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Arkansas Conference Receives Faith Based Group of the Year Award

Annual Award Given by Arkansas Foodbank

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Brenda Norwood, left, and Mary Lewis Dassinger, right, accept the award for Faith Based Group of the Year from the Arkansas Foodbank.

By Caleb Hennington

Digital Content Editor



The Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church is humbled and grateful to receive the Faith-Based Group of the Year Award from the Arkansas Foodbank for the 2019 year.

The Arkansas Conference was selected as this year's recipient thanks to its annual Ingathering hunger relief event, which has been hosted at the Arkansas Foodbank for the past three years.

The 2019 Ingathering event hosted 275 volunteers who helped pack 40,000 pounds of sweet potatoes — which were donated by a local farmer who attends an Arkansas United Methodist Church — and 22,000 pounds of dry beans.

The Arkansas Conference was also recognized at the event for its COVID-19 response in 2020. Thanks to a grant provided by the Methodist Foundation of Arkansas, the Arkansas Conference Delta Project has been able to close the gap for those facing food insecurity during the pandemic through mobile food distributions.

The Delta Project mobile distributions have been able to feed approximately 2,658 families with 17,600 pounds of produce and 111,080 pounds of food since April 2020.



200,000 More Reasons Project Coordinator Mary Lewis Dassinger along with Brenda Norwood, chairperson of the Conference Board of Global Ministries, were present at the ceremony to accept the award on behalf of the Arkansas Conference.

"I was proud to receive this award along with Brenda Norwood on behalf of the Arkansas United Methodist Church. Our commitment to feed the insecure speaks to the power of the Methodist connection and gives glory to God. Being united together with our community is a powerful witness to the 'Acts' church we are called to be," Dassinger said.

Bishop Gary Mueller added, "As Christians, we are called to serve the needy when they are hungry. The Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church is grateful for this recognition and to work alongside the Arkansas Food Bank in ministry."

This year's Ingathering will be different than in year's past due to the ongoing pandemic. Instead of a centralized gathering at the Arkansas Foodbank, each district will participate in their own local Ingathering event. To find more information on what your district will be doing for Ingathering 2020, visit arumc.org/ingathering/.

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