

UM MEN



The magazine of United Methodist Men

**Why I Became
A United Methodist**

A letter from the General Secretary



I hope you have had a great summer and that this magazine finds you actively living out your faith. Once you have finished reading it, find a unique way to pass it on. I have given previous issues to my pastor (then I just

gave him an EMS membership). I gave them to guys in my small group, gave them to guys at the next UMM breakfast meeting, and I have left a copy at a hospital/doctor's waiting room. Have fun finding a way to pass this magazine along; let me know what happens.

I am one of those life-long Methodists; I was "present" at Dulin Methodist Church before I was born. Although I was not given an option to change churches while growing up, I was free to change once I left for college. I attended Lynchburg College, which continues to be related to the Disciples of Christ Church. Since I was in the choir at LC and our tours were always to Disciples churches, I got used to their worship services and many of their ministries. The option to change was always available, but I never really considered a move.

I continue to embrace the UMC for these reasons:

- Wesleyan discipleship — that wonderful balance of personal holiness and social holiness.
- Our view of grace — prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying.

- Our commitment to the poor, to those in prison, to the lost, the least, and the last.
- Our connection — We are able to do more together than any of us could do through a single congregation, district or conference.
- Our world-wide reach — We have planted churches and missions all over the world.
- The Wesleyan movement changed the world in the late 1700s; I pray we can change the world again today.
- The UMC has an historic commitment to develop small-group ministry. This was a vital ingredient in the early Wesleyan movement, which many vital congregations are embracing today.

And I must admit the denomination has afforded me a place to serve. I have been an active lay person who has served in a wide variety of places as a volunteer since being active in MYF. The 18 months of employment by the UMC has been a special blessing and the position has taken me to new and exciting places.

As my friend, Jerry, would answer when asked, "How are you?"

"I am blessed."

Stay in touch, and continue to watch for new webinars scheduled this fall and winter. If you miss them, don't worry we record them as media files and they are available through the office. Enjoy the magazine and pass it on.

Striving to be His servant-
Gil Hanke

The purpose of United Methodist Men is to help men grow in Christ so others may know Christ.



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contents

UM Men **Fall 2011**

FEATURES

- 5** Why I became a United Methodist
- 10** Baptizing babies and burying old folks
- 11** What's in a label?
- 14** A proud remnant - legacy of faith
- 17** Why I stayed in the United Methodist Church
- 19** From prison to the mission fields
- 20** Connecting again in Haiti
- 22** A Scout is Brave
- 23** UM Men help inner city church in Nashville
- 24** Hog father boosts hunger-relief effort
- 26** Across the Nation
- 33** Scouts become brothers with Uganda troop
- 34** Austin district UMM President aids tsunami victims
- 35** A few words about my dad
- 38** UM Men support women clergy

DAD'S ZONE

- 39** How to deal with Nonversations
- 40** Consequences of absent fathers

41 MENS NEWS

47 SCOUTING NEWS

Editor's note: This magazine includes articles from individuals who hold diverse opinions. We hope all articles are thought provoking; they are not necessarily the opinions of the General Commission on UM Men.



On the wrong side of history

In 1959, I was serving as the director of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Wyoming in Laramie while attending Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

That summer I took some 30 students on a rickety school bus to a Methodist Student Movement Conference at Camp Magruder near Rockaway, Oregon.

During the week-long conference, students from across the Western Jurisdiction were asked to support a General Conference resolution calling for the elimination of the racially constituted Central Jurisdiction.

Wesley Foundation directors had been advised of the proposal prior to the camp, and I urged my students to speak in favor of the petition. "It's wrong to continue a segregated system when American society is tearing down similar structures in secular society," we argued.

"The present system ensures that African Americans will be guaranteed bishops in the future," said opponents. "If the Central Jurisdiction is abolished, it is unlikely a white majority will elect black bishops."

Two black students joined arguments against dissolving the racially constituted jurisdiction. "Although the Central Jurisdiction comprises one twenty-seventh of the whole Methodist Church, it is given one-sixth of the total representation in all general agencies," they argued. "Why would we want to get rid of that guaranteed representation?"

Motions to ask the 1960 General Conference to eliminate the segregated system failed.

After long debate, delegates to the 1960 gathering in Denver agreed to retain the Central Jurisdiction. They suggested

members of that jurisdiction could move to geographical jurisdictions on a voluntary basis. They debated but did not set any deadline for the abandonment of the segregated structure.

The students and delegates to the 1960 General Conference were on the wrong side of history.

In 1968, the Central Jurisdiction was finally eliminated when the Methodist Church united with the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

The Rev. Roy Nichols, an African American, was elected to the episcopacy at a jurisdictional conference following the formation of the United Methodist Church. He served as bishop of the Pittsburgh Area for 12 years, and the New York Area from 1980 to his retirement in 1984; he died in 2002.

I doubt if any of the students attending the 1959 Magruder Conference ever noted that we stood on the wrong side of history. Subsequent elections of scores of black bishops of both genders underscore our short sightedness.

In this issue, Bishop Woodie White explains why he stayed in the Methodist Church in spite of the presence of the Central Jurisdiction, and the Rev. Martin Thielen explains why he left the Southern Baptist Convention to become a United Methodist pastor. I am grateful to each for sharing their journeys.

My own journey is uneventful. I was blessed to be raised as a Methodist. At no point in my career have I considered joining another denomination.

I know of the dark chapters in our denominational history book, but there are many more chapters that tell of ways in which members have followed Christ in spite of pressures to reflect societal prejudices.

I am proud to be a United Methodist.

Why I Became a United Methodist

by Martin Thielen

Years ago, I served as an adjunct professor of worship and preaching at a Baptist seminary. One day I was preparing for an upcoming class. I went to a photocopy shop in Nashville and began to make a large number of photocopies of various liturgies and sermons for the class.

An employee at the shop noticed the materials I was photocopying and asked me, "Are you a minister?" "Yes, I am," I replied. He said, "Are you a Southern Baptist minister?" "No," I replied, "but I used to be. I've recently joined the United Methodist Church." He looked at me for a moment with suspicious eyes and said, "Are you divorced or are you gay?" "Neither one," I replied. He said, "Then why did you change denominations?"

I've been asked that question many times over the years. Many people, including some of my dearest friends, have asked me why I gave up good opportunities in the Southern Baptist Convention in order to become a United Methodist.



Appreciative of former denomination

Although I've made a denominational shift, I have tremendous appreciation for my former denomination. They introduced me to Christ and the church. They loved and nurtured me. They gave me a great education. I earned baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees at Southern Baptist schools. The denomination also gave



me tremendous ministry opportunities, including a large multi-ethnic church in Honolulu. The best part of that job was that I kept a surfboard in my office, and I could take it a few blocks to Waikiki beach.

The Southern Baptist Convention also provided me with significant teaching opportunities. I was an adjunct professor of worship and preaching at one seminary, a guest teacher at several others, and a workshop and conference leader at various sites across the nation.

The Baptist church also allowed me to publish many articles and three books. I spent four years working at national headquarters in Nashville as a worship and preaching editor, consultant, writer and teacher.

The Baptist church gave me incredible opportunities for service at a very young age. It was a great ride and I am grateful to God and to the Baptist church for the opportunity.

Difficult decision

The decision to leave the Southern Baptist Convention was one of the most difficult I've ever made. The cost of the transition—loss of status, denominational opportunities, and financial compensation—was huge.



Why in the world did I leave?

I can answer that question with two words—*theology and integrity*.

Let me make a long story short. Over the past twenty-five years the Southern Baptist Convention has made a dramatic shift from a conservative yet tolerant denomination, to a fundamentalist and intolerant denomination.

The convention has adopted a radical fundamentalist theology. I'm not saying that fundamentalism is wrong, bad or evil. I am saying that it's not me. Fundamentalism is not a brand of Christianity that I can support. Therefore, I finally had to ask myself, can I stay in denominational work and keep my integrity? Sadly, the answer was no.

I resigned my denominational job and accepted a pastorate in Hawaii. A few years later I had to ask a more difficult question. The question was no longer—can I stay in denominational

work and keep my integrity? Now the question was—could I stay in this denomination and keep my integrity? For me, the answer was again, no.

I was still in my thirties and knew I could not survive another thirty years in a fundamentalist church. So I resigned my pastorate in Hawaii, sold my surfboard, and my family and I returned to Nashville where I pursued Ph.D. studies at Vanderbilt University.

At that point I began to search for a new church home. Over the next nine months I had serious dialogue with seven different denominations. I finally narrowed it down to three: Episcopal, Presbyterian, and the United Methodist Church.

The Episcopal Church didn't need any more clergy at that time, and I couldn't spell Presbyterian, so I finally went Methodist.

All kidding aside, I spent almost a year thinking, praying and talking to others about this decision. Finally, I felt

led to the United Methodist Church.

Here are my top ten reasons for becoming a United Methodist.

1. United Methodists affirm historic or apostolic theology. I have never been comfortable with liberalism or fundamentalism. Although great theological diversity exists in the United Methodist Church, it seems to me that the mainstream of the church avoids the extremes of ultra-conservatism or radical liberalism. Along with the majority of United Methodist members, I affirm the historic doctrines of the faith found in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. And, I am very comfortable with the theological affirmations in *The Book of Discipline of the UMC*.

2. United Methodists have a balanced method for doing theology. I'm speaking about the so called "Wesleyan Quadrilateral" of scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. Although the church puts high priority on scripture, it does not neglect the fact that our theology must also be informed by tradition, reason, and experience. Some denominations claim that the Bible is their only source of authority. However, strict Biblicism, by itself, is not enough. For example, what does the Bible teach about genetic engineering or national health insurance? The United Methodist theological approach of scripture, tradition, reason and experience represents a solid and trustworthy balance for thinking about our faith.

3. United Methodists preach a theology of grace. The older I get the more I believe that grace is the central issue in Christianity. Through the years I've grown

wary of churches that emphasize law, judgment and condemnation. The United Methodist Church, however, emphasizes God's love, forgiveness and grace. With so many religious right churches preaching a gospel of law and arrogant judgment, this emphasis on grace feels extremely refreshing to me.

4. United Methodists are sacramental. Over the past decade, I have adopted a strong sacramental theology. I understand the sacraments to be concrete signs of God's self giving—God's love made visible. I'm convinced that people desperately need tangible expressions of God's love and grace, especially the water of baptism and the bread and cup of communion. The older I get, the more I need tangible rituals that remind me that I am a child of God. Participating in the sacrament of Holy Communion has become a profound part of my spiritual life. Our denomination affirms sacramental theology and that is extremely important to me.

5. United Methodists emphasize worship. Worship is a high priority in the United Methodist Church





and for that I am grateful. We appreciate the great liturgy of the past, but also have the freedom to use more modern expressions of worship. Unlike some liturgical denominations, United Methodists allow full freedom in liturgical practices. Worship leaders can use biblical, historic and traditional forms of worship, as well as contemporary expressions of worship. In short, we have the best of all liturgical worlds. I've come to believe that worship is the first priority of the church, so I'm glad that worship is of vital importance in the UMC.

- 6. United Methodists have an evangelical heritage and commitment.** Unlike some mainline denominations, United Methodists affirm the importance of missions and evangelism. Although I'm not a revivalist, soul-winner type, I care deeply about reaching unchurched people, and believe the church should unapologetically engage in the evangelical enterprise.
- 7. United Methodists care about social justice.** I have never been comfortable with the pietistic private religion of most evangelical churches. When the evangelical church does discuss social issues,

they usually limit themselves to abortion, homosexuality, gambling and alcohol. However, United Methodists are also dedicated to issues of social justice including race, gender equality, poverty, and environmental stewardship. Our denomination is committed to both evangelism and social issues, and that is one of the major reasons I became a United Methodist.

- 8. United Methodists are inclusive.** Our denomination makes a strong effort to be inclusive of all people regardless of age, race, gender, socio-economic standing and disabilities. I am especially pleased to see women serving in pastoral roles. I've fought some tough battles in my old denomination as an advocate of women in ministry and have the scars to prove it. It's wonderful to be in a church where such battles have already been fought and won. I also appreciate that the United Methodist Church is inclusive theologically. Persons of all theological persuasions—conservative, liberal and moderate—are welcome in the UMC. I know that theological diversity creates many tensions for us, but I believe that we need both liberal and conservative viewpoints to keep us in the broad middle. I'm grateful that the United Methodist Church makes inclusiveness a priority.
- 9. United Methodists are connectional.** Rather than each church being a Lone Ranger congregation, churches in the UMC are in the Kingdom business together. I learned about this during my first appointment. During my Ph.D. studies, I was sent to a small struggling church. This fairly new congregation had dwindled down

to about 30 people. However, it had a new facility, a 24 acre track of land, and a half million dollar debt. On my very first day of work I learned that the church was completely bankrupt. We didn't have enough money to pay the light bill, much less the \$75,000 a year mortgage payment. If this had been a non-connectional church, it would have simply closed down. But since the United Methodist Church is connectional, that was not the case. My second week on the job, I met with the conference finance committee and told them our situation. Either they came through with significant dollars, or we closed shop. They agreed to pay our mortgage for an entire year. That gave us time to heal the congregation, to significantly grow, and finally to hold merger talks with a nearby congregation. The end result was the birth of a large, growing and dynamic church that continues to do great work in its community. This never would have happened if we were not a connectional church.

10. The final factor is more personal: United Methodists warmly welcomed me into the family.


When I moved back to Nashville from Hawaii, I got on the phone and called the bishop's office. I told the secretary that I was a Baptist minister considering a denominational change, and I would like to talk to the bishop. The amazing thing is that she put him on. We talked for almost an hour.

He referred me to the Nashville district superintendent, who, a few weeks later, asked me to serve as an interim pastor for a small church outside of the city. Not only was I warmly welcomed by the bishop and several district superintendents, but I was also

welcomed by clergy and lay people throughout the Tennessee Conference. They opened their arms wide and said, "We'd love to have you as a part of our church family." That meant a lot.

No regrets

These ten things are just some of the factors that attracted me to the UMC. Oh, I won't lie. Some things in the church scared me, like the appointment system—and it still does. I was a free agent for a long time, so it's hard to adjust to the appointment system. But I can honestly say that I have no regrets. Becoming a United Methodist was absolutely the right decision for me.

I'm quite aware that my critique of the UMC is overly optimistic. No church or denomination fully lives up to its ideals. I'm reminded of the pastor who went visiting in his church's neighborhood. He knocked on the door of a young man who said, "Thanks for your visit, but I'm not interested. I don't like organized religion." The pastor said, "Then you'll love our church. We've been trying for thirty years and we're still not organized!" I know that the UMC is not perfect. But there are many good things about our denomination, and I'm glad to be a part of it. 



*Martin Thielen serves as senior pastor of Brentwood United Methodist Church, Brentwood, Tenn. His most recent book is *What's the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian? A Guide to What Matters Most*.*

A free guide for leading a seven-week experience based on the book is available at <http://thielen.wjkbooks.com>. His preaching and worship web site is www.GettingReadyForSunday.com.

Baptizing babies and burying old folks

by Martin Thielen

In the fall of 1979, I left a lucrative career in the insurance business and went to seminary. My father, angry with my decision (he later got over it), growled in disgust, "You'll waste your whole life baptizing babies and burying old folks." Ironically, baptizing babies and burying old folks are two of my favorite pastoral duties. But then I can think of few pastoral chores that I don't like.

Before making the decision to go to seminary, I went to visit the Presbyterian pastor who performed my marriage ceremony. I asked him, "What do you like best about being a minister?" He said, "First, I like being my own boss. Second, I like working with people in significant ways. And third, I like mediating the presence of God." For the next hour, he unpacked those three statements. Near the end of our session, he said with great enthusiasm, "I can't believe I get paid to do this job!"


Like that Presbyterian pastor, I can't believe my good fortune. I actually get paid to lead the church, proclaim the gospel, administer the sacraments, and care for people. Although ministers often complain about high stress and low salaries, most of us love our vocation. In fact, recent studies reveal that clergy are more satisfied with their profession than any other group in America.

I'm no Pollyanna about pastoral ministry. For example, I am painfully aware of the inevitable criticism that comes with this job. Just a few months ago, a fundamentalist member of our church left the congregation, accusing me of "not preaching the Word." But the very next Sunday, I got to lead worship, preach a sermon, and celebrate Holy Communion. And after worship, a little girl I baptized five years earlier gave me a hug and handed me a picture she had drawn for me. At the bottom of the picture she wrote, "Pastor Martin, I love you."



Last Sunday our church celebrated confirmation. After confirming our young people, we invited the congregation to renew their baptismal vows. Large numbers of people made their way to the baptismal font. I put my thumb into the baptismal water, made the sign of the cross on their foreheads and said, "Remember that you are baptized, and be a faithful follower of Christ." Some of the foreheads were young, soft, and smooth. Others were old, wrinkled, and tough. Some who came forward had recently lost a spouse, were going through a divorce, or were battling cancer. Others had recently received a promotion, gotten married, or were expecting a child. Some smiled and some cried. All came in an act of loyalty, renewal, and faith. No doubt, some of our members will live out their renewed baptism vows more faithfully than others. But all of them are beloved children of God, and I have the incredible privilege of being their pastor. It's a gift from God for which I am daily grateful.

Several months ago I had my annual consultation with my district superintendent to discuss next year's appointment (one of the few things I don't like about my job!). During our session he asked me, "What motivates you to be in ministry?" I replied, "I'm called to it. I'm gifted for it. I'm educated in it. And I absolutely love doing it.

I can't imagine doing anything else." 

What's in a label?

By G. Kevin Baker

Churches that drop their denominational affiliation are engaging in plastic surgery; they are not practicing internal medicine.

There is a shed-the-label trend in church-planting circles.

In order to reach a market that prefers generic Christianity over name-brand versions like United Methodist, many denominations have jumped on the label-dropping bandwagon with little thought or reflection.

The sentiment is understandable. If you want to reach more people, get rid of the baggage. People don't want to hear about infrastructure, denominational infighting, tradition, or denominational history. They desire purity, simplicity, authenticity, and an absence of conflict – or at least the appearance of less conflict.

What's in a label?—Quite a bit. Our children have last names so people will know where they come from.

Do some families have things in their histories to be ashamed of?—Sure. Do some family trees have stories of division, dissension, infighting, and abuse?—Absolutely. Does shucking your last name allow you to escape from these realities?—Hardly.

The truth is, names and labels bear stories of hope even as they bear stories of pain. If churches are determined to shed the label, fine, but let's be clear about one thing: We are engaging in plastic surgery, not practicing internal medicine.

The church is a visible body of believers that includes sinners like you and me—sinners who often succumb to



in-fighting, power plays, and division, even as we are simultaneously invited to bear the fruits of patience, kindness, and suffering love.

The answer to the sinful divisions that persist among the baptized is not going to be found in churches that ignore or deny such divisions. The answer comes when we roll up our sleeves and dirty our knees in the hard work

and endless prayer that aches for **Christ's prayer to be fulfilled:** "That we may be one ... so the world may believe" (John 17:23)

United Methodist—the story behind the label

The genius of Methodism has historically been its ability to hold together ideas or themes that often elicit an either/or response. At our best, Methodists embody this practical divinity that calls the church away from false alternatives which tend to truncate a fuller expression of faith, worship, and service.

Evangelical and sacramental

The Wesleyan revival was known for its evangelical fervor. At first, Wesley resisted breaks with ecclesial custom. Leaving the pulpit for open-air preaching did not come easy to this Anglican priest. Yet Wesley and his Methodist preachers would soon hit the streets, the prisons, the jails, and the distant townships with the Good News of Jesus. Many people experienced dramatic conversions and emotional responses to the Word.

Contrary to much evangelical thought, Wesley simultaneously

magnified the sacraments. He believed that baptism was a real moment of regeneration, though he believed it easy enough to sin if one were to turn from God. He also believed that the faithful Christian should maintain the “duty of constant communion.”

worship can be spirit-filled, alive, dynamic, and life-giving. A strong pulpit (attention to excellent preaching and teaching) does not require a church to observe a weak Table (infrequent celebration of The Lord’s Supper) or vice versa. Methodism asserts that being evangelical does not exclude a deep sacramental commitment to the means of grace.

Faith and works

Throughout Christian history, there have been some who favor James over the Paul and others who favor Paul over James. The reformer, Martin Luther, once called the Book of James an “epistle of straw.” Others have wanted to emphasize “faith without works is dead” so much that it seemed they might be implying “works without faith,” though not ideal, is surely better than the former.

Leave it to Wesley to once again live within the tension. How else can one explain how he was accused of being antinomian (*against the law*) by some, and at the same time, called legalistic and methodical in his discipleship by others?

When detractors called Wesley and his Oxford friends “methodists,” they did not intend the word to be complimentary. Wesley’s operative phrase for this synthesis—borrowed from Paul—was “faith working through love” (*Galatians 5:6*).

On the one hand, Wesley firmly believed in the doctrine of *sola fide*; that “*faith alone*” saves. But, like James, he also believed that true

faith would always bear the fruit of good works. In the end, a Wesleyan perspective understands that James and Paul have to shake hands and make up, for they are not enemies but inseparable friends.

Head and heart

It is often said the farthest distance on any human body is the distance between one’s head and one’s heart. Wesleyan theology emphasizes a Christian spirituality that holds the two together. Ours is not an anti-intellectual faith that requires one to “check your mind at the door,” nor a faith that is located solely in the emotive realm of human existence.

Take Albert Outler’s description of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral: *Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience*. Taken together, Methodists often refer to it as a way to think theologically and guide spiritual discernment.

- **Scripture** remains the primary source and criteria for making theological judgments.
- **Tradition** is the rich history of the church and of Israel contained in the Old and New Testaments and the past 2,000 years of church history.
- **Reason**, exercised by a critical mind, is necessary to both comprehend Scripture, tradition, and experience.
- **Experience** is not a catch all for whatever a person may feel, but a way to ask questions of our experiences like: “Does it bear the fruit of the Spirit?” “Does it demonstrate evidence of the gifts and graces of God?”

Personal and social holiness

Wesley was deeply convinced that personal holiness of heart and life is ultimately social as well.


“Christianity is essentially a social religion, and to turn it into a solitary religion is indeed to destroy it. The gospel of Christ knows no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness.—
John Wesley

Wesley and his colleagues were methodical in practicing their personal piety (fasting, prayer, searching Scriptures) and doing so in a social context that meant “watching over one another in love” and holding each other accountable for how they lived out their daily discipleship.

The Wesleyan revival may well have invented small-group ministry, or at least popularized it in a way formerly unknown. For Methodists, salvation and sanctification can never be reduced to a me-and-Jesus-only enterprise.

Can one feel close to God hiking alone in the mountains or floating along in a kayak one brisk Sunday morning? Sure. I have had a few of

those experiences myself (*though not on Sunday!*). Are such individual experiences sufficient for one who desires to be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ? Wesley’s answer was clear—Absolutely not. Our Christian faith is one that invites us to have a personal, saving relationship with God through Christ, but such faith is personal, not private. The writer of the book of Hebrews agrees:

“And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”—*Hebrews 10:24-2*. 



The Rev. Kevin Baker is pastor of Reconciliation UMC in Durham, N.C. This article is edited from postings at <http://>

humor • humor • humor

What is he thinking?

Adam and Eve were enjoying another day in paradise, just lying peacefully by a stream, when Eve asked Adam what he was thinking. “Oh, nothing, really” was his reply.

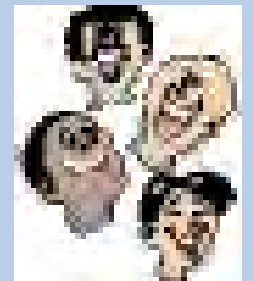
Suddenly, Eve jumped up and grabbed Adam. She began frantically poking him in the chest. “Woman,” Adam shouted, “just what are you doing?”

“Counting your ribs,” said Eve.

Q&A

Q: What do you call a charismatic at an auction?

A: Broke.





Demonstrators protest against segregation during the 1968 General Conference that united the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren churches to form the United Methodist Church. The uniting conference in Dallas did away with the Methodist Church's racially segregated Central Jurisdiction. A UMNS photo courtesy of the Commission on Archives and History.

A proud remnant— 'A legacy of faith'

By Bishop Charlene P. Kammerer

Black leaders have been active in preaching and pastoring since there was a Methodist Church in the United States.

For all those faithful and courageous black Methodists who stayed in an inhospitable, racist, abusive church, we say, "Thanks be to God for you." Those of us in the white majority confess that we have sinned against you and against God who made us all into one family.

We have excluded you from our sanctuaries, our schools and colleges, our public domain, our neighborhoods, our homes, our hearts. For that we are truly sorry. We confess our sins and ask in humility that God move us toward repentance and the place of reconciliation and forgiveness.

First African-American Methodist preachers

Harry Hoosier and Richard Allen set the bar for great preaching. Both slaves and free slaves were attracted to the Methodist movement. The gospel was preached to blacks **and** whites, rich **and** poor, slave **and** free. A group of African-American preachers were licensed as "Sons of Thunder."

In 1844, the denomination was split over slavery.

After the Civil War, black preachers were finally ordained in the Methodist Episcopal North Church.

At the 1920 General Conference, the first black bishop, Robert E. Jones, was elected.

In 1939, when the Methodist North and South Church was reunited, 350,000 black members were then separated by

the structure of the Central Jurisdiction.

Why in the world would black Methodists have stayed in such a racist church and system?

The Methodist Church both reflected its culture and struggled to transcend it. At the 1944 General Conference Thelma Stevens, a young woman from Mississippi, spoke in support of a request that committees of the church meet in places where African Americans could be hosted. During the floor debate, a male delegate ridiculed Stevens, saying, "We provide suitable and adequate entertainment but not along the lines the sister indicated. We can't—You move us too fast."

Delegates laughed and rejected the Stevens proposal.

She would live to see her idea adopted by many church agencies and a later General Conference session.

Experience in segregated society

While growing up in Winter Garden, Fla., I recall "colored quarters" at the edge of town. As a teacher and a woman of faith, my grandmother who raised me "crossed over" that color line when she

took me to visit her friends, and where she taught adults how to read. I always knew that it wasn't right for black and white people to live apart.

I have painful memories as a child of accompanying adults to city auditoriums where discussions were held about integrating the public schools. I also served as the one youth member of the official board of my home church. We had a called meeting for the adults to plan what would happen if black people came to worship in our church. I was the only person present who voted against the new policy.

I never knew the Central Jurisdiction existed until I was in college and became a religion major and studied Wesleyan history. Our worlds in the South were totally separate and totally unequal and unfair.

Abolishing the Central Jurisdiction

Finally, when the Methodist Church merged with the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968, we abolished the Central Jurisdiction

Our church is full of generations of faithful African American leaders.




United Methodist Bishop Charlene P. Kammerer (on video screens) gives a sermon during a service of appreciation for African Americans who stayed in the church despite institutional racism. The service of confession and appreciation was held at the 2004 General Conference in Pittsburgh. A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose.

We celebrate the undaunted courage of people who stayed and led this church—men and women who bestowed a legacy of deep faith, exceptional leadership, inspired preaching and worship, prophetic witness, advocacy for social justice, innovators and educators.

Today we claim we all belong to the same church, the same Lord, the same baptism, the same United Methodist Church.

Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu described the purpose of the church: *“The church should be an audiovisual of*

God’s reconciling and unifying purpose in Christ. God saw our brokenness and sought to extricate us from it—all of us—to bring us back to our intended condition of relatedness. God sent Jesus who would fling out his arms on the cross as if to embrace us.”

Thanks be to those, in generations past and even now, who stayed and led God’s people. 

This article is edited from a speech by Bishop Kammerer to the 2004 General Conference.

A chronology of the Central Jurisdiction

- 1784:** *The Methodist Episcopal Church is organized.*
- 1787:** *Richard Allen and others in the congregation of St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church withdraw in protest of segregation.*
- 1796:** *James Varick leads the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.*
- 1816:** *Black Methodist Episcopal churches unite to form the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Allen becomes its first bishop.*
- 1864:** *Separate African-American annual conferences are formed.*
- 1870:** *The Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, later renamed the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, is formed.*
- 1939:** *The Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church merge to form the Methodist Church. The segregated Central Jurisdiction is formed as a political compromise.*
- 1948:** *The Central Jurisdiction Conference forms a committee to study ways of eliminating the jurisdiction.*

- 1952:** *The General Conference establishes the Board of Social and Economic Relations.*
- 1956:** *The General Conference conducts a study of the jurisdictional system.*
- 1956:** *The General Conference adopts legislation, which later becomes Amendment IX, allowing churches in the Central Jurisdiction to transfer to geographical jurisdictions.*
- 1958:** *Amendment IX of the Methodist Church’s Constitution, adopted by the 1956 General Conference, becomes effective.*
- 1960:** *General Conference sets up the Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations to continue a program to abolish the Central Jurisdiction.*
- 1964:** *Conferences within the Central Jurisdiction begin merging into geographical annual conferences.*
- 1967:** *Bishop L. Scott Allen becomes the 14th and last bishop elected by the Central Jurisdiction.*
- 1968:** *The Central Jurisdiction is abolished with the merger of the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren churches into the United Methodist Church. *

Why I stayed in the Methodist Church

By Bishop Woodie White

Bishop White, the first staff executive of the General Commission on Religion and Race, explains why he stayed a member of the Methodist Church when other black church members left the denomination before and after the creation of the Central Jurisdiction.

From its beginning, American Methodism has leaned toward racial justice and inclusivity.

The first Methodist *Book of Discipline* was strongly anti-slavery, and its earliest worshipping congregations were interracial—even those held in homes. Yet, this forward-looking posture was challenged from within the institution, and its racial ethic was not altogether without contradictions. In many ways, the racial attitudes of early Methodists mirrored the communities in which they were located.

Well into the 20th century Methodism had both a positive and a negative reputation on race. But on the whole, the denomination leaned toward racial justice and inclusivity.

Creation of the Central Jurisdiction

In 1939, when American Methodism determined to reunite, after having divided in 1844 over the issue of race and slavery, it established a segregated structure to satisfy the demands of the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

The new church organized itself into five geographical units, called jurisdictions. It also created a sixth all-black racial jurisdiction to assure the existence of all white jurisdictions in the southern and southwest regions of the United States.

This compromise would haunt Methodism for the next 28 years, and the denomination would spend as much time trying to decide how to eliminate the

racially segregated and divisive structure. In the face of such racial ambivalence, many ask, “Why did black people remain in The Methodist Church?”

Writing in *Methodism’s Racial Dilemma: The Story of the Central Jurisdiction* (Abingdon Press, 1992) the late Bishop James S. Thomas quoted a 1939 response by Dr. Willis J. King, president of Gammon Theological Seminary who was later elected bishop:

“More important (to the Negro members) however, than rights and prerogatives was the instinctive conviction evident from their earliest connection with the people call Methodists, that this fellowship represented a communion that was seriously seeking to build a brotherhood among all men. They believed that their membership in such a fellowship would help in the achievement of world brotherhood.”

Thomas added, “Another reason why so many African Americans remained in The Methodist Church was the vigor of the church’s outreach to them, albeit within segregated structures.”

For many, it was the church of their birth. They knew no other church. Many asked, “Why should we leave our church?”

Why I remained in the Methodist Church

In my case, I learned at a family reunion last summer that our “home” church, Macedonia UMC, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, dates back to 1865. Both of my parents are from little villages on “the shore” where the UMC has long been central.

The two cemeteries of those churches, Asbury and Macedonia, are the resting place of generations of my family. These generations were products of Methodist preaching and evangelism.

I suppose, I am a United Methodist in part because of the outreach of early Methodists to people of color. The strong stand against slavery of northern Methodism and its staunch sense of social justice was laudable and attractive. The creation of a network of historically black colleges, one of which I attended, enhanced the reputation of The Methodist Church among black people.

I attended a United Methodist seminary known as "the school of the prophets" because it prepared future ministers with the expectation that they would speak out against unjust systems, however powerful and no matter what the cost.

In 1968, when The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church united to form the UMC, the new denomination committed itself to a racially inclusive church absent a segregated racial jurisdiction. Its Constitution provides in clear, unequivocal language the following:

"The United Methodist Church is a part of the Church Universal which is one Body in Christ. Therefore all persons without regard to race, color, national origin, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, to participate in its programs, and when they take the appropriate vows, to be admitted into its membership in any local church in the connection.

"In The United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, or economic condition."
Article IV

Today, The UMC is one of the most racially inclusive Protestant churches in the nation and perhaps globally. At every level of the church it has persons of various racial and ethnic groups in significant leadership positions. Its programs continue to be directed to a racially and ethnically diverse constituency.

To be sure, racism has not disappeared in the denomination. Many local congregations are still organized along racial and ethnic lines, and individual prejudice still exists.

But more and more people of different racial backgrounds worship together in UM congregations, and are led by pastors whose race may be different from the majority of the worshippers.

We are not yet what we want to be as a Church, but we are clearly not what we used to be. I guess, that's why I am proud to be a United Methodist!



Bishop Woodie White serves as the bishop in residence at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta. He was elected to the episcopacy in 1984 and served as president of the Council of Bishops (1996-1997).

From prison to the mission field

By H. William Green

CARY, N.C. —

Otis Hardy was sentenced to two life sentences for unarmed robbery in June, 1979.

He was pardoned by North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt in 2000.

Today, Otis and his wife, Wynella, are members of First UMC in Cary, and Otis is helping inmates make the transition from prison back into society.

Although raised a Muslim, Otis was led to faith in Christ by a prison guard, and he soon became a transforming influence on his fellow inmates.

He progressed in prison to trustee status where he was selected to work as a pastry chef at the governor's mansion. While in prison, Otis participated in DISCIPLE Bible Study.

Since his release, Otis leads a Bible study at a halfway house and helps find jobs for men who have recently been released from prison.

He was honored for his volunteer work by a 2002 private dinner with President George Bush in Washington, D.C.

After graduating from Saint Augustine College in 2004, Otis increased the pace of his volunteer work. He currently is engaged in a southeast Raleigh ministry to poor people living with drugs, and gang violence.

Otis, a highly-sought-after speaker, has the ability to relate to a wide variety of people. The Scripture that Otis uses whenever he gives his testimony is:

"The human mind may devise many plans, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established"

— Proverbs 19:21



The Rev. H. William Green, a pastor of First UMC in Cary, N.C. (right) first met Otis Hardy in 1999 while he was leading a DISCIPLE Bible study in prison. Green was the first men's ministry specialist and is a leader of UM Men at the Cary church. Hardy is an active member and spoke at one their meetings.

Otis is also able to counsel troubled youth, dialogue with gang members, build bridges between law enforcement and ethnic-minority neighborhoods, preach at churches, and bring persons of all races together to address societal problems.

Following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2006, Otis was actively involved in relief efforts in Jackson County, Miss. He repeated those efforts in Raleigh after tornadoes hit the area.

Following two life sentences, Otis never expected to be released from prison, but the Lord had other plans for him.

Connecting again in Haiti

By Gil Hanke

LA TEMBLAY, Haiti —

This summer, I led a nine-member team to help rebuild a church here. Organized under the Texas Annual Conference, the team had six members from Texas, two from Tennessee and one from Virginia. We left the U.S. on June 27 and returned July 5.

We slept in a Methodist school and worked at the church a short walk down the road. Our team worked for the Haitian Methodist Church under the direction of Haitian masons and carpenters.

Our work was coordinated by the UM Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and UM Volunteers in Mission. Our team raised \$3,500 for the project, an amount matched by UMCOR.

Those who had never been to Haiti or who had not been to the island nation since the January, 2010, earthquake were moved by the damage. Two of us who were there shortly after the earthquake were gratified by the amount of clean up and rebuilding efforts.

Our task was to be in relationship with children and adults at the school, the worksite and the community. We followed a Missouri Area team that had poured a slab for the church building and we erected concrete block walls.

I have made many trips to Haiti, usually to work in schools serving children with severe hearing impairments. Three of those schools were completely destroyed by the earthquake, and they have now reopened in different locations.

Institut Monfort, a Roman Catholic school, was a special place for us as the children were more oral than some of the other schools for the deaf. I had some



Gil Hanke carries cinder blocks to build the walls of the church at La Temblay, Haiti

difficulty connecting with them as they had moved out of the Port au Prince area.

The new location of the school was just a few miles from La Tremblay. With the help of our interpreter, I made connections with the school and two nuns from the school visited our worksite. They were initially hesitant to meet as some other visitors from the US were more interested in a photo shoot than providing assistance. Subsequently, I was

invited to visit the school on Saturday afternoon. Trust was restored and they will welcome us when we make future visits to test their children and provide hearing aids.

Sunday, after many days of hard hot work at the church, we enjoyed a two-hour-plus worship service at the school. The congregation was excited to see work on their church progress. Soon they will return to a larger new facility.

That afternoon, we took Haitian staff members to a beach. For some of those who had cooked for us and taken care of us, it was their first time at a real beach.


Monday we returned to the Methodist Guest House and we toured the severely damaged city of Port au Prince. Government buildings were especially hard hit and there are tent cities in every open public space.

We visited College Bird, the “mother church” of the Methodist Church of Haiti, and a severely damaged Methodist school. We then walked around the corner to the site of St. Vincent’s School for Handicapped Children, a place I had visited on every previous trip.

The school had relocated to a building across the street.

As we stood looking at a temporary wall where the school and clinic had stood, I felt a hand on my shoulder. I turned to find a teacher who had attended Saint Vincent’s due to his deafness. We embraced and he recounted in sign language his injuries and experience during the quake.

I promised to return, a promise he knows from the last 20 years I will keep.

United Methodist teams continue to come to Haiti. They work and bring in many things. Their most precious gift is hope and the physical evidence that the people of Haiti are not forgotten. 

Gil Hanke is the top staff executive of the General Commission on United Methodist Men

A Scout is brave

by Teresa Rector and Amy Carter

ARLINGTON, Tenn. —

Nicholas Carter, a Life Scout in Troop 452 chartered by the Arlington UMC, has exhibited this part of the Scout Law every day for the past ten years.

At the age of four, he was diagnosed with a rare brain tumor that without emergency treatment would blind him and eventually kill him. After being stabilized at LeBonheur Children's Hospital, he was transferred to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital where he underwent treatment.


He exhibited bravery each time he walked into the treatment room, got on the radiation table and had his head held in place by a mask that was bolted to the table. His courage was evident with every needle poke, every time he was put into a MRI or CT machine, and each time doctors told us what the scans showed. Radiation treatments destroyed his pituitary gland and he has to take daily medication for the rest of his life. He still endures numerous hospital stays for simple illnesses and continues to have follow-up visits at St. Jude.

Nicholas joined the Cub Scouts in first grade and has challenged himself to keep up with other Scouts his age while facing coordination, stamina, and health



issues. He continues to do so to this day and holds the rank of Life Scout having completed all required merit badges. He had to build up his endurance, and overcome coordination issues to earn the swimming merit badge, his last required one.

Nicholas regularly serves dinners to guests of the Ronald McDonald House, and he provides hope for families with children at St. Jude. He has held a fundraiser for T.H.E. BRAINTRUST, an organization who uses the Internet to help support people affected by brain tumors. With the support of friends and family, "Nicholas' Nickels" raised \$3,200 for the organization.

Today, Nicholas, 14, is a freshman at Arlington High School where he is on the trapshooting team and active in the Key Club. He was recently adopted by Union University's men's basketball team as their "sixth man" through the Friends of Jaclyn Foundation. This organization links children with sports teams to improve the quality of life for these children with brain tumors. Next up for Nicholas is his Eagle Scout project. 

Teresa Rector is program coordinator for Collierville (Tenn.) UMC and chaplain of Troop 452. Amy Carter is the mother of Nicholas.

UM Men help inner-city church in Nashville

NASHVILLE, Tenn. —

The Nashville City Codes Department gave Dixon Memorial UMC notice that its inner-city structure was in violation of several codes. If repairs were not made immediately, the department would levy severe financial penalties or prohibit the 80-member congregation from meeting in the aging building.

The church issued a call to help. Led by Cliff Steger, the Nashville District Lay Leader, UM Men responded. The former president of Tennessee Conference of UM Men recruited men from Gordon Memorial, his home church, Dixon Memorial, Bellevue UMC, and Brentwood UMC to work on five weekends.

Men from Brentwood UMC led the way in reinforcing rafters, replacing and painting fascia board and installing 300 feet of gutter with eight downspouts. Scaffolding was required to work at the 15-foot-high level.


The men also repaired and painted doors and door frames, removed a

fallen tree, repaired the front steps and directed water away from the building.

Heavy rain cancelled a couple of work days, but the men completed the work on May 1, the Sunday after Easter, one week after their scheduled completion date.

"The men who worked on the project were very generous with their time and resources," said Steger. "They responded quickly and even bought extra materials and lunches for the workers."

"This was an example of Christian fellowship, brothers supporting others in need in the community and within the church," said Ingram Howard, president of Tennessee Conference UM Men. "It was obvious that everyone involved in the project came away feeling good about helping this small church and their community, a place where many of the men had never been or seen before. This was truly an example of God's love in action."

Howard estimates that the gift of labor saved the church about \$3,000. 

Humor


Any order will do

A confirmation student was asked to list the Ten Commandments in any order. He wrote, "3, 6, 1, 8, 4, 5, 9, 2, 10, 7."

Leave Shirley out of it

A minister was giving a lesson to a group of children on the 23rd Psalm. He noticed that one of the little boys seemed disquieted by the phrase "Surely, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life..."

"What's wrong with that, Johnny?" the preacher asked.

"Well," answered Johnny, "I understand about having goodness and mercy, for God is good. But I'm not sure I'd like Shirley following me around all the time." 

Hog Father boosts hunger-relief effort

The Rev. Nathaniel Long, a North Georgia pastor who calls himself The Hog Father, celebrated his 49th birthday by riding his motorcycle 451 miles to the Tennessee and Alabama borders.

He describes himself as an out-of-shape and over-fed pastor of a rural church. However, on this trip, he was feeling a good deal healthier and lighter.

Long and three other United Methodist clergymen in Georgia, had been living only on Stop Hunger Now packages during the 40 days of Lent. The international organization provides prepackaged food for hungry people for 25 cents a day.

4 for 40

"We call ourselves the '4 for 40,'" Long said.

The clergymen's unusual diet drew attention and funding to the Raleigh, N.C. organization that has already distributed 43 million meals to hungry people around the world.

Members of the clergymen's four UM congregations pledged \$1.50 a day during Lent to fund four packaging events where dry ingredients were poured into plastic packages.

The events provided a total of 50,000 meals that were distributed by Stop Hunger Now.



Participants in a LaGrange (Ga.) packaging event

Founded by Ray Buchanan

The Rev. Ray Buchanan, a Marine Corps veteran and a United Methodist clergyman, founded the international hunger-relief group in 1998. He was also the founder and co-director of the Society of St. Andrew, a Virginia-based food-relief organization for the United States. Both hunger-relief agencies are partner organizations with the Commission on United Methodist Men.

Stop Hunger Now packets are easily transported, and they have a shelf life of five years. Contents are boiled in water for 20 minutes. The rice, soy, dehydrated vegetables and 21 vitamins and minerals in each plastic packet provide six nutritious meals at 25 cents per serving.

"During my birthday ride, I stopped at a store to look at my map when the owner of a red Harley with a trailer in tow approached me," Long said. "The fellow cyclist asked about the Stop Hunger Now logos on my bike."

Long told his fellow motorcyclist all about the organization and his fast.

The man, a firefighter, asked Long for his card and the address of the Stop Hunger Now website. He does not know whether the fellow cyclist contributed to the effort.

"I had a wonderful time," Long said upon his 11 p.m. arrival back at his home in Senoia, Ga.

One failure

In a blog about his experience of living only on the "Stop Hunger Now" food, Long wrote that his only failure came during a trip to Disney World where he had no way to heat the contents.

"Trust me, this Stop Hunger Now food is pretty good hot," Long said, "but I just can't do it cold."

With financial gifts hovering around \$5,000, Senoia United Methodist Church — Long's congregation — packaged 10,000 meals on June 1. Another event was held at a nearby middle school where two groups of 100 sixth-graders each worked for 90 minutes pouring ingredients into plastic packages, sealing the packs and placing them in shipping boxes for an additional 10,000 meals.

Birthday meditation

Long, the father of five children ranging from 7 to 24, says his birthday ride gave him time to reflect on why people have failed to do anything about the 925 million hungry people in the world.

"Most of the time our lack of effort in ending the plight of world hunger is not indifference, selfishness, hard-heartedness, hate or any negative action," Long said. "It is usually due simply to the fact that we live our lives with blinders on. We live, sleep, work, play (and) relate in a place where we are usually untouched by the realities of others around the world."

"One of the things I love about Stop Hunger Now is that the solution to the hunger in the world already exists; we just have to decide to make it a reality," he added. "And you and I can do that one child, one meal and one-quarter at a time."





**MONTGOMERY, Ala.—
Sixteen UM churches work on 60 projects**

Two thousand members of 16 UM congregations worked on 60 projects during their second annual Great Day of Service. Church members planted a garden behind the Friendship Mission while others served the Montgomery Area Council on



Aging, Gift of Life, Family Sunshine Center, Brantwood Children's Home, Habitat for Humanity, and Child Protect of Montgomery.

**SELLERSBURG, Ind.—
Church presents three awards**

Sellersburg UMC presented Cross and Flame Awards to three fathers of Eagle Scouts. Pastor Richard P. Werle presented the awards to David Pickel, Dwight Eirod and Darryl Moore.

**ARLINGTON, Va.—
Boy Scouts host Shrove Tuesday pancake supper**

Boy Scout Troop 167 of Mt. Olivet UMC hosted a Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner.



**GRAND HAVEN, Mich.—
Church receives award from President Obama**

The UMC of the Dunes received the President's Volunteer Service Award along with a signed letter from President Barack Obama.

"The church has been a strong proponent of voluntarism and welcoming community members by hosting the Family Promise program, building Habitat homes, working with the People Supper House, and participating in the Coast Guard Festival," said the Rev. Dan Duncan, pastor. "Our church provides food, shelter, shower facilities, spiritual support, and donated goods

for the homeless," said Duncan. "Plus church members make all of the meals and host the families experiencing poverty as they get back on track with their lives and learn to live independently."

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.—
Men sing before NBA game**

Men of St. Mark's UMC sang the national anthem prior to a March game between the Charlotte Bobcats and the Portland Trailblazers at the Time Warner Cable Arena in Charlotte. Terrance Little is the choir president and Kenny Leonard is the director. District Superintendent George Thompson and St. Mark's members were there to applaud.



**ALEXANDRIA, Va.—
Kansas Senator speaks to UM Men in Virginia**



U.S. Senator Pat Roberts

U.S. Senator Pat Roberts and his wife, Frankie, attend Aldersgate UMC in Alexandria while congress is in session. The Kansas senator was the speaker at a May dinner sponsored by UM Men.

**AIKEN, S.C.—
Men build eight ramps a year**
Men of St. John's UMC have built at least eight wheel-chair ramps every year for the last 25 years. Some of the funds for the Jack Meeks Memorial Ramp Ministry are raised at an annual golf tournament.

The average ramp costs about \$700 for pressure-treated lumber and hardware, said Midge Rothrock of St. John's UMC. Golf tournaments raise between \$7,500 and \$10,000.

**DE PERE, Wis.—
Church forges partnership with Bulgarian congregation**

Members of New Hope UMC in De Pere, Wis., had only been worshipping together for a year when they forged a partnership with a UM congregation in Russe, Bulgaria. The church sent teams to Russe in 2008 and 2009. In 2009, the Wisconsin church hosted a team from Russe. For the past three Christmas Eves, the two congregations have worshipped together via Skype with video cameras in each sanctuary.



Young members of a church in Russe, Bulgaria, wave greetings to their friends at New Hope UMC in DePere, Wis.

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.—
Men assemble hand-driven carts**

UM Men at Trinity UMC hosted a district PET (Personal Energy Transport) project. After breakfast and a brief devotion by Ingram Howard, president of UM Men of the Tennessee Conference, the men assembled 10 carts that were shipped to Africa. The event was coordinated by Gary Johnson, president of Murfreesboro District UM Men.



Carts made by UM Men in Murfreesboro are sent to Africa through Columbia, Mo.-based PET International.

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla.—

Church packs 144,580 meals

At a second packaging event, the UM Church of the Servant assembled 144,580 Stop Hunger Now meals on Sunday, April 10.

"We shut down Sunday school, but not church," said Scott Smith, the church's director of discipleship.

Church of the Servant had its first Stop Hunger Now event on March 7, 2010. Some 500 volunteers assembled just over 101,000 meals. This year, event leaders raised \$35,000 for meals and recruited more than 1,300 volunteers for packing day. They worked in four shifts from 7:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

ODESSA, Fla.—

Scout builds promotion bridge

Daniel Nusekabel, a member of Van Dyke UMC in Tampa, led Troop 339 in building a promotion bridge at the Girl Scouts USA regional office in Odessa.



Dan Nusekabel, a leader of Troop 339, hammers home a point to his fellow scouts building a promotion bridge at a Girl Scouts headquarters.

Members of the Van Dyke congregation later awarded Daniel a Good Samaritan Award.

DOVER, Del.—

Men portray the lesser disciples

Men of Wesley UMC portrayed "Lesser Disciples" in a play written by the Rev. Charles Goodin. John the Baptist and the Apostle Paul were featured along with other lesser known men who appeared at various times during Jesus' preaching, teaching and healing ministry.

PLEASANT GROVE, Ala.—

Blessed to help

"We are blessed to be able to help others," said Bill Sadberry, 74, a volunteer at Pleasant Grove UMC command center following April tornadoes.



A tornado flattened Pleasant Grove, Ala. Dozens of tornadoes spawned by a powerful storm system wiped out entire towns across a wide swath of the South, killing hundreds.

AP Photo by Greg Bluestein

Storms destroyed entire neighborhoods and killed more than 330 people. In Pleasant Grove, volunteers remained in the field on Sunday, and only came by the church for a hot lunch.

"We can either be in church, or be the church," said Denny Nissley, founder of Christ in Action, a volunteer group that specializes in disaster recovery.

Cinnaminson, NJ—

Asbury men engage in dry-land synchronized swim event

In support of the Asbury UMC 200th anniversary celebration, men of Asbury UMC put on a dry-land version of a synchronized swim team. The church family was held in hysterical laughter at the sight of the six man team's choreographed antics based on the theme music from Chariots of Fire and other classical pieces. There will never be anything like it for another 100 years. Search You Tube for Asbury UMM to see the full show.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—

Conference members leave with potatoes

Members of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference left the meeting with bags of potatoes in their trunk for local food pantries. UM Men of the conference distributed 50,000 pounds of potatoes to conference members and Philabundance, a Philadelphia food bank.



Ross Brightwell, president of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference UM Men, accepts delivery of 50,000 potatoes during the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference.

Photo by Suzy Keenan*

TOWAMENCIN, Pa.—

County commissioner raps politicians

Montgomery County Commissioner Bruce Castor Jr., said he makes decisions based upon his Christian faith.

"A person of faith worries that God is looking over his shoulder and does the correct thing," he told UM Men of Christ UMC in Towamencin.

Castor is in his 26th year as a Montgomery County employee and he now serves as a county commissioner. He said many politicians make decisions based on what is politically correct or what would benefit a friend or crony rather than what is right.

"In my career, I have seen the worst things that people can do" said Castor. "We need to take the talents that we are given to better ourselves and our community." The Republican commissioner explained that Montgomery County is governed by three

commissioners: two represent one party and the third represents the other political party. Each commissioner serves a four-year term and may be reelected. There are no term limits.

REDLANDS, Calif.—

Seventy men attend retreat

Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men, spoke to 70 men of the California-Pacific Annual Conference attending a retreat on Armed Forces Day. The one-day event included devotions by the Rev. Bau Dang, superintendent of the Riverside District, and greetings by Richard Kim, conference president.



The Rev. Nancy Grissom Self and the Rev. Dr. Lewis Fry, officiate at a closing communion service during a May 21 rally at First UMC of Redlands.

PINEVILLE, La.

Church raises funds for Strength for Service books

On July 3, as part of the Fourth of July weekend, UM Men asked persons attending three worship services for funds to send copies of Strength for Service to God and Country to members of the U.S. Armed Forces. The men raised \$735.

UM Men President David Tassin says the group also donated 70 copies of the historic book of daily devotions to local firefighter, emergency medical workers and police officers on Sept. 11, the tenth anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center.

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—

Church hosts fellowship for motorcycle riders

Frazer Memorial UMC sponsors the Fellowship of Christian Riders, a group that conducts a couple of motorcycle rides each month. After-church rides are short and Saturday rides are longer.



In April, some 90 bikers participated in the fourth annual Blessing-of-the-Bikes ceremony. The Rev. Tim Thompson, senior pastor of the 8,500-member congregation, and the Rev. Patrick Quinn, teaching pastor, gave each rider a pin fashioned as a compass with the word "Blessed" at the bottom.

LINCOLN, Neb.—

UM Men report rings the bell

Dave Mendyk, president of Nebraska Conference UM Men, gave a report to the annual conference meeting in Lincoln.

"As Gil Hanke and I finished speaking by asking to be allowed as a partner in ministry to men, someone in the back began yelling, 'Fire alarm!'" said Mendyk. "We have to clear the building."

"Some drywall work had created a cloud of dust that set off the alarm. It gave us all 20 minutes to think about that UM Men report."

After conference members returned, Bishop Ann Scherer-Simpson said, "Well, David, I guess we could say, 'You really rang the bell,' or 'You really lit a fire under us.'"

GRAPEVINE, Texas—

Men sponsor activities with the Wakanda Nation

"Iron Men" of First UMC provide dads and their children an opportunity to ride horses and shoot arrows as members of the Wakanda Nation.



Dads get the Caddos tribe ready to ride.

The nation has programs for children in kindergarten through the 5th grade. Young girls belong to the Ponies Tribe of the Indian Princesses program, and boys belong to the Caddos Tribe of the Indian Guides program.

First UMC also hosts a Boy Scout troop and a Cub Scout pack. The church was awarded a Shepherd Church Charter Recognition for its youth programs.

GREAT FALLS, Va.—

Troop produces 103 Eagle Scouts

Boy Scout Troup 673, sponsored by men of Great Falls UMC since 1962, has produced 103 Eagle Scouts. Several Eagle projects improved the church property.

In 2011, Matthew Morgan organized a team to upgrade the landscape at the church and Tommy Grant refurbished the church's picnic area.

SAINT FRANCISVILLE, La.—

Song inspired by Joe Kelley

The choir of Saint Francisville UMC surprised Joe Kelley with a song written in his honor. Ron McLemore wrote the words and music to "Has Anybody Told You That They Love You Today." Those who know Kelley also know the source of McLemore's inspiration.

ROANOKE, Va. —

Virginia Conference men launch Disciple Bible prison ministry

During the 2011 session of the Virginia Annual Conference, Jim Green, conference president of UM Men, introduced Mark Hicks, the founder and president of Disciple Outreach ministries. This ministry equips laity to lead Bible study sessions in state prisons and suggests ways to help inmates prepare for life after their release.



Virginia Conference officials sign an agreement with Disciple Bible Outreach while Mark Hicks (left), founder of the prison ministry, and Gil Hanke (right) observe the signing.

Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men, addressed the gathering about the partnership between UM Men and the prison ministry.

A partnership agreement was signed to officially start the program in Virginia.

A similar partnership agreement was signed during the Memphis, Tennessee, and Holston Annual Conference sessions.

OCALA, Fla.—

Church provides meals for homeless

First UMC of Ocala provides clothing, toiletries, gas cards and other services to the homeless every Monday. On Tuesdays, the church serves them lunches.

Scott Bolin, president of the UM Men, and volunteer John Simpson organized teams of men to come in on Sundays to make the soup. George Heubeck, 91, is one of the volunteers.

The first luncheon was hosted Aug. 24, 2010. Six people attended. By the summer of 2011, the church was serving 110 people.

OMAHA, Neb.—

Scout leader and musician honored by columnist

Von R. Trimble, a member of Clair Memorial UMC, a lifetime EMS member and a scoutmaster, was honored by Janice Gilmore, a columnist for the Omaha World Herald. She noted that Trimble played in the Duke Ellington band at age 15. At age 16, he played with Lionel Hampton, and he also played with Miles Davis.

A graduate of Omaha University (now the University of Nebraska at Omaha), Trimble worked for the government for 34 years, many of them as a Social Security supervisor. He is a 50-year volunteer for the Boy Scouts, serving as a scoutmaster, cubmaster, district chairman, and chairman of the Eagle Board of Review.

Gilmore concludes her column, "But of all the wonderful ways Trimble has served in the community, my favorite is his being my Sunday school teacher!"



Von R. Trimble

XENIA, Ohio—

Men plant crop for food pantry

John W. Sherer, a member of Faith Community UMC, says the idea came during a district meeting of UM Men.

Men of Faith Community planted five rows of potatoes, and 40 tomato plants. Produce was delivered to the Xenia Fish Pantry.



MUNCIE, Ind.—

Bishop presents award of excellence

Indiana Area Bishop Michael Coyner



presented the Bishop's Award of Excellence to Troop 276, chartered by Castleton UMC of Indianapolis. The presenta-

tion was made during the Indiana Annual Conference session in Muncie.

CHESTER, Ill.—

Fifty years of providing scholarships

For the 50th year in a row, UM Men of First UMC in Chester presented local students with scholarships to attend college. The 2011-2012 recipients are: Gary McDaniel, Adam Lutz and Molly Herschbach.

The scholarship program began in 1962 as a memorial to Jerry Lamkin, a member of First UMC who was killed in an auto accident. Records are not available prior to 1983; however, since that year, men of Chester have presented 57 Lamkin scholarships to 44 students totaling \$18,750.

COLEMAN, Texas—

Coleman men help paint Valera church

Thirty members of five congregations in four communities repainted the 104-year-old building of Valera (Texas) UMC. UM Men of First UMC in Coleman participated in the four-hour project and provided lunch for the workers.



DIXON, Ill.—

Men hold workdays at Camp Reynoldswood

Men of Kirkland UMC and DeKalb District had chainsaws and chop saws working at full power on three Saturdays at Camp Reynoldswood.

To see the men in action, pay a visit to YouTube (<http://youtu.be/CjfdYewYrG4>) "It takes an army of willing folks all using their gifts and graces (and power tools) to be a good steward of one of God's great gift of creation," said Scott Brooks, president of DeKalb District UM Men.

"Thanks Scott and your army of workers at Reynoldswood," said Bruce Nelson, director of retreat and outdoor ministries for Northern Illinois Conference. "The camp looks great and the windows are finished on the inside now."

WICHITA, Kan.—

Men honor spiritual fathers

"Our goal at Calvary UMC is spiritual reproduction," said George Houle, a men's ministry specialist.

The church honored Shawn Chastain as a "spiritual father" and Mike Wood as a "spiritual grandfather." Houle said the recognition is awarded every Father's Day to men who "lead us in the pursuit of God, show persistence rather than perfection, teach, guide, mentor and support us through God's presence in our lives.

"Mike has provided Calvary UMC with music on organ, piano and just about any other key board instrument for 25 years. He has been playing since he was 12," said Houle. "Shawn also has been part

of worship music all his life, and has directed choirs of all ages at Calvary for nearly a decade."



Calvary UMC in Wichita, Kan., honors Shawn Chastain (left) and Mike Wood with Spiritual Fathers Awards.

Scouts become brothers with Uganda troop

ATLANTA, Ga. —

Twelve Scouts of St. James UMC Troop 370 left Atlanta for Uganda two days after Christmas, 2010.

The troop served as trailblazers for a new "Bridges of Mission" initiative of the North Georgia Conference.

The initiative is designed to join American church groups with those abroad. Troop 370 named its part of the initiative, "Scouting Bridges: Uganda."

The 12 boys expected a week of activities with a small troop from the Humble School in Lukojjo. Upon their arrival, however, they were met by scores of Scouts from throughout the Mukono District.

"The Bridges program allows participants to engage in a deeper relationship and understand the perspective of the foreign Scout, his or her typical life activities, Scout activities, challenges and opportunities," said Troop 370 Scoutmaster Harry Evans. "The image of a bridge was chosen for the program name because bridges are points of connection."

Evans said the Ugandan Boy Scout program is very different from those in the United States. American Boy Scouts focus on teaching service, good character and leadership. Ugandan Scouts learn about survival, sustainable farming and preventing disease.

Scouts in both nations value service to their communities, keeping God at the center of life and being an active part of a worldwide organization.

American and Ugandan Scouts worked together to build a latrine for a 70-year-old woman and her family who



had no bathroom facilities.

Scouts from both nations mixed mortar and laid bricks under the watchful eyes of Lukojjo villagers.

It wasn't all work. The boys also camped at the Humble School, went on a safari in


Queen Elizabeth National Park, and hiked the Mountains of the Moon. The work and activities helped form lifetime friendships among the Scouts from both nations.



Twelve Scouts and their leaders from Uganda sing for the June session of North Georgia Conference in Athens. The Scouts came to the conference at the invitation of Scouts from St. James UMC.

Twelve Uganda Scouts returned the visit in June, and 48 Atlanta Scouts will go to Uganda in December.

"We really see this program as an example of what scouting in the 21st century can be," said Evans "—a blurring of borders between countries and continents and sharing the core values that scouting has across the world."

Bishop Daniel Wandabula of the East Africa Area told the team, "I'm grateful to see our young people in the Scout movement... we need to know more about each other and what God is calling us to do." 

Austin District UMM president aids tsunami victims

Chip Sparks, president of the Austin District UM Men, served as logistic planner for U.S. Military efforts to aid victims of the massive tsunami that devastated the eastern shore of Honshu (the main island of Japan).


"In my role as a logistics planner, I was asked to come on duty to assist in the 24 hour manning of the Joint Logistics Operations Center," Sparks reported at the UM Men Austin District website (<http://www.gbmg-umc.org/austinumm/japan.html>).

"We were responsible for receiving, validating, scheduling, tracking, and distributing all of the U.S. humanitarian assistance to the citizens of Japan. By the

time that I returned home on April 28th, we had shipped over 250 million gallons of water and 100 tons of food, in addition to the fuel, shelters and blankets to the affected areas."

Service members living near the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant wore personal dosimeters to monitor their radiation exposure. The Marine Corps Chemical Biological Incident Response Force was also sent to monitor radiation.

The situation at the reactors fortunately improved and the Marines were able to return home.

There are over 80,000 U.S. military service members and families in Japan. 



A fishing boat is noticeably out of place after being swept ashore during a massive tsunami that devastated Ofunato, Japan. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Matthew M. Bradley.

Venture Crew focuses on music

CUMBERLAND, Ind. —George Morrell, a scouting ministry specialist, began a Venture Crew focused on music. Crew member download free play-along material from PlayJazzNow.com. "The pastor, Rev. Jeff Mair, has been very supportive," says Morrell. "There is a possibility that Venture Crew 372 could rejuvenate the high school youth group which dissolved. 



A few words about my dad

By Deborah Chandler

My father died on Fathers Day, June 18, 1995, at the age of 63.

Since Christmas, 1995, I have honored his memory with twice-a-year donations to the Society of John Wesley Fellows

Over the years, I have received phone calls from different men at the United Methodist Men's Foundation in Nashville. The call always goes the same way. They express their gratitude for my donations and continued support of the men's ministry. And, they ask about the man that inspired his daughter to honor him in this way. This past year, I was asked to write about my father. This is my attempt to respond to that request. But to tell this story, I must tell you two truths.

First, it was never my idea to make these donations. My father's last Christmas was in 1994. That year, he asked his three children to skip the traditional gifts. Instead, he asked that we make donations to the Society of John Wesley Fellows. You see, he wanted to be a fellow, but he wanted the donations to be the gift of his children. He asked for no more birthday gifts, Father's Day gifts, or Christmas gifts. He just wanted to be remembered in donations. Well, we did what most adult children might do. We ignored him and bought gifts anyway.

When the first Christmas without out him rolled around, I knew what I needed to do. I contacted his minister and asked for his help in finding out about the Society of John Wesley

Fellows. I made my first donation and committed that I would continue to make donations. I asked that my father be made a fellow in memory. The men in Nashville agreed.

Difficult assignment

I was asked to write the information for this article over six months ago. While I was committed to the idea, I was overwhelmed with how I would communicate the essence of the incredible man I called "Dad." I sought inputs from my dad's minister, several of his friends in the church, and the members of my family. Despite receiving inputs, I learned no one else had the words either.

My father was Joe Chandler, born May 29, 1932 on a Tennessee farm near Shiloh National Park. He described his childhood as both happy and poor. While he believed education was his means to a brighter future, he didn't have that option. He joined the Marine Corps and served his country for nine years. Shortly after enlisting, he married my mother. While they were high school sweethearts, her parents were too strict to allow them to date. A few years later, my sister was born. Still in the military, my dad started to attend college.



Joe Chandler



Men's Club in First UMC of Park Ridge, Ill. The program included regular breakfast meetings with devotions, announcements and a program. Community leaders or prominent church leaders were regular speakers. My father served as the president from 1992-1993. He was an active member until his death.

While these facts describe the events, they don't describe the man. He was many things to many people. In the Marine Corps, he was the embodiment of the Marine Corps values: honor, courage, and commitment. In his career, he was an example and inspiration of ethics in business for the young people he mentored and trained. Integrity was the most common word used when his coworkers talked about him at his memorial service.

In the UM Men's group, he was remembered for his conviction, dedication and persuasion. He was a natural organizer who brought men together. To my mother, he was loyal. I used to tell my friends that my parents were like peanut butter and jelly — you can't have one without the other. He loved her, encouraged her and remained a united front in raising three children together. To his children, he was Dad. He taught us to live by his values, learn from his mistakes, and take responsibility for our actions. He made each of us feel secure, loved and treasured for our unique characteristics.

Despite all that I have written, my words fail to capture the man. So, I offer some of his words. to help you understand why I honor his memory through donations to the Society of John Wesley Fellows.

Deborah feeds her daddy some cake on her first birthday. "My dad would have eaten anything off of his kids' fingers just to make them smile," said Deborah. "My mom?—Let's just say she has better taste."

Eventually with the help of the GI bill and my mother working full-time, he graduated with a degree in business.

Soon after, the family moved to Chicago and he started what would be a successful 30 year career as an investment banker selling municipal bonds for John Nuveen & Company. Soon, I was born followed by my brother. When I was in 3rd grade, my dad said, "It's your mom's turn." With his encouragement and support, my mother started attending community college. She received her master's degree the year before I completed college.

My father battled heart disease for over 15 years. He had two bypass surgeries, a stroke, and died of a heart attack. Both the pain and limitations of his health drove him to explore and understand his faith.

Shortly after his retirement, my father organized The United Methodist

"Get your education. It is the one thing you can never lose and it can never be taken away from you."

"Don't do anything that you wouldn't want to read about on the front page of the Chicago Tribune."

"You have to embrace diversity. We share a lot in common with the Jewish people --- it starts with the Old Testament". (His response when I told him I would marry a Jewish man. He signed all his cards and letters to my husband, "Shalom, Joe".)

"You have always been very kind and considerate of your mother and me. It's too bad that every father hasn't had a daughter just like you, but then God only made one and I am blessed that you are part of my life". (Written to me in a card)


"Things at work may be difficult, but you are a great person and have a lot to give any employer. If the company is one tenth the corporation I think they are, they will let you express your ideas, take many of your suggestions and grow with you. You have some wonderful experience and the future is yours. Simply go for it all. I have confidence in you and others will just have to make room for you." (Written in a letter)

"You are a stunning couple: well educated, good jobs, and families who love you very much. Together, you each have a very special friend to travel down life's trails with. My love and respect for each of you runs deep and true, and if ever either of you need me, I want to be here for you." (Written shortly after my husband and I were married)



Joe Chandler expresses obvious pride in his Blue Bird daughter, Deborah.

"I thank God each day for you, Arnold, Connie & Kevin, Michael and for Mary and ask for guidance and strength to walk daily the life that our creator would have us to walk. We Methodist believe that this sanctification, that is spiritual growth and development is a lifelong process. It is a journey that contains a lot of love along with trials and tribulations but grow as a people and family we must or we miss our true opportunity in life. It is not so much what we have as who we are and what we are that counts." (Written in a letter)

I was 4 years old when my dad taught me to tie my shoes. He said, "There are two ways you can learn to tie your shoes. I will show you both and then you can decide which way you want to do it". Of course, after he taught me "wrap around the loop and pull the bunny through the hole," he said, "Let me show you the other way just in case you change your mind." 

UM Men support women clergy

NASHVILLE —

In recognition of the years when many UM congregations actively opposed the appointment of women to their churches, presidents of annual conference UM Men unanimously asked the 2012 General Conference to encourage all church members to welcome clergy women to their pulpits.


In addition, the resolution urges local church chapters of UM Men to include women clergy in their studies and activities. The Discipline requires local churches to have chartered units of UM Men with the appointed clergymen or clergywomen as ex-officio members of the units and the executive committees.

Some churches and units have failed to acknowledge these requirements.

Conference presidents hope this resolution will affirm units that

welcome and include women, and encourage recalcitrant units to discover the joy of having women lead their congregations and participate in their units.

Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the Commission on UM Men, said this denomination has been blessed with great pastors, conference staff, district superintendents and bishops.

"The assumption may be that as a male, leading a predominately male-focused ministry that most of my success would be with male leadership," said Hanke. "In reality, some of the best leaders I have had the honor of working with are female. Leaders of either gender who are committed to see men grow in Christ, and reflect His love into their community are the leaders that inspire me to do my best." 

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How to deal with 'nonversations'

Dads, you know what nonversations are. They are those times you ask your teenager a series of questions and you get one-word responses. It's a time when nothing is really being shared.

In an article for CNN, Vanessa Van Petten helps parents understand the reasons for such communication lapses and suggests ways to deal with them.

She says one of the reasons teens fail to communicate is because they often confuse a parent's general interest in their well-being as another way of nagging them.

She says the solution is to find your child's "rhythm."

"Some kids are very talkative after school but fall silent at meals," says Van Petten. "Others are usually at their surliest after sports practice but warm up after homework is done."

She suggests you ask your teens what times of the day they typically feel like talking and which times are, 'no-go-zones'."

A second problem is that teens do most of their communicating by texting and Facebook. It's difficult to talk with an already engaged teenager.


Van Petten suggests parents create "no-technology areas" in their homes where teens can do whatever they want but it cannot be on a device.

She also suggests that parents don't know how to ask the right questions, and she suggests ice breakers such

as having everyone at the dinner table rate their day on a scale of 1 to 10 and then tell the group the oddest thing that happened to them that day.




"Parents will find that teens begin to save ideas for the 'weirdest moment' question," says Van Petten..

So how do you make a nonversation a conversation? If parents ask the right questions during their child's natural talkative times and avoid competition with devices, the communication lines will open up. 

Consequences of absent fathers

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 24 million children in America — one out of three— live in biological father-absent homes.

There is a multitude of consequences.

- Children in father-absent homes are five times more likely to be poor. In 2002, 7.8 percent of children in married-couple families were living in poverty, compared to 38.4 percent of children in female-householder families.
- During the year before their babies were born, 43 percent of unmarried mothers received welfare or food stamps, 21 percent received some type of housing subsidy, and 9 percent received another type of government transfer (unemployment insurance etc.). For women who have another child, the proportion who receive welfare or food stamps rises to 54 percent.
- Based on birth and death data for 217,798 children born in Georgia in 1989 and 1990, infants without a father's name on their birth certificate (17.9 percent of the total) were 2.3 times more likely to die in the first year of life compared to infants with a father's name on their birth certificate.
- Even after controlling for income, youths in father-absent households still had significantly higher odds of incarceration than those in mother-father families. Youths who never had a father in the household experienced the highest odds. A 2002 Department of Justice survey of 7,000 inmates revealed that 39 percent of jail inmates lived in mother-only households.
- The overall rate of child abuse and neglect in single-parent households is 27.3 children per 1,000, whereas the rate of overall maltreatment in two-parent households is 15.5 per 1,000.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school.
- Students living in father-absent homes are twice as likely to repeat a grade in school; only 10 percent of children living with both parents have ever repeated a grade, compared to 20 percent of children in stepfather families and 18 percent in mother-only families. 

Four men commissioned as men's ministry specialists

Four men have been certified as men's ministry specialists by the General Commission on U.M. Men and the Turner Center for Church Development at Vanderbilt Divinity School.

Certification for the men's ministry specialist takes 12-18 months. Candidates must participate in a No Man Left Behind Leadership Training experience and a lay speaker course. They must also complete an on-line course in UMC polity and history and a safe-sanctuary course.

Candidates are asked to read *No Man Left Behind* by Man in the Mirror Ministries and *Spiritual Fathers* by Dan Schaffer. They are asked to write about their spiritual history and complete a spiritual-gifts assessment prior to working with an adviser on a two-year spiritual growth plan.

All candidates are asked to consult with their U.M. Men conference and district presidents along with their district superintendents in order to prepare a 3-to-5 year strategy to strengthen men's ministry in their areas.

Four persons have recently completed these requirements and are available to help local churches expand their ministries to men.

Rickey Haynes

SENATOBIA, Miss. —

The Rev. Rickey Haynes, a M.Div. graduate of Memphis Theological Seminary, is now in his eighth year as pastor of the two-point Coldwater Charge in northwest Mississippi.



Since Haynes also works as an appraiser for Farm Credit System, he is presently classified as a local pastor.

Haynes says he briefly separated from congregational activities while he was in college, but he returned to the church following the birth

of his first child. "At that point in life, I understood the need to be part of the church and make certain that my family had the opportunity to know and grow in the Lord Jesus Christ," says Haynes.

He received a call to the ministry following a 1984 "Walk to Emmaus", and he has since served as a leader of "Emmaus" and "Chrysalis" weekends both as a layperson and later as a clergyman. His first appointment was as an associate pastor of Senatobia United Methodist Church. After two years in that congregation, he was appointed to two churches in the Mississippi Delta where he served for 11 years prior to his appointment to the Coldwater and Arkabutla churches.

Haynes serves as treasurer of Mississippi Conference United Methodist Men. "I became convinced some time ago that revival and renewal among men is a key to revival and renewal in the church universal, but especially the United Methodist Church," he says.

"It was an honor to conduct the final interview with the Rev. Rickey Haynes," said Dave Ramsey, a member of the evaluation team. "He has a heart for men's ministry and is eager to move forward as a men's ministry specialist."

Edgar H. Case

STAFFORD, Texas —

Edgar H. Case, a 17-year member of First UMC in Sugar Land, Texas, now serves as the Texas representative of the Florida-based Man in the Mirror ministries.

He has completed three DISCIPLE Bible Study courses along with "Christian Believer" and "Jesus in the Gospels". He also participates in two men's Bible study groups along with a Wesley Group at the



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Sugar Land church.

Case is in his 10th year as a teacher of 4th and 5th grade Sunday school classes. He is a member of the men's ministry leadership team, and he served as lay leader for prayer at two different times. He co-led a men's prayer ministry group, and chaired the Finance Committee and the Caring-Forever Endowment Fund at the Sugar Land church.

An active member of Sugar Land T-3 Ministry (Titus 3:1-2), Case helps put together sack lunches to distribute to the homeless. He has also completed chaplaincy training through the Oil Patch Chaplains organization that provides short-term emotional and spiritual support to those who have experienced trauma in the upstream oil business.

"I believe the most significant challenge facing the church today is to help men understand the critical importance of being the spiritual leader that God designed them to be," said Case. "We need to give men the tools and spiritual encouragement to become the strong disciples God wants them to be in their homes, their jobs, their neighborhoods, and their communities."

"I believe Ed's vigor and love of Jesus Christ is the infusion that we need as a men's ministry specialist," said Dan Ramsey, a member of the team assessing candidates for the position.

Johnnie Draughon

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. —

Johnnie Draughon, a member of Community UMC in Virginia Beach, is director of Lay Speaking Ministries for the Virginia Annual Conference.

In the 1960s Draughon said he left home and bought totally into drugs, sex and the rock-and-roll culture. "For about 16 years my goal was to put as much distance between myself and Christians as I possible could." That attitude changed 30 years ago when Draughon met Marilyn, his future wife. "Through that relationship I realized that



I had read scriptural texts from several religions and occult groups and had been extremely critical of Christians but had never read the Bible," says Draughon. "I read through the New Testament in about two weeks and then took nearly two years to struggle through the Old Testament. That was the beginning of an amazing journey of faith, including taking and leading DISCIPLE Bible studies, and walking and teaming in the Tidewater Emmaus Community."

Draughon has also been involved in Officer's Christian Fellowship of the USA since 1983; that organization of Christian military officers first led him to study the Bible.

He has served as president of the local church and district units of UM Men, and he is a member of the Virginia Conference UM Men Board. He is also a regular attendee of annual retreats at Blackstone, Va., as a discussion leader, song leader and soloist. He also attended national men's gatherings in 1989, 2001 and 2005.

Dr. J. Thomas Laney Jr., associate director of the Turner Center, said Draughon's personal faith story "is a compelling one that enables him to reach out to men with a wider variety of backgrounds—even those who have experienced alienation from church."

Bud Sears

SUWANEE, Ga. —

William E. (Bud) Sears III, a member of Suwanee First UMC, is a M.Div. candidate at Asbury Theological Seminary.

During the past 38 years, Sears has served, at different times, in various roles at Suwanee First, including minister of music, adult Sunday school class teacher, task force leader in the development of a safe-sanctuaries policy, chair of the missions committee, lay member of the North Georgia Annual Conference, and president of the local UM Men organization.

The men's ministry at Suwanee First has spent time and money upgrading a battered



women's shelter in a nearby community and helped others restore the Leigh Cottage at the UM Children's Home in Decatur after the cottage was destroyed by fire. Sears also serves as vice president for local missions for North Georgia Conference UM Men.

A graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology with a bachelor in electrical engineering and a master of science in electrical engineering, Sears served for 39 years in various technical and managerial roles for the Georgia Tech Research Institute.

"At the end of college, Beverly Miller and I were married in 1966," says Sears. "Beverly was a United Methodist who couldn't handle the worship style of the Baptists. So I joined Buford First United Methodist Church with the full intention of evangelizing that group". He jokes that all Baptists in those days knew that all Methodists were "headed straight for hell." He was disabused of that belief in short order after joining the UMC in 1968.

Sears is a recent graduate of the UM Licensing School for Pastoral Ministry and is currently awaiting an appointment as a part-time local pastor in the North Georgia Conference.

How to lead men's ministry

By Greg Arnold

It shouldn't surprise anyone that most men who are elected to lead men's ministry within a church usually find out about their new prestigious position with a phone call like this:

"Hey Jim! Guess what? You were just selected to be the head honcho of our men's ministry, congratulations!"

To which Jim replies: "Who is this?"

The exceptions to the rule are those communities of faith who have a dedicated men's pastor or an upstart that doesn't have to wade through the "that's-not-how-we-to-do-things-here" crowd.

Many well-established churches struggle with men's ministry because of the recitation of long lists of failures that a faithful few offer as excuses. Few success stories are shared. On the other hand, upstart communities and church plants tend to have vital men's ministries because they don't bring any baggage to the tables.

Guard against only reporting failures.

Dare to challenge the status quo and always question whether or not your intentions are rightly placed.

Let's look at how Jesus Christ led ministry.

- He began his ministry by building relationships—not programs
- He lived as an example by practicing what he preached
- He challenged the "this-is-how-we've-always-done-it" crowd
- He never backed down from defending God's word and intention
- He invested in those around him with teaching
- He ministered to the hurting, the widows, the orphans, and the outcast
- He empowered those around him to lead

Did you notice that I left off his miracles and his divine attributes? This is to encourage you to see what a men's ministry leader can do.

In addition, consider how many disciples were on his leadership team? Were the few men successful? Uh... yes. Quite successful.

Men tend to measure success by numbers. And men in western culture quantify success by numbers "right now."

Disappointment is the only result that follows head counts at meetings.

- Instead, count how many:
- Children and hungry you fed
- Homeless you sheltered
- Families that have re-engaged in the church
- People you've served
- People who have committed to follow Christ

There are thousands of men's ministry groups within the church that have a good attendance—but zero outreach. And there are just as many groups that are transforming their communities with just a few dudes who have a passion for serving others.



Greg Arnold is a deployed staff member of the General Commission on UM Men, based in Vancleave, Miss. (garnold@gcummm.org).

Awards presented to UM men

Bishop William W. Morris Church honors retired bishop

NASHVILLE, Tenn. —

Gordon Memorial UMC presented Bishop William W. Morris with a lifetime membership in UM Men for serving as interim pastor. Robert Bostic, president of Gordon Memorial UM Men and Bill Bowen, president of the Nashville District UM Men. "Bishop Morris has done an excellent job as pastor of our church for the last nine months. He has been a personal inspiration to me and our men's ministry," said Bostic.



The bishop also served as interim general secretary for the General Commission on UM Men prior to the election of Gil Hanke.

James Francis Wood Fund raiser extraordinaire

RUIDOSO, N.M. —

Need money for a worthy cause? Call Jim Wood. As president of the Optimist Club, Wood organized a golf tournament to raise funds for local youth projects, and he organized a coat drive for underprivileged children.

He used his same fund-raising skills to help UM Men build a community center that now provides space to tutor young people, a food area for the Ruidoso football team, and meeting place for youth, senior citizens, and community organizations.



Jim Wood

"Jim is a man of faith," said Thomas Ross, president of UM Men of Community UMC. "His gravelly voiced response to almost any request is, 'Sure.'"

Community UM Men presented Wood with a life membership award.

William Skoog It started with breakfast

DES MOINES, Iowa —

Bill Skoog started attending Altoona UMC when he moved to the area in 1980. Shortly thereafter, he invited a few men to join him for breakfast. That group later became the nucleus of

the Altoona men's organization.

Today, the group is a chartered UM Men unit that continues monthly breakfasts while adding church-wide luncheons, Easter sunrise breakfasts and outdoor tree lighting. The group also provides financial support for the Boy Scouts, Heifer International and a food pantry.

"Bill's secret chili recipe, his picture taking skills, and his talent to nurture grocery-business contacts set a high bar for those of us who follow," said Brian Cressey, president of Altoona UM Men.

Altoona men presented Skoog with a life membership award.

District men honor female superintendent Michigan men present life membership

PORT HURON, Mich. —

Men of the Port Huron District presented the Rev. Joanne R. Bartelt with a life membership for her support of UM Men during the two years she served in the district office.

Bartelt was appointed to the cabinet in 2009 while serving as associate pastor of First UMC in Ann Arbor. Her previous appointments were to St. Paul's UMC and Gladstone Memorial UMC in Rochester. She is also chairperson of the Personnel Committee of Detroit Conference.



Joanne Bartelt

Dan Stanley receives the Dan Stanley Award Church names award for first recipient

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Dan Stanley of Mandarin UMC was named the inaugural winner of the Mandarin UMC Man of the Year Award for 2010.

Out of affection and appreciation, UM Men named the award after the first recipient. A plaque and a crystal cross were presented after singing Happy Birthday to the surprised 90-year old.

Dan and his wife, Meta, have led The Upper Room Bible Class for over 25 years. Dan has led a weekly men's Bible study for 20 years and a weekly men's prayer group for 10 years.



He also led the annual men's and couples Florida Conference Retreat for 28 years. A record 58 Mandarin men attended in 2010.

"Dan is more than a great Christian leader in our church family and in our community," said Jim McClellan. "He is a great friend and an inspiration that brings men closer to Christ."

Dr. J.D. Landis and Pete Plum

Men honor pastor and former president prior to leaving city
SWARTZ CREEK, Mich. —

UM Men of Swartz Creek UMC presented life memberships to their pastor and to a former president prior to each of their departures from the city.

Prior to his June appointment to First UMC in Midland, Mich., UM Men honored the Rev. Dr. J.D. Landis for 11 years of service to the Swartz Creek Church. During that time, the congregation increased from 350 to 700 members. "In my 60 years in the Methodist Church, I have never seen a more gracious servant of the Lord," said Bruce Lanning, president of UM Men.

The men also gave a life membership to Pete Plum who began an annual interdenominational community prayer breakfast. Some 300 men attended the event in each of the last four years. Plum left Swartz Creek to join his clergy wife who was appointed as a pastor in the Flint District.

Joe Klotz

UM Men honor departing pastor
TOMS BROOK, Va. —

Prior to the Rev. Joseph Klotz's 2011 appointment to a new church in the Roanoke area, UM Men of Toms Brook UMC presented him with a life membership.

Following a work day at church, Jeff Delano, president of the UM Men organization, surprised the pastor with a certificate, card and pin.

"It was a tremendous hit," said Delano, "Joe was very much moved by the Holy Spirit, as were the group of men present."

Klotz received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Virginia Tech. After serving four years in the First Infantry Division followed by graduation from Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va., he was ordained elder in 1984. He was appointed to Toms Brook UMC in 2009.



Marvin Little and Ed Yancey Men honored at recognition banquet

GREENVILLE, N.C. — UM Men of St. James UMC held a recognition banquet where they honored deceased members Les Garner and Herschel Williams, gave aprons and certificates to members of the cooking crew and presented life memberships to Marvin Little and Ed Yancey.

Little twice served as president of UM Men and has been the treasurer for many years. He has participated in all work projects and cooked barbecue chicken for the St. James Spring Fling.

Yancey served as a member of the cooking crew before becoming president. When he moved from Greenville, he became an active member of UM Men in Centenary UMC and Benson Memorial UMC. After returning to Greenville in 1991, he rejoined the St. James UM Men and continues to serve the organization.



UM Men of St. James UMC honored six kitchen crew members with aprons. Left to right: Tom Barrington, Woody Andrews, Dan Bishop, Robert Jessup, Reggie Davis, and Tildon Brittle. Photo by Sandra Harvey

Joe Sipos

Men honor conference president
LEWES, Del. —

Bethel UMC presented a life membership to Joe Sipos, president of Peninsula-Delaware Conference UM Men from 1989 to 1993. Having attended every national gathering of UM Men since 1981, Sipos has also served as conference director of lay speaking and chair of the committee constructing a new building at Gethsemane UMC in Seaford, Del.

Conference presidents of UM Men urge churches to expand their ministries to men

Men file resolutions with the 2012 General Conference

NASHVILLE, Tenn. —

Noting that only 10 percent of churches maintain vibrant men's ministry programs, conference presidents of United Methodist Men urge churches to utilize men's ministry specialists and scouting ministry specialists to expand their ministries to men.

Meeting last March in Nashville, members of the National Association of Conference Presidents, agreed to send a resolution to the 2012 General Conference celebrating small groups of men who meet monthly for study, worship and fellowship, but declaring that "should be only be a fraction of a local church's effort to deepen the spiritual lives of men and to minister to men and young people without church homes."

Noting an ABC poll that found that only 32 percent of American men attend church compared to 44 percent of American women, the men will ask the highest legislative body in the UMC to encourage pastors and district superintendents "to utilize DVDs, on-line training, lay-speaking courses, the services of men's ministry specialists, and other resources provided by the General Commission on UM Men to expand the ministry to all men within and beyond their congregations."

Observing that the denomination has declined every year since the 1968 merger of the Methodist Church with the Evangelical United Brethren Church, the men declared churches could reach unchurched youth through Boy Scouts of America and other youth-serving organizations. Many churches reluctantly provide spaces to these groups, but some faith communities regard these as



Delegates to the 2008 General Conference meet in a plenary session in Fort Worth. The National Association of Conference Presidents filed two petitions to the 2012 General Conference that will meet in Tampa, Fla. A UMNS photo by Paul Jeffrey.

nuisances instead of ministry opportunities.

Local churches are reminded of a disciplinary requirement to charter a group of UM Men and they are encouraged to recruit persons to serve as scouting ministry specialists and men's ministry specialists.

Lamenting the fact that churches have not always been supportive of female clergy, the presidents also filed a General Conference petition urging men to welcome women to the pulpits of their churches. The petition also asks local chapters of UM Men to invite their female pastors to share in their studies and activities.

More than 100 volunteers help churches expand ministries to youth

Scouting ministry specialists come from many backgrounds, but they all share a desire to help churches expand ministries through youth-serving agencies.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. —

The General Commission on UM Men has recruited and trained 110 persons to serve as scouting ministry specialists.

These volunteers help churches view scouting and other youth-serving agencies as ways to reach out to their communities and touch the lives of unchurched families.

While many churches charter Boy Scout troops and host Girl Scout troops, 4-H clubs and Camp Fire USA groups, these congregations sometimes view these groups as annoyances that make too much noise and create messes.

"I was told a true story by a friend," said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men. "It is one of the best worst illustrations of how churches view Scout troops.

"At the same meeting that a church uninvited Scouts to use their building (they are loud, they are messy, and they are not church kids) they heard a report from the education committee that there was rapid decline in the number of youth attending the church."

Hanke also notes that every week churches host racially diverse groups with some unchurched members, but they seldom view these groups (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, Camp Fire, or Big Brother-Big Sisters) as part of their ministry. "What a missed opportunity!"

Scouting ministry specialists try to help churches understand the contradictions inherent in such viewpoints.

The ways in which these volunteers relate

to neighboring churches differ, but they all seek to help churches strengthen their ties with existing youth agencies and encourage churches without such ministries to begin them.

Hawaii

In Hawaii, previously unchurched families are joining Kahalu'u UMC as the result of their sons' participation in Boy Scout Troop 117 or Cub Scout Pack 117.

"Not only have several families from the Scout units joined the church, the youth have revitalized other areas, including service projects, music and youth leadership in worship," said Elwin Spray, district scouting coordinator and a scouting ministry specialist. "All of the clichés about advantages for youth involvement through church sponsorship of scouting are true."

Oklahoma

As the first scouting ministry specialist in the Oklahoma Conference, Marvin White, helped First UMC in Moore receive a Shepherd Church Charter Recognition, and he presented five Scout leaders with Cross and Flame Awards, a first for the 2,300-member congregation.

White is also updating the scouting ministry section of the church and UM Men



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websites.

White provides monthly articles about scouting in the church newsletter, and he has assumed responsibility for a church scouting display that now includes the original 1931 troop charter, membership cards of the first scoutmasters, and a bugle from the 1920s. Last year, White started a Cub Scout pack at Cross Timbers UMC in Moore, a congregation begun by First UMC. He also serves as district commissioner for three additional packs.

Kentucky

Steve Bays, a 20 year scouting volunteer with Summit Heights UMC, is serving as one of four scouting ministry specialist in the state.

“I work closely with our pastor and Steve Berry, the conference scouting coordinator, to make sure we support all of our groups, said Steve. “I also help plan annual Boy and Girl Scout Sundays when I have nominated and helped present Cross & Flame awards to deserving adult leaders.”



The veteran Scout leader also assisted in Troop 341 receiving a “Bishop’s Award of Excellence.”

A graduate of religious-emblems training at the Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron, N.M., Bays now serves as counselor for all Scout groups related to Summit Heights, and he has taught PRAY. studies for all four age groups: God and Me (grades 1-3), God and Family (grades 4-5), God and Church (grades 6-8), and God and Life (grades 9-12).

New Jersey

Lew Weil, president of Northern Shore District UMC Men and a veteran Boy Scout leader, is helping New Jersey churches reach out

to young people through several youth-serving organizations.

“Scouting in my youth formed my ethics, my love of the outdoors, and my leadership skills,” said Weil. “Serving as a scouting ministry specialist provides a way to give back all I have received from scouting.”

Weil is also the Amachi coordinator for the Greater New Jersey Conference. Amachi is a program of Big Brothers-Big Sisters that matches men and women with children of incarcerated parents.

He is one of six scouting ministry specialists in the conference now providing information about the P.R.A.Y. religious awards.

Arizona

Doug Wright, a veteran Scout leader, a former U.S. Air Force officer and president and founder of Commercial Investors Realty,



Inc., is a scouting ministry specialist and scouting coordinator for the Desert Southwest Conference. Wright is vice president of the Board of Trustees for the Arizona 4-H Youth Foundation, an agency now serving

over 142,000 young people across Arizona, and he is in his 17th year as vice president of major-gift and endowment efforts for the Catalina Council of Boy Scouts of America. Through two decades of scouting leadership, he has enabled the Western Region Councils to receive \$30 million in charitable gifts.

“Leadership of this great nation will continue to come from the tremendous character-building and mentoring programs that the Boy Scouts and 4-H Clubs offer our nation’s youth,” said Wright. “The UMC will continue



to grow exponentially by embracing the scouting ministry specialists.”

Ohio

Jeremy Weaver, the father of a Boy Scout, a Cub Scout, and a future Venture Crew member, serves as one of two scouting ministry specialists in the West Ohio Annual Conference. The other volunteer is Roger Mallory of Columbus.



A 1996 graduate of The Ohio State University, Weaver is a former middle- and long-distance runner and a former member of the band. “Although I don’t do some of these anymore, I enjoy watching my kids participate in many of those,” said Weaver.

Since being named the 37th scouting ministry specialist two years ago, Weaver has attended the UM Scouter’s Workshop at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, N.M. He established the first UM scouting booth in his local council at the University of Scouting and he is working with the district Scout executive to utilize scouting ministry specialists as a way to increase the number of Scout units. “Most importantly,” says Weaver, “I have been privileged to have met other faith leaders. The meetings resulted in the possible rebirth of a Council Interfaith Committee.”

California

Frank Bailey, a 52-year veteran of scouting and father of three adult children, says his scouting career began as a Cub Scout in 1958. He attended the national jamboree in 1964 and he became an Eagle Scout in 1967. The following year, he led a Loomis troop on a 50 mile hike in Desolation Valley and served as a security



guard for the National Jamboree Trading Post in Farragut, Idaho.

Bailey participated in a 1962 junior leader training course and he came back to teach the course in 1970. He was an instructor at the 1969 and 1970 Order of the Arrow training sessions

“I saw an advertisement for the position of scouting ministry specialist in the conference newsletter,” said Bailey. “I applied and was accepted. This position has allowed me to be involved in two of my passions at the same time. I am currently the advancement chair for the Sierra Gateway District which is part of the Golden Empire Council. As such, I meet many of the Eagle Scout candidates in the district and I chair the Eagle Board of Review.”

Scouting Awards

Donald E. Travis

Two-time scoutmaster honored

EVANSVILLE, Ind. —

Donald Travis, a tuba playing Sunday school teacher and two-time scoutmaster, received a Cross and Flame Award from Methodist Temple.

Travis was assistant scoutmaster for four years and became the scoutmaster of Troop 301 from 1991 to 1996 while his son was a Scout. He led a crew to the Philmont Scout Ranch in 2003, and, in 2007, he taught the God & Me course of the Program of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY). He became scoutmaster again in 2009 and taught the God & Me course in 2010.

The active church leader also serves as one of two lay leaders. He directs the Bell Choir, sings in the Temple Choir, plays tuba in the Brass Ensemble, and teaches a 3rd-grade Sunday school class.

Jeanne Marie Karstendiek

Serves in five annual conferences

TAMPA, Fla. —

VanDyke UMC presented Jeanne Karstendiek with a Torch Award for 17 years of service to youth in Northern Illinois, Baltimore-Washington, Virginia, Alabama-West Florida and the Florida Annual Conferences. As the wife of a military officer, she also administered God & Country Religious awards at Ramstein (Germany) Air Base under auspices of the Military Chaplaincy Program, where she was the Protestant director of children's and youth programs. She also led Vacation Bible Schools for thousands of children.

The 41-year-old scouting ministry specialist is a graduate of William Woods Women's College in Fulton, Mo., and she is finishing a graduate degree in special-needs education (Autism) with Phoenix University and works with autistic youth through Van Dyke UMC.

She has led at least 100 young people in God & Country classes since 2003, and she currently serves as chair of the District Cub Camping Committee and director of a day camp for 400 children.

Julie Giles, director of children's ministry at VanDyke UMC, presented the award to Jeanne, June 28, in front of 600 children and 350 staff at a special-needs camp.



Jeanne Karstendiek leads a class of candidates for a God & Country Award.

She coaches a youth triathlon USAT team and received a BSA Unit Organizer Award for starting a triathlon Venture Crew. She also started a First Place Health and Nutrition Bible Ministry based on a similar effort

with three churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

Michael Maxey

Helps build 19 wheelchair ramps

MINDEN, La. —

Over the last two years, Michael Maxey has worked 133 hours with UM Men of First UMC in Minden to build 19 wheelchair ramps.

An active member of UMYF, he attended two Weekend-of-the-Cross mission events with other Shreveport area youth. He also participated in two Habitat for Humanity builds and a mission trip to provide food for the homeless.

Matthew Wise, president of UM Men of First Church presented Michael with a Good Samaritan Award.



Michael Maxey (white shirt left) stands next to Matthew Wise, president of UM Men of First UMC in Minden, following the construction of their 19th wheelchair ramp.

Christopher Saccett

State trooper leads Scouts on chilly campouts

ENFIELD, Conn. —

Most of the Scouts in Troop 108 have earned Iceberg Awards for camping when the temperature is below 30 degrees. Christopher Saccett, a Connecticut State Police officer and assistant scoutmaster, led many of the frosty outings.

An Eagle Scout who attended the 1985 National Boy Scout Jamboree and a ten-day trek at the Philmont Scout Reservation in Cimarron, N.M., Sackett is skilled in knot tying, fire building and the use of a compass. As a state trooper he is trained in First Aid and CPR.

"I've had the privilege of knowing Chris for nearly two years," said the Rev. David Williams, pastor of Hazardville UMC. "In that time I have had the opportunity to work closely with Chris in his capacity as church lay leader and most recently, as the institutional representative for Boy Scout Troop 108. I count my time with Chris as a real blessing."

The church nominated Sackett for a Torch Award in the New England Annual Conference.

Robbie Disnmore

Completes project at church prayer park

TAMPA, Fla. —

Robbie Disnmore, a member of Hyde Park UMC, led a team of 30 Scouts and 10 adults to complete an Eagle project at the Hyde Park Memorial Prayer Park,

Robbie, the son of Jim Disnmore, director of administration at the church, received a Good Samaritan Award for his efforts to beautify the church grounds.



Bill Winter

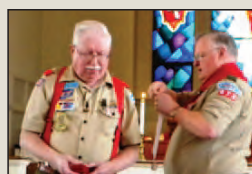
Professor and Scout leader receives Cross and Flame Award

SILVER SPRINGS, Md. —

Dr. William Winter has worked with young people as a college professor for 35 years. He served as a Boy Scout leader for 40 years and as lay leader of Colesville UMC for over 20 years.

The certified lay speaker has supported the religious awards program of scouting, and he mentored 35 Scouts to the rank of Eagle.

"Bill has set the example for the adults as well as the boys in keeping God first in their lives," said Kemper.



David Kemper (right), chair of Troop 473 Committee, presents a Cross and Flame award to Scoutmaster William Winter during Scout Sunday at Colesville UMC

Sydney Knight

High school student honored for crossing borders

RICHMOND, Ky. —

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, a man crosses cultural and religious boundaries to help another man in need.

First UMC presented a Good Samaritan Award to Sydney Knight, a high school sophomore, for frequently leaving her clique to befriend new and less-connected young people.

Terry Tilton

Pastor receives Silver Torch Award, serves as chaplain at national jamboree

HIBBING, Minn. —

The Rev. Terry Tilton, pastor of Wesley UMC, has served as scoutmaster, Tiger Cub leader, and cubmaster. He chaired the Versabi District and the Protestant Committee on Scouting for the Viking Council. He was the advancement chairman for Troop 100 in Breckenridge, Minn., where he served as pastor prior to his 2010 appointment to Wesley UMC. During his time in Breckenridge, Tilton also served on the Council Executive Committee, and he chaired the Oxcart Trails District and the Protestant Religious Association of the Northern Lights Council.

The father of Evan, an Eagle Scout, and Katherine, a Gold Award winner, Tilton served on the staff of the 1983 world jamboree and the 1989 and 2005 national jamborees.

In 2010, he served as a chaplain at the national jamboree, and his church awarded him a Silver Torch.



Michael Goodman

Scoutmaster and Scout receive awards

TAMPA, Fla. —

Eagle Scout Michael Goodman received a Good Samaritan Award at a Scout Sunday service at Lake Magdalene UMC. His scoutmaster, Mark Nusekabel, received a Cross and Flame Award at an earlier Tampa Metro District Scout Banquet.



Nusekabel is a computer programmer with IBM, and scoutmaster for the 80-member Troop 339.

Roy Shirilla

Church honors captain of Sheriff's Department LIVELY, Va. —

Bethel UMC presented Martin Roy Shirilla, a captain in the Sheriff's Department, with a Cross and Flame Award for his service as a cubmaster and for his participation in the Heart of Virginia Boy Scout Council. Shirilla also serves as scouting coordinator for the Rappahannock District.

He attended a 2006 training event at Philmont Scout Ranch and a 2007 Duty-to-God training program.

Ben Gorton

Scout builds closets at children's camp

HAMILTON, N.Y. —

Ben Gorton, a member of Cazenovia Boy Scout Troop 18 and a member of Park UMC in Hamilton, led an effort to refurbish a clothing closet and build a new one at Camp Lookout, an Eaton, N.Y., camp for disadvantaged children. Each summer, some 600 children from Madison County participate in camping activities.

Ben serves his troop as chaplain's aide, a position he held during national and world jamborees. He also organized a Scout Sunday service at Park UMC, which presented him with a Good Samaritan Award.

Ben also serves as a volunteer at a local art center where he works with elementary youth. He is active in the local theater program, and he participates in the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association for home-school students.

Dr. Lester Spencer

Pastor receives plaque for 18 years of support of scouting

MONTGOMERY, Ala. —

Robert Beam, scouting ministry specialist and assistant scoutmaster of Troop 8, presented Dr. Lester Spencer, pastor of St. James UMC, with a plaque in appreciation for his 18 years of support of scouting.

Spencer received the plaque prior to moving to the 4,500-member Gulf Breeze (Fla.) UMC.

During his 18 years as pastor of St. James, the congregation increased in size from 120 members to 1,850 members, with an average worship attendance of 1,250.

Trevor Lundquist

Scout transforms courtyard

MIAMI, Fla. —

The courtyard of Kendall UMC was seldom used. Plants were dying and tables and benches were sinking into the dirt. That changed when Trevor Lundquist finished his Eagle Scout project. Tables and benches now rest on concrete slabs and plants have all been replaced. It's no surprise that the church gave Trevor a Good Samaritan Award.

Shelby and Sheldon Rooney

Church honors twins

MONTROSE, Iowa —

Trinity UMC presented Good Samaritan Awards to Shelby and Sheldon Rooney for delivering potatoes to the hungry, singing in a nursing home and teaching a Sunday school class. The twins also help with rummage sales, clothing collections, and they deliver meals to shut-ins. Sheldon helped an elderly woman pack and move into a senior housing unit. "Both of these youth are very civic minded and involved with scouting," said the Rev. Goldie Laymon, pastor of Trinity UMC. "The will do anything for anyone who needs help."



Robert Beam (right) presents a plaque to Dr. Lester Spencer.



Ben Gorton and Tiger Cub Cole Vantine prepare for Scout Sunday at Park UMC in Hamilton, N.Y.



Shelby and Sheldon Rooney lead the Trinity congregation on Scout Sunday, 2011.

United Methodist leader gives \$4 million to establish high-adventure reservation

William H. Latimer III, a member of First UMC in Union City, Tenn., contributed \$4 million to establish a 1,500-acre high adventure Boy Scout reservation in Tennessee.

"Literally tens of thousands of youth from Tennessee and across the country will benefit from this generous gift from Bill Latimer, and we simply do not have the words to express our gratitude," said Joe Long, executive director of the Middle Tennessee Council.

Latimer, founder of Bill Larimer Investments, has been a leader in the commodities business for 20 years and serves as a member of the board of Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Tennessee. He resides with his wife, Carol, in Union City, where he was elected to three terms on the city school board. He serves as the director of the Obion Grain Company, Mayfield (Ky.) Grain Company, Ethanol Grain Processors, Seeds Inc., Burger Bros. Grain Company, United Farmers Plant Foods, Arbor Healthcare and Rogers Oil Company.

Latimer earned the rank of first lieutenant in the U.S. Army after graduating from the University of Tennessee with a degree in industrial engineering. He has three sons — William, Michael and Douglas.

He was one of the principal contributors to the Obion County Public Library, is past chairman of the Administrative Board of First UMC and past president of the University of Tennessee Martin Development Committee.



Bill Latimer (left) receives a Torch Award from Stan Craig during the 2011 Memphis Annual Conference session in Paducah, Ky. The award is presented to adult leaders who have made major contributions to Boy Scouts or other youth-serving agencies.

Alaska Scout establishes free flu shot clinic

CHUGIAK, Alaska —

Philip Lambert, 16, a member of Chugiak UMC, worked with the church missions committee, the Alaska Public Health Department and the Municipality of Anchorage to establish a free flu shot clinic at the church.

Philip assumed responsibility for organizing, publicizing and recruiting volunteers and health-care workers for the event. He received permission to advertise the clinic in five public schools, six community churches, and 14 local businesses. He also advertised in a local newspaper and on radio stations.

Since the church was especially interested in reaching residents of a nearby trailer park, Philip went door to door handing out flyers and inviting residence to the church for the free vaccine.

The event was a huge success. One eight-member family drove 20 miles from Anchorage because they could not afford to pay for vaccinations for all the children.

The church later nominated Philip for a Good Samaritan Award.



Philip Lambert pauses for a photo during his free flu shot clinic at the Chugiak UMC

Scouts receive God and Family Awards

MIDLOTHIAN, Va. —

Eight members of Cub Scout Pack 1879 at St. Marks UMC received God and Family Awards after participating in seven study sessions conducted November, 2010 to January, 2011, by Bill Chaffin, scouting coordinator for the Richmond District, and the Rev. David Bonney, senior pastor. In addition to the square knot for their uniform, a medal and certificate, the boys were also given 2010 Jamboree New Testaments.

Following the studies, the father of Jake Sanza expressed appreciation to Chaffin, a scouting ministry specialist and chief organizer of the studies.

“Jake really appreciated the Bible that you gave him. Last night on the way home, he asked if he had time to read his new Bible before bed.”

During the classes, the boys compared the ingredients and cooking of pizza pie with Bible characters and the attributes of a Christian family. The crust is the foundation as God is the foundation for a family. The sauce takes time as the biblical and family heritage takes time to develop. Toppings are as unique as Moses and Aaron and as unique as each family member. Cheese holds the pizza together as the 10 commandments hold the family together. Heating the pizza is like the difficult times through which Paul, Silas, and family members



Cub Scouts and their leaders celebrate the completion of God and Family courses. First row (left to right): Aaron Vardell, Andy Baldacci, Will Meadows, Will Davis, Ian Brown, the Rev. David Bonney. Second row: Mark Vardell, Todd Baldacci, Bill Chaffin, Jim Davis, David Meadows, Davis, and David Brown. Not pictured Jake Sanza, Joshua and James Ganey.

travel, and eating is like the feeding of the five thousand and the spiritual nourishment a family receives.

The studies ended with a pizza party.

God and Family is one of four awards presented by Programs of Religious Activities with Youth. The St. Louis based program provides God and Me (grades 1-2), God and Family (grades 3-5), God and Church (grades 6-8) and God and Life (grades 9-12). For information about the program, visit www.praypub.org, or call 1-800-933-7729.

to us in Jesus. Participants came from Cub Scout packs in University UMC, Griffith UMC, and Community Lutheran Church.

The group was led by Doug Wright, a scouting ministry specialist.



Youngsters receive God and Me awards

LOS VEGAS, Nev. —

Eight 1st through 3rd graders completed five God and Me classes and earned their religious emblems from Programs of Religious Activities with Youth, the St. Louis-based agency that administers the former God and Country awards..

Topics included creation, prayer and God's gift



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