett, Steve Wilson, Christopher Wright and Yesenia Zapata.

Awards recognize churches and individuals providing outstanding ministry, outreach

A number of awards and recognitions were announced during this year's Annual Conference. They included:

Foundation for Evangelism

The Harry Denman Evangelism Award, sponsored by the Foundation for Evangelism, honors United Methodists in each annual conference whose exceptional ministry of evangelism—expressed in Word (what), Sign (why), and Deed (how)—brings people into a life-transforming relationship with Jesus Christ. Two Arkansans were recognized: **David Leech**, a member of First United Methodist Church, Stuttgart, Denman Outstanding Laity Award; and the **Rev. Danita Waller-Paige**, pastor of White Memorial United Methodist Church, Little Rock, Denman Outstanding Clergy Award.

Methodist Family Health

Methodist Family Health recognized local churches that have made significant financial contributions and provided

exceptional volunteer support to MFH programs around the state. They included:

Generosity Awards: Fayetteville Central UMC, Hope First UMC, Brinkley UMC, Little Rock First UMC, Jonesboro First UMC and Searcy First UMC

Volunteer Awards: Rogers First UMC, El Dorado St. Paul UMC, Magnolia First UMC, Forrest City UMC, Sardis UMC, Little Rock Asbury UMC, Pocahontas UMC and Batesville First UMC

Methodist Federation for Social Action

The Lucy Foster Service Award for dedication in the promotion of social justice was presented posthumously to **Dr. Rob Sherer** by the Methodist Federation for Social Action. Established in honor of one of the founders of the Arkansas chapter of MFSA, the award was presented by Kyle Forehand, great-grandson of the award's namesake, and accepted on behalf of the Scherer family by Harold Hughes.

A graduate of the University of

North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a Rockefeller Fellow at Yale University Divinity School, Sherer was active in the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s and participated in the March on Washington with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., hearing the iconic "I Have A Dream" speech from just a few feet away from King. Sherer served as Tulane University's Archivist for more than 15 years. After moving to Arkansas, his love of social justice and history converged with service on the boards of the Arkansas Conference Commission on Archives and History and the United Methodist Museum of Arkansas and active involvement in MFSA.

Board of Ordained Ministry

Rev. F. Gladwin Connell, retired elder, of Little Rock, received the 2018 Barnabas Award, presented by the Arkansas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Established in honor of the late Rev. Jim Beal, the Barnabas Award recognizes persons who have "a heart for pastors" and show special interest in



Rev. Danita Waller-Paige bursts into song upon receiving the Denman Award for Evangelism.

aiding pastors in the entry process, as well as in the work of ministry. Connell joined the former Little Rock Conference as a probationary member in 1961 and was ordained an elder in full connection in 1963. He served local churches, was conference director of youth ministries, a district superintendent and delegate to Jurisdictional and General conferences before retiring in 2000.

Connell has been an advocate for both pastors and congregations throughout his ministry. He has guided and helped many persons enroll in Hendrix College, seminary and other courses of ministerial study and service. Numerous pastors and church leaders credit Connell with having a profound impact on their lives at formative times in their faith journey and service to the church.

voicing disappointment at what they termed “the lack of women consulted in forming the resolution.” The resolution was referred, to allow for “holy conferencing.”

Paying up

Funds contributed to an all-in-fun “snarky jar” that Mueller placed front and center on the stage added up quickly. Members of the conference, as well as guest speakers and other presenters, were encouraged to add a contribution for any “snarky comment,” comments considered to be bragging, or for referring to members of the conference by the incorrect term, “delegates.” With proceeds going to the conference 200,000 Reasons To Fight Childhood Hunger initiative, \$931 was collected.

Connectional strength

The Office of Connectional Ministry was lauded for leadership that embodies the trajectory of the conference, guided by the mission statement “Creating vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped to transform lives, communities and the world.”

Connectional Ministry provides the umbrella for a variety of conference ministries and services, including new church/mission engagement, campus ministry, youth and children’s ministry, feeding ministries, camp and retreat ministry, Volunteers in Ministry/disaster relief, global ministry, interfaith ministries and ethnic ministries, to name but a few.

“Our connectional system is one of our strengths, one of our joys,” said the Rev. Jim Polk, Director of Connectional Ministries in a video highlighting the varied ministries. “Our connectional ministries allow people to come together to do

ministry that none of us could do by ourselves.”

Foundation update

With assets in excess of \$165 million, the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas is the sixth largest United Methodist Foundation in the nation, reported Clarence Trice, senior vice president and chief financial officer of the Foundation. More than \$5.5 million in grants were distributed to United Methodist ministries and institutions in 2017.

Arkansas seminary scholars are among the recipients, Trice added, with 34 full scholarships being awarded since the Seminary Scholarship program was begun in 2000. Each scholarship is valued at approximately \$22,000, allowing most students to begin their ministry in Arkansas free from debt.

In addition, in 2017, the Foundation made a \$250,000 challenge grant to support renovation of facilities at Lydia Patterson Institute in El Paso, Texas, a United Methodist high school for Hispanic students. Installments of grants pledged to Philander Smith College and Hendrix College were also made.

A special time of remembrance was held in memory of Jim Argue Jr., executive director of the Foundation.

More actions

Other actions approved by the conference included:

- **A Camp and Retreat Ministries Task Force** reported that one conference camp, Tanako, is currently accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). The remaining three camps—Mount Eagle, Shoal Creek and Bear Creek—were given until Dec. 31, 2019, to obtain ACA accreditation or risk losing relationship status with the

[See Conference, page 13]

Saints of the Conference remembered at Celebration of Life service

Arkansas Conference clergy members and spouses who have died in the year since the 2017 Annual Conference were remembered at a June 18 Service of Celebration of Life. Rev. Mary Jane Cole, spiritual director with Sacred Path and associate pastor at First United Methodist Church, Little Rock, brought the message.

Those memorialized at this service are:

Thomas A. Abney, Lois A. Anderson, Gertrude Bitter, Venita Bruner, H. Frank Cook, Dewey Dark, Leon T. Dixon Jr., Edwin Bland Dodson, Gleda Marie Edwards,

William D. “Bill” Elliott, Rita Kaye Hammett Evans, Marion Fleming, Peggy Lann, Jerry L. Lumpkin, Gary B. Lunsford, James Edward Major, Lillie R. Major, Albert C. Marlar, Carlos E. Martin, John Pershing Miles, Rebecca J. Miller, Earl Thomas Moreland, Sylvia L. Nosc, Eva Louise Pettus, Carol Ann Robbins, Elizabeth “Betty” Embrey Robertson, Robert P. Sessions, Wensil Smith, Ellis Edward “Ed” Warren, Sondra Warren, Dorothy Yarnell Warden.

Prayers shawls honoring the lives of those who died were presented to their family members.

Years of service applauded as 25 clergy members retire

Twenty-five clergy members were recognized for their service as they moved toward retired status at the 2018 Arkansas Annual Conference. The retirees have a combined total of more than 600 years of ministry.

During a Celebration of Retirees, each honoree received a retirement certificate, retirement pin and a plaque of appreciation from the Board of Ordained Ministry.

The 2018 retirees are:

- Maxine Allen, Full Elder; 23 years
- David E. Baker, Full Elder; 40.25 years
- Robert C. “Bobby” Bell, Full Elder; 42 years
- Walter L. Burnett, Part-time Local Pastor; 23 years
- Rufus R “Bob” Burnham Jr., Full Elder; 40 years
- David Caswell, Part-time Local Pastor; 11.75 years
- Austin “Hawk” Coleman, Part-time Local Pastor; 8 years
- Jenni Duncan, Deacon, Full Connection; 20 years
- Bill L. Fish, Full Elder; 36.5 years
- Thomas T. Frase, Full Elder; 18.5 years
- James E. Harris, Associate Member; 15 years

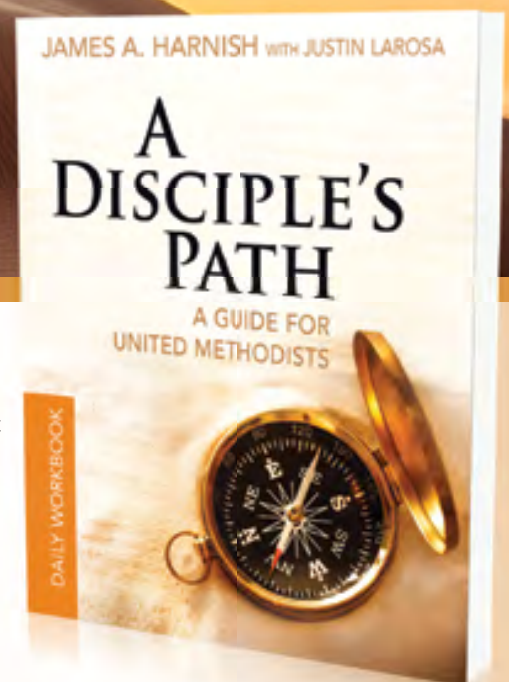


Persons taking retired status, along with family members, sing at the opening of the service celebrating their ministries.

- Robert Hunt, Full Elder; 24.75 years
- Richard Lancaster, Full Elder; 44 years
- P. Diane Miller, Part-time Local Pastor; 14.5 years
- Thompson W. Murray, Full Elder; 31.5 years
- Carl Ownbey, Full Elder; 8 years
- Lewis T. See, Full Elder; 40 years
- Charles L. Sigman, Full Elder; 21 years
- Dennis Spence, Full Elder; 43 years
- Carol Ann Stewart, Part-time Local Pastor; 5 years
- Lynn D Strang, Part-time Local Pastor; 16 years
- Mace Straubel, Associate Member; 24 years
- Sandra Wanasek, Deacon, Full Connection; 18.5 years

DISCIPLESHIP FROM A DISTINCTLY WESLEYAN PERSPECTIVE

Prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness...this is what we commit to when we become members of The United Methodist Church, and it’s a big step. But A Disciple’s Path helps us look beyond membership, presenting an engaging approach to discipleship from a distinctly Wesleyan perspective. Discipleship is ongoing, so the 6-week study is perfect for new-member groups, but also works well in small groups of long-time members. It helps you develop spiritual practices, discover your unique gifts, and engage in ministry that brings transformation to your own life and to the lives of others and the world.



Resources include:
Daily Workbook | Leader Guide
Companion Reader | DVD

Abingdon Press
Growing in Life, Serving in Faith

Cokesbury
Cokesbury.com | 800.672.1789



Bishop Reuben Saenz

ARKANSAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018
Pathways to Hope



Rev. George Odell, Rev. Angie Gage



Mary Lewis Dassinger, Todd Vick



Rebekah Dodson, Bishop Gary Mueller, John Mark Mathis



Rev. Junius Dotson



ANNUAL CONFERENCE PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHEN GIDEON, RODNEY STEELE, STEPHEN COBURN AND MARCIA DUNBAR.



Bishop Mueller, Allyson Elizabeth Ruehr



The Extended Cabinet



Dr. Bill Tsutsui

Arkansas Conference Appointments 2018–19

Names of those changing appointments as of July 1, 2018, are listed in **bold type**. TBS: To be Supplied

CENTRAL DISTRICT

District Superintendent **Blake Russell Bradford**
 ADONA Richard Gifford
 ARGENTA James W. Choate
 Deacon Jessica Waddell Teegarden
 ASBURY LITTLE ROCK Mary Hilliard
 Associate Douglas Ray Walker
 BENTON FIRST Benjamin William Crismon
 Associate **Taylor Loy**
 Deacon Garry Dean Teeter
 BETHEL JACKSONVILLE **Jerry Martin Bowie, Jr.**
 BETHLEHEM LONOKE Charles Watt
 BRYANT FIRST **Susan Ledbetter**
 CABOT Stephen P. Dickinson
 Associate **Steven Wilson**
 CANVAS COMMUNITY **Gail Cole Brooks**
 Deacons Edward Paul Atkins
 Melissa Thomas
 CARLISLE FIRST Randy H. Rowlan
 CENTERVILLE Lana Gartner
 CLEVELAND Suanne Morgan
 CONCORD LONOKE William Stephenson McMahon
 CONGO Polly Burton
 CONWAY FIRST Michael Roberts
 Associate Lauren Kristine DeLano
 DES ARC FIRST Naomi P. Rogers
 EBENEZER CONWAY TBS
 ENGLAND Diane Hughes
 FAITH GEYER SPRINGS David D. Hoffman
 GARDNER MEMORIAL AMBOY Mary Candace Barron
 GRACE CONWAY **Herschel Lee Richardson, Jr.**
 GRACE EAST END George Thomas Jones
 Associate Lonzell Kendrick Blackmon
 GRAHAM CHAPEL/OAKLAND Tammy Garrison
 GREENBRIER FIRST Kevin Lyon
 HAMILTON/HUMNOKE **Larry Edward LeMasters**
 HAZEN/DEVALLS BLUFF Deanna L. McCormack
 HEBRON CARLISLE Roger Crouch
 HENDERSON Melvin Moss
 HICKORY PLAINS Deborah D. Harrison
 HIGHLAND VALLEY **Ulysses C. Washington**
 Associate Jennifer Dawn Williams
 HOPE KOREAN Sun Ug Choh
 HUNTER LITTLE ROCK Rashim Merriwether
 JACKSONVILLE FIRST Nathan Joel Kilbourne
 KEO Jemmie Reynolds
 LAKEWOOD Luke Conway
 Associate Jonathon Michael Bevil
 Deacon Cynthia Shaw Henry
 LEVY David Ray Hawkins
 LITTLE ROCK FIRST David C. Freeman
 Associate Donna Hankins-Hull
 Deacons Mary Jane Cole
 Haley Jones
 Adam Kirby
 LONOKE FIRST **Robert Holifield**
 MABELVALE Robert K. Marble
 MARKS CHAPEL Terry DeWayne Hughes, Sr.
 MAUMELLE FIRST **Aubrietta Lynn Jones**
 Associate **Andrew Suite**
 MAYFLOWER Richard Wilkins
 McCABE CHAPEL Johnnie Davis
 MORRILTON FIRST Katherine G. Pearce
 MOUNT CARMEL VILONIA Carey Chrisco
 MOUNT PLEASANT LITTLE ROCK Mary N. Jones
 MOUNT ZION LONOKE Robbin Dale Haley
 NAYLOR William Ferguson

NEW HAVEN LITTLE ROCK Norma Gillerson
 NEW ZION/MOUNT ZION CENTER RIDGE James Lee Scruggs
 North Little Rock First Elizabeth Lynn Kilbourne
 Associates James W. Choate
 Brent Higdem
 NORTH PULASKI LaNita Anne Daniels
 OAK FOREST Michael Blanchard
 OLD AUSTIN David Randle Steele
 PARKVIEW/NEW HOPE BENTON **Shari Day**
 PERRYVILLE Chanda Adams
 PLEASANT HILL ALEXANDER Alicia I. Finch-McCastlain
 PRIMROSE Charles H. Green
 PULASKI HEIGHTS Britt Skarda
 Associates Philip Jayphen Clark
 **Andrea Cummings**
 Jeffery Bernard Hampton
 Belinda Price
 Betsy Singleton Snyder
 QUAPAW QUARTER Keith Duane Coker
 SAINT ANDREW LITTLE ROCK Charlie E. McAdoo
 Deacons Jenni L. Duncan
 Ann Michelle Whitfield
 SAINT JAMES LITTLE ROCK Carness Vaughan
 Associates Claire M. Caldwell
 Matthew T. Carter
 Gregory Schick
 Deacon Martha S. Taylor
 SAINT JAMES LONOKE David Scruggs
 SAINT PAUL LITTLE ROCK Richard S. Mitchell
 Deacon James Scott Moore
 SAINT PAUL MAUMELLE LaVon Post
 SALEM BENTON **Justin Ledbetter**
 SALEM CONWAY William Todd Vick
 SARDIS Phillip Troy Conrad
 **Clayton Ferrell**
 SOUTHBEND Garren Earle Hagemeyer
 SPRINGFIELD/MALLETOWN Max Austin Daughtery
 SYLVAN HILLS Sara Darlene Bayles
 THE JOURNEY/
 MOUNT TABOR-CABOT Jeffery Trent Warrick
 THERESSA HOOVER MEMORIAL **Deborah Bell**
 TRASKWOOD Thomas Crawford
 TRINITY LITTLE ROCK Roy Patterson Smith
 Deacon George Hull
 TRINITY NORTH LITTLE ROCK Gerald Meeks
 VILONIA James Clark Kjolraug
 WARD/SIXTEENTH SECTION Carol Jean Grace
 WESLEY CHAPEL LITTLE ROCK/
 DUNCAN Ronnie L. Miller-Yow
 WESLEY CONWAY/PLUMMERVILLE **Patricia Butler**
 WESTERN HILLS **Nathaniel Thomas Grady, Sr.**
 WHITE MEMORIAL Danita Waller-Paige
 WINFIELD Vida R. Williams
 WYE MOUNTAIN Richard Gifford

Extension Ministries

HORIZONS STEWARDSHIP COMPANY James Clifton
 Christopher
 CENTRAL TEXAS CONFERENCE Lawson Leonard Delony
 DAKOTAS-MINNESOTA CONFERENCE Carolyn Doering
 Kirk Doering
 OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE **Donna Hendricks**
 TEXAS CONFERENCE **Colin Bagby**
 WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
 CONFERENCE **Carter Ferguson**
 BAPTIST HEALTH SCHOOLS
 OF LITTLE ROCK Melissa Thomas
 CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL Adam Kirby

DAILY BREAD COUNSELING BRYANT Garry Dean Teeter
 EQUIDISCOVERY Martha S. Taylor
 FORREST HEIGHTS STEM
 FACULTY Jessica Waddell Teegarden
 SACRED PATH, INC. Mary Jane Cole
 UAMS George Hull
 WELL SPRING Ann Michelle Whitfield
 GARRETT-EVANGELICAL
 THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY Kathryn Dunn Chambers
 DIACONAL MINISTRY CENTRAL David W. Clemmons
 David L. French
 Jim Walsmith
 CENTER FOR VITALITY Deidre Jo Roberts
 **Michelle Morris**
 CONNECTIONAL MINISTRY/
 ASSISTANT TO BISHOP James P. Polk
 HENDRIX COLLEGE J. Wayne Clark
 Judith J. Whitney
 INTERFAITH ARKANSAS Stephen Jean Copley
 McMURRAY UNIVERSITY Martha D. CashBurless
 NEW FAITH COMMUNITIES **Jeffery L. Jackson**
 **Rashim Merriwether**
 OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY Rockwell F Jones
 PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY Rebekah Linn Miles
 PHILANDER SMITH COLLEGE
 CHAPLAIN Ronnie L. Miller-Yow
 WESLEY FOUNDATION UA LITTLE ROCK Jana Dawn Green
 WESLEY FOUNDATION UCA Lloyd Blake Langston
 CENTRAL ARKANSAS VETERANS
 HEALTHCARE SYSTEM Leonard Higgins
 TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
 CRIMINAL JUSTICE Catherine Estes
 HONORABLE LOCATION William S. Briant, Jr.
 Susan Elizabeth Gladin
 Jon Mac Taylor
 FAMILY LEAVE Regina Holtman Gideon
 **Brittany Richardson Watson**
 MEDICAL LEAVE Lynn Ann Lewis McClure
 Leslee Lynn Phillips

NORTHEAST DISTRICT

District Superintendent Johnna J. Galloway
 ANTIOCH/GARNER James H. Turner
 ASH FLAT/EVENING SHADE Larry Morris
 AUGUSTA/BALD KNOB Melanie Lauren Tubbs
 BATESVILLE FIRST **John Mark McDonald**
 BAY Millie Diane Wimberley
 BEEBE Matthew I. Daniels
 BETHESDA CAMPGROUND Carl Hudson
 BLACK ROCK/LYNN Dennis Calaway
 BLYTHEVILLE FIRST William Zachary Roberts
 BONO Thomas Dellinger
 BRADFORD/PLEASANT PLAINS William P. Mills
 BROOKLAND/UNION GROVE **Cory Pfeifer**
 CALICO ROCK/SPRING CREEK Laura Jo Prange
 CAMPGROUND/WARREN'S CHAPEL Everett Isom
 CAVE CITY/BEAR CREEK **John Mark Moore**
 CENTRAL AVENUE BATESVILLE Paul E. Seay, Sr.
 CHEROKEE VILLAGE Angela Gage
 Associate Jimmy W. Anderson
 CHRIST UNITED **Alma Rita Hastings**
 CHRIST WAY Charles Miller
 CLINTON George Edwin Odell
 CONCORD/CEDAR GROVE FLORAL Steve Long
 CORINTH TBS
 CORNERSTONE JONESBORO Kathleen L. McMurray
 Deacon Samantha Meadors

Arkansas Conference Appointments 2018–19

Names of those changing appointments as of July 1, 2018, are listed in **bold type**. TBS: To be Supplied

CORNERSTONE PLEASANT PLAINS/ CUSHMAN James D. Wheeler	SEARCY FIRST David Paul Orr Associate William Blake Schrepfer	DARDANELLE FIRST/LIBERTY HALL James A. Benfer Associate Vitalino Mendez
CORNING John Franklin Michael	SHARP/OAK RIDGE TBS	DIAMOND CITY/ST PAUL'S HARRISON/ OMAHA Mark Donald
DAMASCUS Vaughn Marsden	SHILOH JONESBORO Mace P. Straubel	DOVER Heather Sprinkle
DELL Marilyn Webb	SHILOH PARAGOULD/PRUETT'S CHAPEL Paul Ed Seay, Jr.	ELKINS Charles Randall Cooper
DESHA/JAMESTOWN Randy Seale	SHIRLEY Jan Vandygriff	ELM SPRINGS Jonathan Griesse
ELI LINDSEY/FRIENDSHIP RAVENDEN John Stoll	SIDNEY TBS	EUREKA SPRINGS Blake A. Lasater
FAIRFIELD BAY Paul Strang	SOUTHSIDE Roger B. Hook	EVERTON/BERGMAN Debbie Fink
FARM HILL Robert Hager	STONE POINT/FLOYD Robert Mark Quick	FAITH FORT SMITH Charles W. Armour
FISHER STREET/SEDGWICK Donald Lewert	TRUMANN/LEPANTO Jeff Weaver	FARMINGTON Charles Dee Harper
GRIFFIN MEMORIAL Kenneth R. Lee	TUCKERMAN/SWIFTON Jerry Pentecost	FORT SMITH FIRST William O. Reeves
GRIFFITHVILLE/DOGWOOD Kathy N. DeBusk	UMSTED MEMORIAL/EMORY CHAPEL Tonya Hancock	Associate William Dane Womack
GUM SPRINGS SEARCY TBS	WALNUT RIDGE/HOXIE J. Beth Perdue	Deacon Janice Sudbrink
HARDY Kay Brogdon	WEINER/FISHER Jesse James	ENTRY George Adkins
HARMONY/MOUNT PISGAH Donna Harvey	WESLEY COTTER James "Jimmie" F. Snow	GODDARD Kim Cloninger
HARRISBURG Michael Darryl Utley	WHITEHALL/FAKES CHAPEL Stephen Anderson	GOSHEN John Humphries
HAZEL EDWARDS MEMORIAL/ OIL TROUGH Clayton Bulice	WILD CHERRY Marty Sanders	GRACE ROGERS Ramiro Lizcano
HEBER SPRINGS Thomas Toombs	WILSON/KEISER Gary Yarbrough	GRACE COMMUNITY John Jeffrey Jones
Associate David Andrew Ruehr	WISEMAN TBS	GRAVELLY/BLUFFTON Joy Carmean
HOLIDAY HILLS C. Daniel Brand	WESLEY FOUNDATION ASU Samantha Meadors	GRAVETTE/DECATUR Heath Williams
HORSESHOE BEND Kenneth R. Anderson		GREEN FOREST Michael Bolin
HUNTER Tom Machen	Extension Ministries	GREENWOOD John Embrey
IMBODEN/SMITHVILLE Michael C. Dodson	U.S. ARMY David Carl Eaton	Associate Lyn Poplin
JONESBORO FIRST John P. Miles, II	LEAVE OF ABSENCE William Clint Black	HARMON J. Michael Callahan
Associates Patty Sue Soward	MEDICAL LEAVE Larry W. Martineau	HARRISON FIRST Carl D. Palmer
. Casey Turner	. . . . . Gregory A. Webb	HARTFORD/MIDLAND Chris Rink
JUDSONIA/KENSETT Gilliam Sills		HARTMAN Gina Hamlin
LEACHVILLE/CARAWAY Jason Sutfin	NORTHWEST DISTRICT	HATFIELD/MOUNTAIN VIEW MENA Bryan Richardson
MAMMOTH SPRING CAMP Ryan Spurlock	District Superintendent Stephen Douglas Coburn	HAYS CHAPEL Paul Marshall
MANILA/COMMUNITY Tony J. Huffman	ALMA/KIBLER Douglas Phillips	HERITAGE James Wesley Hilliard
MARKED TREE/JOINER Robert Daniel Partlow	ALPENA/SHILOH DRY FORK Jerry Michael Bishop	Associates Brian Seewald
MARMADUKE Everett Herman Blakely	ALTUS/GRENADES CHAPEL Regena Marie Mason	. . . . . LaToya Shepherd
MAYNARD Rockey Earl Starnes	ARKANSAS KOREAN MISSION Hyeong Kwon Jung	HIGHFILL/SULPHUR SPRINGS Andrew Smith
McCRORY/COTTON PLANT Carla Ray Thompson	ATKINS/BELL'S CHAPEL Roy Beth Kelley	HIGHLANDS Robert Blackwell Cloninger
McRAE TBS	BELLA VISTA FIRST Jeanne Williams	HUNTINGTON Frank L. Grubbs
MELBOURNE/GUION William Grothe	Deacon Brenda Dianne Wideman	HUNTSVILLE/PRESLEY CHAPEL Bradley Keith Moore
MONETTE/LAKE CITY Jerry W. Reed	BELLEFONTE/VALLEY VIEW Susan Kramer	JASPER Byron Wesley Mann
MOOREFIELD LaVon Long	BENTONVILLE FIRST William Kurt Boggan	JOURNEY HISPANIC MISSION TBS
MOUNT CARMEL JONESBORO N. Wayne Clark	Associate Eric Meyer	LAMAR/MOUNT OLIVE CLARKSVILLE Beth Latham
MOUNT PLEASANT QUITMAN Paige Gustin	Deacon Rebecca Boggan	LESLIE/MARSHALL Micheal L. Proctor
MOUNTAIN HOME FIRST Royal Keith Dodson	BERRYVILLE Andrew Wayne Hughes	LIVING WATERS AT CENTERTON Heath R. Bradley
Associate Heather Spencer Clawitter	BLAND CHAPEL Brian Youngs	MANSFIELD/HACKETT Richard P. Rogers
MOUNTAIN VIEW/SAINT JAMES— MOUNTAIN VIEW Paul B. Coy	BOONEVILLE/WASHBURN Michael Andrew Smith	MENA FIRST Pauleen Ann Ferris
NEWPORT FIRST Ronald Jeremy Pressgrove	BRIGGSVILLE Susan May Fisher	MIDLAND HEIGHTS Daniel Lane Williams
NORFORK Raymond R. Bachman	BULL SHOALS/YELLVILLE Charles B. Beevers	MISSION Dazzle Burns
OAK GROVE SEARCY Stephen Ellis Waggoner	CECIL Dale Richardson	MOUNT OLIVE VAN BUREN TBS
OSCEOLA Rollie Thomas Mullins	CEDAR GROVE YELVILLE/PLEASANT RIDGE Kem Reeder	MOUNT PLEASANT TBS
OXFORD Bobby Coleman	CENTRAL FAYETTEVILLE Mary Jan Davis	MOUNTAIN VIEW ALMA/ NEWBERRY CHAPEL Robert M. Jeffery
PANGBURN Fleming "O.D." Turner	Associates Jody Lynn Farrell	MULBERRY/DYER Philip Costner
PARAGOULD FIRST John Andrew Fleming	. . . . . Gregory Gibson	NEW HOPE VAN BUREN Lynn David Strang
Associate Patricia Bodenhamer	. . . . . Steven K. Pulliam	OAKLEY CHAPEL Shane D. Pair
PIGGOTT/WRIGHT'S CHAPEL/MARS HILL John Hiegel	CENTRAL FAYETTEVILLE/UA WESLEY Associate Emily L. Burch	OLA/PLAINVIEW/WAVELAND Lonnie M. Landers, Sr.
PLEASANT GROVE JONESBORO Jimmie Stillwell	CENTRAL LINCOLN/MORROW Rachel Krest	OZARK Carlton N. Cross
PLEASANT HILL/PINE LOG James "J.R." McElhannon	CENTRAL ROGERS James H. Lenderman	PARIS/MAGAZINE Judy Hall
POCAHONTAS James Wainscott	Associate Matthew H. Johnson	PARKS/SQUARE ROCK Roger Rice
POWELL'S CHAPEL TBS	Deacons Pamela Cicioni	PEA RIDGE/BRIGHTWATER John Scott Stewart
QUITMAN Shawn Gustin	. . . . . J. Lester Oliver	POTTSVILLE Mildred Faith Bryant
RAVENDEN/RAVENDEN SPRINGS Danny Roark	. . . . . Dawn Spragg	PRAIRIE GROVE FIRST Lee Benjamin Myane
RECTOR Jacob Steven Lynn	CHARLESTON Daniel Thueson	PRAIRIE VIEW/PIONEER MEMORIAL Aaron Madden
ROCK SPRINGS LAFE/ RAMER'S CHAPEL Howard Mark Trout	CHERRY HILL Deborah L. Head	ROGERS FIRST Michael Mattox
ROSE BUD David T. Jones	CHICKALAH James A. Benfer	Deacon Helena Cathy Caudle
RUSSELL Treva Mills	CITY HEIGHTS Randy L. Miller	RUSSELLVILLE FIRST Ruben Anthony Griffin
SAINT PAUL JONESBORO Billy Vanderbilt	CLARKSVILLE Larry Eugene Kelso	Associate Sarah Rachel Lowenberg
SAINT PAUL SEARCY Judy Wills Rudd	COLES CHAPEL/BRANCH Janet Barrow	SAINT JAMES FAYETTEVILLE Jeffery L. Blessingame
SALEM/SALEM VIOLA Velda Bell	DANVILLE TRINITY/DANVILLE/HAVANA Thomas Sullinger	

Arkansas Conference Appointments 2018–19

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SAINT PAUL FORT SMITH Steven M. Poarch
Deacon Mark L. Waynick
SAINT PAUL GRAVEL HILL Jon Scheible
SEQUOYAH Sara Cole Pair
SILOAM SPRINGS FIRST Gary Clark Atkins, Jr.
SPRINGDALE FIRST Andrew C. Thompson
Associates Todd Martin Lovell
. Jennifer Ryerson
. Rob Williams
TRINITY FAYETTEVILLE/VINEY GROVE Terry M. Gosnell
VALLEY SPRINGS TBS
VESTA Geral Lynn Holloway
VIETNAMESE FORT SMITH TBS
VIETNAMESE VAN BUREN Daniel Joseph Nguyen
WALDRON BIRDSVIEW Patricia Diane Miller
WALTREAK Larry Pat Millard
WEDINGTON Joseph W. Hall
WESLEY FORT SMITH/CAVANAUGH **Zeke Allen**
WESLEY RUSSELLVILLE **Michael Alan Lowenberg**
WINSLOW Rick Broadway
WOODLANDS Ben Hampton Anderson

Extension Ministries

ADMINISTRATIVE LOCATION **Larry D. Ott**
HIGHLANDS ONCOLOGY GROUP Pamela Cicioni
PEA RIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
COUNSELOR Helena Cathy Caudle
THE TEEN ACTION AND SUPPORT CENTER **Dawn Spragg**
HARRISON FIRST Denise E. Palmer
WESLEY FOUNDATION ATU John David Palmer
CIRCLE OF LIFE HOSPICE SPRINGDALE Audie D. Long
CHAPLAIN COBB VANTRESS Rex Alan Dickey
LEAVE OF ABSENCE Brian Timmons
. Randall D. Ludwig
MEDICAL LEAVE Andrea E. Allen
. William Joe Head

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

District Superintendent Mark K. Norman
ALMYRA/HUNTER'S CHAPEL ROE TBS
ALTHEIMER TBS
BAILEY CHAPEL Travis Earl Jackson
BAYOU METO/LODGES Mary F. Welch
CORNER
BETHEL/CENTER GROVE Willis Winn Findley
BRINKLEY/BRASFIELD Ted Edmondson
CHERRY VALLEY/VANNDAL Cheyann Bolin Chambers
CLARENDON/HOLLY GROVE **Melvin Dwight Mann**
CROSSETT Bryan R. Diffee
DEWITT/ST. CHARLES Tyrone Hill
DUMAS/TILLAR Tandy Curtis Hanson
EARLE/CRAWFORDSVILLE Johnny Jenkins
EBENEZER TULL Randy Dale Reed
EXTRA Royal S. Dodson
FORREST CITY FIRST **Karl Dixon Platt**
FOUNTAIN HILL/ZION **Jim Bailey**
GILLET/DELUCE Janet T. Edwards
GOOD FAITH CARR/REDFIELD TBS
GOOD HOPE/TRINITY WARREN Timothy V. McClellan
GRADY/TRINITY STAR CITY TBS
GRAND AVENUE STUTTGART Luke Parker
GREENHILL/LACEY J. Donald Johnson
HAMBURG FIRST Cletus Gregory Comer
HAWLEY MEMORIAL/
WESLEY PINE BLUFF Edna Mae Morgan

HEBRON NEW EDINBURG TBS
HELENA Walter Michael Wilkie
HERMITAGE/WAGNON Marty Reep
HICKORY RIDGE/TILTON TBS
HUGHES/MADISON Timothy Edward Rushing
HUMPHREY Spencer Branch
KINGSLAND/CHAMBERSVILLE Tyler Rushing
KYNETTE TBS
LAKESIDE LAKE VILLAGE **Henry Andrew Ratliff**
LAKESIDE PINE BLUFF James Steve Wingo
Associate **Yesenia Zapata**
LEOLA/MOORE'S CHAPEL SHERIDAN **Robert L. Lyons**
MARIANNA/BEAR CREEK CAMP Frankie Glenn Hicks
MARION **Andrew C. Kjorlaug**
MARTIN'S CHAPEL TBS
MARVELL/LEXA Gary Lawrence Maskell
McELROY/ELLIS CHAPEL/
CENTRAL WYNNE Stephen Wayne Baldwin
McGEHEE FIRST/WESLEY McGEHEE Reginald Russell
MONTICELLO FIRST **Hammett Nichols Evans**
Associate Lori Fallon
MONTROSE/PARKDALE **Chyrl Savage Slocum**
MOUNT OLIVET/PROSPERITY/UNION Boyd F. Savage, Jr.
NEW EDINBURG TBS
NEW HOPE/SHERIDAN Jack LaVerne Gilbert
PARKIN/FORREST CHAPEL **Jeff Hogland**
PINE BLUFF FIRST Michael Cuning Morey
PLEASANT GROVE/DEWITT TBS
PORTLAND/DERMOTT/WILMOT Toby Austin
RISON/MOUNT CARMEL RISON Gordon Mohr
ROCK SPRINGS/WILMAR/MT PLEASANT
MONTICELLO/ANDREWS CHAPEL Hardy P. Peacock
ROE Joe E. Glover
SAINT FRANCIS Jonah Wayne Smith
SAINT JAMES PINE BLUFF **Maxine Allen**
SAINT LUKE PINE BLUFF Barbara A. Douglas
SAINT MARK PINE BLUFF **Bobby Ray Jones**
SCRUGGS CHAPEL/LIVINGSTON CHAPEL John W. Love
SHERIDAN **Todd-Paul R. Taulbee**
SHERRILL William Paul Woolley
STAR CITY FIRST John Bradley Elrod
STUTTGART FIRST **Bryan Fink**
SULPHUR SPRINGS PINE BLUFF TBS
WABBASEKA TBS
WALLERS CHAPEL **Kathy Jenkins**
WARREN FIRST Gary Frank Harrison
WATSON/MT. TABOR MONTICELLO/
ARKANSAS CITY Walt Lowe
WESLEY CHAPEL BRINKLEY/
TAYLOR CHAPEL William J. Thompson
WEST HELENA/ELAINE Melissa Maskell
WEST MEMPHIS FIRST **William V. Buchanan**
WHEATLEY/SALEM WHEATLEY **Sara Nan Nelson**
WHITE HALL **Roger Allen Crum**
WYNNE Lester Glenn Pettus

Extension Ministries

CASA DE DIOS/WAVE OF PRAYER Mary Olson
INTERNATIONAL CHURCH
OF BANGKOK Clefton Samuel Vaughan
WESLEY FOUNDATION
PINE BLUFF Natasha Ja'Shun Murray
WESLEY FOUNDATION UAM Edward Kavan Dodson
. **Phillip Jackson**
U.S. AIR FORCE Ronald Lewis Feeser, Jr.
HONORABLE LOCATION Constance Steele

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

District Superintendent Rodney G. Steele
AMITY Glen Dale Harris
ARKADELPHIA FIRST William F. Cato
ASBURY MAGNOLIA/MCNEIL David A. Moore
ASHDOWN/RICHMOND/WADE'S CHAPEL **James H. Cross**
AVERY'S CHAPEL/BRUCE MEMORIAL/
MIDWAY Willie Joe Miller
BEARDEN/THORNTON Ronald G. Grigsby
BELL CHAPEL/RED HILL/LITTLE MISSOURI **Pam Bright**
BISMARCK Deborah Perry
BRADLEY Bonnie Carol Moore
BUENA VISTA/STEPHENS Cedric R. Walters
CAMDEN FIRST **Beth Ann Waldrup**
CHRIST TEXARKANA/OGDEN J. David Kassos
CHRIST OF THE HILLS Siegfried Johnson
Associates Sheila M. Jones
. **Regina Turner**
DELIGHT/ANTOINE/SMYRNA James Taylor Henderson
DeQUEEN FIRST/GILLHAM Mark Cloninger
DIAMONDHEAD George W. McCoy
DIERKS/GREEN'S CHAPEL Carroll D. Jackson
DODDRIDGE/OLIVE BRANCH Walter L. Burnett
DUMAS MEMORIAL Patricia Daugherty
EBENEZER NASHVILLE Shirley F. White-Souder
EBENEZER STEPHENS Kenneth Hippel
EL DORADO FIRST **David W. Bush**
EMERSON Barbara Grimes Lewis
FAIRVIEW TEXARKANA Thomas Lee Rider
FAIRVIEW CAMDEN/WESTSIDE **Kathryn Burchfield**
FAITH HOT SPRINGS/GARDNER **Laura Butkovic**
FORDYCE FIRST James Phillip Smith
FOREMAN **Daryl E. Hines**
FRIENDSHIP—FRIENDSHIP/
KEITH MEMORIAL Jeff Ladd
FRIENDSHIP—PRESCOTT/
SWEET HOME UNION Gene M. Ross
GLENWOOD/DAISY Glen Gaboury
GRAND AVENUE HOT SPRINGS David Fleming
GREERS CHAPEL Daniel Read
GURDON/CENTER GROVE GURDON Donnie Hudson
HALL Joyce Watson
HAMPTON/HARRELL/FAUSTINA Charles A. Perry
HARMONY HOPE/WILLISVILLE Jerry G. Westmoreland
HARMONY MAGNOLIA/
PHILADELPHIA/UNITY John Wayne Edwards
HARMONY GROVE CAMDEN/
HOLLY SPRINGS LAKESIDE Terrie Lynn Bunnell
HAVEN Chester Ray Jones
HINTON Lincoln Combs
HOLLY SPRINGS TEXARKANA Doug Rhodes
HOPE FIRST Steven Johnson
HORATIO/WINTHROP Philip McLarty
HOT SPRINGS FIRST David F. Moseley
Associates Teresa L. Holt
. William J. Sardin
HUNTER'S CHAPEL/TULIP/WAVERLY **Donald H. Robinson**
HUTTIG Robert Earl Ballard
JUNCTION CITY Mary Depper
LANGLEY Elias Nesar
LEWISVILLE **Pamela J. Jackson**
LISBON TBS
LOCKESBURG FIRST/WICKES Teresa Egan Chapman
MAGNET COVE/SHOREWOOD HILLS Walter J. Garrett
MAGNOLIA FIRST Pamela Jean Estes
MALVERN FIRST Bruce Wayne Bennett

Arkansas Conference Appointments 2018–19

Names of those changing appointments as of July 1, 2018, are listed in **bold type**. TBS: To be Supplied

MANCHESTER.....Michael Shawn Meeks	PINEY GROVE.....R. Scott Gallimore	TAYLOR.....Spencer Glendas Plumley
MARYSVILLE/EMMET..... Wayne Chambers	PRESCOTT FIRST/HOLLYWOOD.....Sue D. Howe	TEXARKANA FIRST.....Jaimie Jack Alexander
MINERAL SPRINGS/CENTER/ CENTER POINT..... Chad Brinkley	PULLMAN HEIGHTS.....Rose A. Poag	Associate..... Jay Stephen Simpson
MORNING STAR..... Nancy Scott	RHODES CHAPEL.....James Carroll Rawls	TIMOTHY/SAINT MARK CAMDEN.....Benny Morgan
MOUNT CARMEL LOCKESBURG/ SCOTT'S MEMORIAL.....Tommy Halsell	ROCKPORT/LEAU FRAIZ.....Troy Lee Cate	TRINITY GURDON/OKOLONA/ MT. ZION ARKADELPHIA.....Andrew Orr
MOUNT IDA/JOPLIN.....Russell Edward Hull	RONDO/PLEASANT HILL TEXARKANA.....Harry J. Hamner	VALLEY GROVE.....TBS
MOUNT MORIAH /RUSHING MEMORIAL.....Willie Fort	SAINT ANDREW ARKADELPHIA.....Bobby W. Sanders	VILLAGE HOT SPRINGS.....Chris Hemund
MOUNTAINSIDE.....Davida Autry	SAINT JOHN.....Danny Dunlap	WASHINGTON.....Keenan C. Williams
MURFREESBORO.....Michael P. Daniel	SAINT MARK EL DORADO.....Winston D. Roden	WILEY CHAPEL.....Alzean Stewart
NASHVILLE FIRST/ BINGEN..... Daniel R. Kirkpatrick	SAINT PAUL EL DORADO.....Travis Langley	
NEW ERA/MOUNT PISGAH.....Charles Payne	SAINT PAUL MALVERN/ADKINS MEMORIAL...Ryan Bachuss	
NEW SALEM..... Tammy Harrell	SILVER SPRINGS.....Jannette Mosley	
NORMAN..... Jerrod Bachuss	SMACKOVER/SILVER HILL..... Steve Cook	
NORPHLET/CENTENNIAL.....Ronnie Newberry	SPARKMAN/DALARK/BETHLEHEM.....Peggy Abbott	
OAKLAWN.....Russell D. Breshears	SPRING HILL/OAK GROVE.....Revel Kidd	
PARKER'S CHAPEL/PLEASANT GROVE.....Tracy Roden	STAMPS.....John J Noggle	
	SUGAR HILL.....Gregory A. Burks	
	SWEET HOME MURFREESBORO.....Al Terrell	

Extension Ministries

ASBURY UNIVERSITY.....Christopher T. Bounds
ST. VINCENT HOSPITAL.....Rose A. Poag
WESLEY FOUNDATION HSU/OBU.....Jessica Lee Durand
WESLEY FOUNDATION SAU.....Corey Tyson Read
Chaplain U.S. Army.....John Charles Fimple
HONORABLE LOCATION.....Carey Don Womack

Conference (from page 7)

conference.

- **An amendment to the charter** of Hendrix College was approved, reducing the total number of members of the Board of Trustees from 42 to 34.
- **A Future Facility Task Force**, examining current and emerging needs of the Arkansas Conference office, was granted another year to continue the assessment, collect more data and explore future building and space needs.
- **“Re-voting” on Constitutional Amendment 1** was held. The results were not announced, due to the varying times that all conferences were voting on the issue. An error in the text on the ballot as presented at the 2017 conference voided the results and necessitated a re-vote. The amendment deals with gender justice and the affirmation that, as part of the denomination's core foundational beliefs, the church stands against any actions, organizations or individuals who discriminate or dehumanize women and girls.

More to celebrate

- Reports on a variety of ministries and initiatives were made during the 2018 Annual Conference. These included:
- **Leaders of the 200,000 Reasons To Fight Childhood Hunger** initiative (so named because Arkansas has roughly 200,000 children, or 1 in 4, who face food insecurity) reported that 66 percent of the state's United Methodist churches currently have a ministry that feeds hungry kids,

up 20 percent from last year. The goal for 2018-19 is to increase church participation to 80 percent.

- **The Laity Address** was presented by Karon Mann, lay leader, and Kathy Conley, associate lay leader. “Laity in the United Methodist Church are called to love, to learn, to lead and to pray. Those are our pathways to hope,” Mann said, especially in the face of challenges and trying times. “Discipleship is our path to hope.”
- **The Center on Vitality** (www.vitaldisciples.org) continues to celebrate faith sharing and announced plans for a Summit on Growing Disciples Aug. 25, building on a similar discipling event in 2016 that drew more than 600 participants. For details, visit: <http://vitality.arumc.org/growing-disciples-summit>. The Leadership Unleashed initiative for lay leaders is expanding to emphasize Communities of Practice. Church leaders from many conferences have expressed interest in adapting materials and replicating how the Center is motivating and engaging persons in ministry.
- **The Center for Communication** announced that the *Arkansas United Methodist*, which has been produced by the conference as a printed newspaper since 1880, will be changed to an online digital magazine and distributed at no cost to clergy and laity, beginning in August.
- **United Methodist Women** of the Arkansas Conference, at their global assembly in May, pledged \$215,000 to the UMW organization for national and

international mission work. The “Mission U” educational event will be held July 25–28 at University of the Ozarks at Clarksville, with three study topics: Embracing Wholeness: An Earth Perspective for Covenantal Living, What About Our Money? A Faith Response, and Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church. The Arkansas Conference UMW annual meeting will be held Nov. 3 at Russellville First United Methodist Church.

- **Leaders from several institutions** related to the conference made reports. They included: Dr. Craig C. Hill, dean of Perkins School of Theology; Dr. Neil Blair, president of Saint Paul School of Theology; Dr. Roderick L. Smothers, president of Philander Smith College; Richard Hearne, director of development, Lydia Patterson Institute, Dr. Albert Mosley, senior vice president for faith and health, and Jonathan Lewis, ordained deacon in the Memphis Conference, with Methodist LeBonheur Healthcare; Dr. Bill Tsutsui, president of Hendrix College.
- **A video showed highlights** marking the 50th anniversary of the United Methodist Church, formed in 1968 with the merger of the Methodist Church and Evangelical United Brethren Church.
- **Presenting the Youth Address** were Rebekah Dodson, outgoing president of the Arkansas Conference Council on Youth Ministry, and John Mark Mathis, incoming president. They

celebrated the 1,400 youth who “huddled together,” per Bishop Saenz's analogy, at Veritas and the almost 600 who turned out for Junior and Senior High Youth Assembly in 2017. Youth yearn for genuine faith, they said. Youth are “filled with hope for what is happening in our church and what will continue to happen. ... We will not focus on our troubles but continue to make disciples and

keep our eyes focused on mission as a whole. We say yes to Jesus and look forward to what lies ahead.”

For more photos from Annual Conference, visit the Photos section of the Arkansas Conference Facebook page: facebook.com/arkansasumc/photos. Videos, including live streaming recordings of annual conference sessions, are also on the Facebook page.



Bishops Mueller and Saenz and other clergy and laity lay hands on ordination candidate Jonathan Griesse.

Service of Ordination and Commissioning celebrates new steps in ministry

Those ordained elder at the 2018 Arkansas Annual Conference are: Michael W. Bolin, Patricia Kathryn Butler, Lauren Kristine DeLano, Jonathan R. Griesse, Jay Stephen Simpson, Ronald Jeremy Pressgrove and Jennifer McCain Williams.

Brenda Dianne Brewer Wideman was ordained as a deacon.

Persons commissioned as provisional members are: Janet Barrow, Andrea Cummings, Judy Casbeer Hall, Taylor Wade Loy, Andrew Suite and Melanie Tubbs.

OBITUARIES

MORRILTON

Sondra Lynn Scott Warren, 70, of Morrilton, the surviving spouse of Rev. Ellis

Edward Warren, passed away May 22, 2018. She was born May 19, 1948, in Morrilton, to Thomas and Jessie Ruth



Scott. She obtained a master of science in education degree with an emphasis in history from the University of Central Arkansas. She taught at Morrilton Junior High School for two years before devoting her life to being a United Methodist preacher's wife and stay-at-home mother.

She is survived by her children, Christopher (Kathy) Warren of Fort Worth, Texas, Courtney (Thomas) Turner of Marvell, Scott Warren of Russellville, Jennifer Warren, John Warren, William Warren and Joshua Warren, all of Morrilton; and grandchildren, Nathan, Lauren and Wesley Turner, Michael and Andrew Warren.

Funeral services were held May 25 at Morrilton First United Methodist Church, with burial at Elmwood Cemetery. Memorials may be directed to Morrilton First United Methodist Church.

SHERWOOD

Sylvia Lynn Nasic, 84, of Sherwood, a retired clergy associate member of

the Arkansas Conference, went into the arms of the Lord on May 19, 2018. She was born Feb.



9, 1934, in Little Rock, to Evans Vaughn Sanders Sr. and Pauline Omelia Sanders.

Retired from the U.S. Postal Service, she was an ordained United Methodist minister and earned a bachelor's degree in theology. During her ministry, she served as pastor at Quitman, Dumas Memorial in El Dorado, Wye Mountain and Western Hills in Little Rock. She loved God and her family.

She was preceded in death by her parents and a brother, Evans Vaughn Sanders Jr. She is survived by her four children, Paula Miles (Bruce), Patricia Patton, Diana Roberts and Anita Johnston (Chris), all of Sherwood; six grandchildren, Randy Roberts, Jr. (Jessica), Amber Patton (Justin), Stephanie Roberts, Matthew Hodges, Tom Watson, and Cory

Watson; four great-grandchildren, Avery, Patrick, Eden and Ezra; and other family members whom she loved dearly.

Services were May 30 at Griffin Leggett Rest Hills in North Little Rock, with burial at Roselawn Memorial Park, Little Rock.

HAYESVILLE, N.C.

Gertrude Regina Bitter, having had a "life well lived" for 94 years,

died May 4, 2018, with grace, gratitude and faith in the Christian hope of a heavenly home. She was the surviving spouse of



Rev. Melvin Bitter, whose last appointment in Arkansas was Good Faith Carr UMC, Pine Bluff.

The daughter of Gertrude Regina Jungen and John Jacob Jungen, Gertrude was born in Manhattan, N.Y., on Jan. 26, 1924. While growing up in the Bronx with her younger brother, John J. Jungen, Gertrude enjoyed equestrian activities and becoming an exceptional classical pianist. At age 15, she was the

organist at her local church. At 16, she auditioned on the piano in Carnegie Hall before the longtime conductor/director of the New York Philharmonic Symphony, Walter Damrosch.

Although she did not continue on the path to be a classical pianist, it was while Gertrude was playing the piano at the USO during World War II that she met and fell in love with a young sailor who for 71 years would be the love of her life. Together, she and Melvin were blessed with six children, including two sets of twins.

After Melvin became an ordained minister, Gertrude blessed others with her gift of music, playing pianos and organs in Lutheran, Congregational and Methodist churches throughout the United States.

Although she was a city girl, she joined Melvin in his love for adventure and the outdoors. They sailed their boat "Windborne" in the waters off Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. They motorcycled through the countryside of New England, Arkansas and Florida. She accompanied Melvin when he felt the call to missionary service in the Truk Islands. Their love of camping

brought them to the mountains of North Carolina and to their home of the last 25 years in Hayesville.

Along with her parents and brother, Gertrude was preceded in death by her husband Melvin and daughters Regina and Christine. She is survived by her sons, Paul (Martha McAfee), John (Mary Johnson), and Mark, and daughter Pam (Cliff Obertuck), along with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

A celebration of life was held May 7 at the Townson-Rose Funeral Home Chapel of Hayesville, followed by graveside services at Greenlawn Memorial Gardens in Murphy.

NOEL, Mo.

Eleanor Gramling Forbes, 85, of Noel, Mo., formerly of Hartford, Ark., passed away June 9, 2018, in Bentonville. She was born Sept. 26, 1932, in Bishop, Va., to Andrew and Helen Marie Martin. She was the surviving spouse of retired United Methodist local pastor Joe Gramling, who served Havana UMC for 17 years.

She was a beautiful woman from the inside out, talented baker who loved to feed the souls of others with

her love, and most of all was adored by all who knew her. For years, she cooked for the students of Hartford schools and then in later years for those at Hartford and Mansfield senior centers.


She is survived by her husband, Barney Forbes; one daughter, Tina Durham and husband, David of Little Rock; three sons, Robert Chick and wife, Pamela of Hartford, William Chick and wife, Wilma of Hartford, and Paul Gramling and wife, Michelle of Springdale; three step-children, Mary Correia and husband, Paul, Charles Forbes and wife Mary, and Marty Luebker and husband, Herman; one brother, James Steele and wife, Iris of Mansfield; two sisters, Dean Luton of Mansfield and Wanda Suttles of Moore, Okla., 18 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren, and a host of friends. She was preceded in death by her husbands Bernard L. Chick and Joe Gramling; her parents; two sisters, Betty Woosley and Frances Keener; and one brother, Morris Buck Steele.

Funeral service was June 14 at Hartford Assembly of God Church, with burial at Hartford Memorial Park.

NEW

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COMING UP

Davidson Camp meeting begins July 27

Davidson Methodist Campground will hold its 134th annual revival encampment July 27–Aug. 5.

Guest preacher will be Rev. Charlie Williams. Services will be held daily 11 a.m. and 7:45 p.m. The dress is casual. An opening Prayer Service is planned for 7:45 p.m. July 26, led by Rev. Travis Langley. The closing Memorial Service will be held at 11 a.m. Aug. 5 and feature a message by Rev. Kyle Peters. Each night singing groups and special music will perform, beginning at 6:45 p.m.

Crafts for children will be offered at 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Meeks Etchieson of the Clark County Arkansas Historical Association will be guest speaker for the 6:45 p.m. service July 29. Clark County will celebrate its 200th birthday on Dec. 15. Etchieson will speak on the “Big Spring” Civil War Battle fought on Davidson Campground.

For RV space or cabins, please contact Blake@DavidsonCampground.com or call (870) 345-9711.

Davidson Campground is located 12 miles west of Arkadelphia, off Arkansas Highway 26.

Youth Assembly happening this month

Junior and Senior High Assembly, hosted by the Arkansas Conference Council on Youth Ministries, is coming up July 23–27 at Hendrix College in Conway.

Registration is \$195 per youth and includes 11 meals, four nights of lodging, worship services, small group sessions, daily workshops and a T-shirt.

Details and registration information available at <https://accym.org/assembly>. For any questions, contact Michelle Moore, (501) 324-8048 or michelle.moore@arumc.org.

Marriage retreat for youth workers and spouses coming up in October

A Marriage Retreat for Youth Workers and Spouses is on the calendar for Oct. 19–21. Presented by the Arkansas Conference Youth Worker Network, the event will be held at Mount Eagle Retreat Center. Cost is \$50 per couple.

The retreat will provide an opportunity for communication, sharing and reflecting for both the youth worker and his or her spouse. It will also provide time to meet other couples that share the same challenges and struggles. While some topics will be general to all marriage, others will be more specific to those issues that arise in marriages with one or both spouses involved in ministry settings.

Registration forms are available at www.arumc.org. To register, mail completed forms and \$50 check made payable to ARUMC to: ARUMC, Attention: Michelle Moore, 800 Daisy Bates Drive, Little Rock, AR 72202. Registration deadline is Oct. 1.

Renewal event aimed at youth workers focuses on Sabbath

Youth ministry is not for the faint of heart! It's an exhausting job with few breaks from its sometimes 24/7 demands. While youth workers know that rest is important, it's hard to truly practice the concept of Sabbath in today's world.

“Equip: Sabbath 2018” will address that challenge. The overnight retreat Sept. 14–15 will be held at Shepherd of the Ozarks, a 460-acre Christian conference center located in the heart of the Ozark Mountains, near Marshall.

Participants will have true Sabbath time to rest, relax, spend time with friends and spend time with God. The event will explore the concept of Sabbath and why it is important. Participants will learn practical ways to find Sabbath time during each day and leave with a sense of renewal and empowered to continue to find that sense of renewal each and every day.

Cost is \$50 for those who register by July 15; \$75 after that date. Registration deadline is Aug. 31. Registration includes: Friday night lodging, snacks and Saturday breakfast and lunch, and the book “Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives” by Wayne Muller.

The event is sponsored by the Arkansas United Methodist Youth Worker Network. Registration may be made via www.arumcywn.org.

Ben Few Campground to host services beginning July 13

The annual encampment of Ben Few Campground, located in Dallas County near Princeton, will be held July 13–22.

Rev. Mike Proctor of Leslie/ Marshall will be this year's evangelist. Chase Burns of Jacksonville is returning as Youth Director and will also serve as Music Director. Kathleen Dockery of Hot Springs returns as pianist. Services begin at 7:30

p.m. each evening, with mid-day services at 11 a.m. Classes for adults, youth, and children begin at 9 a.m. Monday-Friday.

Special musical guests will include the Oaklawn UMC Praise Team, July 15; The Arkansans, July 17; and the Bismarck Gospel Tones, July 19. Music begins at 6:30 p.m.

Mark your calendars and experience this special “time apart” which is a great part of Methodist heritage. For RV hookup reservations or more information, call Jane Knickerbocker at (501) 865-4540 or (501) 276-2425 or Linda Clark at (870) 312-1920.

Ebenezer Encampment, dating to 1822, continues this month

Ebenezer Camp Meeting at Center Point will begin its 197th annual encampment July 13 with an 8 p.m. service.

Ebenezer was organized in 1822 near old Washington by John Henry and relocated to Center Point in 1837. After a fire in 1853, meetings were held on Red Hill until the current site was acquired in 1857. Some damage occurred in September of 1863 when General Cabell, with

about 900 men, were retreating from Fort Smith through Caddo Gap, and Center Point to Arkadelphia. In 1868, the Center Point area was raided by a carpetbagger state militia. The camp has been rebuilt over the years after disasters, both manmade and natural, caused destruction.

For this year's gathering, Rev. Brad Elrod, pastor of Star City First UMC, will be the evangelist. Young campers will be under the direction of Jeremy Carter, children's minister at Magnolia First UMC. Carolyn Carter of Junction City will return as pianist, and Morgan Lee of Butterfield will serve as song leader. Rusty Jones of Gurdon will serve as host pastor. Thomas Lee of Butterfield will speak at the lay service on Sunday afternoon. The Testimonies plan to return Monday evening for their 18th meeting. That service will be followed by the traditional ice cream supper. Daily services will be held at 11 a.m. and 8 p.m., with an afternoon service at 3 p.m. on Sunday and Wednesday.

The camp ground is located off Highway 278, three miles north of Center Point. Services will end July 20. For more information, contact Bob Lee, (501) 922-3958 or blee.72104@yahoo.com.

Questions

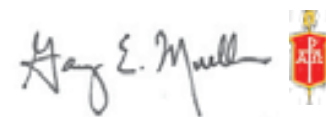
(from page 1)

mind that we've got Jesus and that's all we'll ever need; Experiencing the fullness of God's unconditional, invitational and transformational love in Jesus Christ that changes everything; and Embracing the reality that it's not how “successful” we are, it's what Jesus' power can do.

What can each of us do to make a difference? Not surprisingly, it's all about the choices we will make in the coming months. We can choose to be our best selves, and not our worst. We can choose to act and speak humbly, and not arrogantly. We can choose to treat those with whom we disagree as brothers

and sisters in Christ, and not as adversaries. We can choose to stay connected with each other, and not turn our backs. We can choose to ask the Holy Spirit to do what we cannot seem to do on our own, and not believe worst-case scenarios are inevitable. And perhaps most of all, we can choose to pray.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!



Gary E. Mueller
Bishop



The Davidson Campground pavilion is the central worship site for the annual Camp Meeting.

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20TH ANNUAL ARKANSAS RETIRED PASTORS DAY will be October 22! For more info: Contact Dr. David Bush @ 870-830-7777.

ORGAN FOR SALE: One owner Rodgers 805C Organ. Recently checked by certified audio technician; computer and electronics are in good condition. Keyboards need removed and replace bad key weight glue, 2 speakers need repair. \$9,995 as is, or \$11,995 with all repairs made. Wesley UMC, 2200 Phoenix, Fort Smith, AR. Call church office (479) 646-9702 or Harley Strang (479) 646-9329 to arrange inspection.



Rebuilding Lives

Carolyn McCone, CFRE, executive director of the Methodist Family Health Foundation and a member of Pulaski Heights UMC, Little Rock, believes raising funds to help Arkansas children aged 3-18 rebuild their lives has been a highlight of her career.

“Though most United Methodists are familiar with the Methodist Children’s Home, many are not aware of the other important programs we provide at Methodist Family Health,” Carolyn said. “One program is the Rev. Regnier Memorial Summer Camp that allows kids from our group homes to spend a week at Camp Tanako having the total camp experience.”

In recent years, the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas has provided grants that allow campers to experience swimming, canoeing, fishing, and other activities, many for the first time. Previously, UMFA funded field trips for children with emotional and behavioral problems to visit places like the Arkansas Art Center, the Little Rock Zoo, and Toltec Mounds.

The Methodist Family Health Foundation holds some of its endowment funds at UMFA. In working with UMFA staff on administering the endowments and grants, Carolyn has found them dedicated to their mission, accessible, and responsive.

“We love that our youth have the chance to make priceless memories, while having fun and simply being a kid,” Carolyn said. “Without UMFA funding, it would be difficult to allow the children in our care to participate.”



The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas

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5 UMFA seminary scholars named

Five individuals have been named United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas Seminary Scholarship recipients for 2018.

Selected by the Arkansas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, the recipients are: Chase Burns of First UMC, Jacksonville; Cheyann Bolin-Chambers of Cherry Valley/Vanndale UMC; Mary JoAnn “Annie” Meek of First UMC, Conway; Robin Roark of First UMC, Sheridan; and Heather Sprinkle of Dover UMC.

Established in 2000, the UMFA Seminary Scholarship Fund awards grants for scholarships to Arkansas students attending three-year United Methodist seminaries. The students make a covenant to return to Arkansas to pastor as Elders in United Methodist churches after completing their seminary studies.

“The UMFA Seminar Scholarship program has a significant role in ensuring strong pastoral leadership for the Church in years to come,” said UMFA Vice President of Development Janet Marshall. “These students will touch the lives of thousands of United Methodists during their years of service to the Arkansas Conference.”

Sprinkle is a seminary student at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. Helping to the launch of the “More than Manna” Wednesday evening meal



Heather Sprinkle

program at First UMC, Russellville, and organizing a summer Bible study there helped her learn that people need to be asked to lead because they may not see their own potential. She has been active in the River Valley Prevention Coalition, served on the board of the Dover Public Education Foundation and was a writer for *The Courier*.

Roark, a student at Saint Paul School of Theology in Leawood, Kan., serves as youth director at First UMC, Sheridan, where he is proud to have increased the youth



Robin Roark

participation from eight to 22 in six months. In the past, he was a leader in the youth and children programs and served on the Administrative Council at White Hall UMC. Roark has been a high school English teacher in North Little Rock and White Hall.

A recent graduate of Hendrix College, Meek plans to attend Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill.

Formerly a member of another denomination, she fell in love with the United Methodist missional commitment to health, wellness, justice and compassion, along with its critical commitment to discipleship, vital community and congregation building. As a UMYF Scholar and Chaplain’s Associate at Hendrix, Meek had the opportunity to preach, lead and write for worship.



Annie Meek

Chambers is a part-time local pastor at Cherry Valley/Vanndale where she preaches, makes pastoral visits and conducts funerals. She works with the Cherry Valley food pantry, which feeds about 100 families each

week. Before becoming a pastor, she was a volunteer in the children and youth programs. A student at SMU Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, she is the recipient of a Clergy Excellence scholarship at Perkins.



Cheyann Bolin-Chambers

Also a student at Perkins, Burns previously attended Memphis Theological Seminary. He is part-time minister of youth at First UMC, Jacksonville.

At 15, he became a member of the Christian Motorcycle Association and through that organization has ministered in prisons, at motorcycle rallies and on the road. He served as music director at Levy UMC where he began his process of discernment. Burns is the recipient of a Perkins Scholar award.



Chase Burns

The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas manages \$165 million in endowment funds and other charitable assets that benefit local churches and United Methodist ministries. UMFA is one of the largest United Methodist Foundations in the country. Founded in 1963, the Foundation is responsible for more than 800 funds that support United Methodist ministries.