

# UM MEN

The magazine of United Methodist Men

**UM Men  
target  
domestic  
violence**



# A letter from the General Secretary

**A**s the ads on TV illustrate, domestic violence is not an easy subject to talk about. But, I'll start, and pray you continue this conversation with those you care about.

As I am writing this, Nashville news stories report on several deaths caused by husbands or "significant others," and a rape case involving four former college football players and an unconscious co-ed at a local prestigious university.

## **Silence, does not help.**

Everyone will acknowledge that in some cases men are victims of domestic violence, but those numbers are tiny in comparison to incidences of male violence against females.

The real message of this issue is: Only men can stop violence against women.

Violence against women is NOT because a man got mad, and lost control; violence against women is all about control. It is based in entitlement, and based in how men and our society degrade women.

Sometimes it is a harmless comment such as when a dad tells his son, "You throw like a girl" as if girls have lesser ability. This year's Little League World Series may change that expression forever. This degrading of women invades any contact we have with media.

## **So what can we do?**

First, we must always see domestic violence as a crime.

If I confront a stranger because I don't like a bumper sticker on her car, which leads to me hitting her and breaking her jaw, there is no question that I will be charged with assault. If I



take that same action with my wife in our home, it is still assault.

Second, there are comments against women that we should not leave unchecked. We should respond simply, "Please don't ever say that in front of me again." That simple statement can change the atmosphere in the workplace and other places where men gather.

As mentors, coaches and Scout leaders, we can have a positive impact. Real men of God don't speak of women as sex objects, and real men of God don't hit women.

I must add there is push back in social media. Videos that illustrate the problems of violence against women end up on YouTube, and the responses from some men are hard to read.

We have a lot of work to do. I pray this issue helps you engage in this work.

Gil Hanke

**United Methodist Men exists to declare the centrality of Christ in every man's life.**



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**UM Men**

**Spring 2015**

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*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.*



**The statistics are alarming:**

- Some 3.3 million American children witness abuse in their homes every year.
- Estimated annual U.S. health care costs for domestic violence is \$4.1 billion.
- In the UMC, adjudicating cases of sexual misconduct by clergy has cost \$100 million in the past 10 years
- More than three women and one man are murdered by their intimate partners in the United States every day.
- During the first five years of the Iraq war, 4,000 U.S. soldiers were killed in combat. During those same five years, more than 6,000 Americans were killed by intimate partners.

These statistics help us understand that even some of those who worship with us on Sunday mornings have been affected by intimate partner violence.

Sadly, some churches have discouraged women from leaving situations where domestic violence is present. It is never appropriate for church leaders to tell women they need to endure this because it is their role.

It is important for us to take an honest look at the presence of domestic violence, to establish ways to prevent it, and to provide safe options for women trapped in abusive relationships.

“When someone comes forth with their story, they are giving you a precious, fragile gift,” says the Rev. Ann Tiemeyer, a staff executive with the National Council of Churches. “And you need to affirm that you believe—that you hear their pain. The amount of pain you hear always trumps for me whether someone would be making this up.”

“It’s not enough to say, ‘I hear you, that’s really too bad,’” says the Rev. Dr. Marie M. Fortune, founder of Faith Trust Institute. “It’s important to say, ‘I believe you and it should have never happened to you. It was wrong what the person did to you.’ That is the beginning of healing.”

Appropriately, UM Men have agreed to work with UM Women to address the issue of domestic violence.

A number of seminars, workshops and webinars have already been held, and this issue of UM Men magazine may also serve as a resource for groups that want to stop domestic-partner violence in their churches and communities.

*Rich Peck*



# UM Men target domestic violence

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

**L**eaders of UM Men agreed to increase efforts to reduce the number of incidents of domestic violence.

“Only men can stop domestic violence,” said Gilbert C. Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men.

He told a fall board meeting that domestic violence occurs in lots of homes, including parsonages.”

## Cooperative effort

“This is the first time UM Men and UM Women have an official opportunity to provide a dual witness instead of appearing to be at logger heads,” said Mississippi Area Bishop James Swanson, president of the 20-member commission. “This will be a witness that the world and the church needs as we seek to bring healing and wholeness to women, children, and families that have suffered for far too long because the church has either ignored or refused to bring the full power that God has given us to bear upon this evil.”

The bishop told the group of his long history of involvement with domestic violence cases. “I have discovered that other social-service groups are ready to aid us,” he said while noting, “police department personnel are never in more danger

than when they respond to a domestic violence call.”

In a commission report to the Connectional Table, Bishop Swanson called for a dialogue with UM Women “to seek ways that we might collaborate to stop domestic violence.”

The commission and conference presidents of UM Men agreed to: Become an advocate within annual conference areas to stop domestic violence.

1. Create a resource center for those who need information and ideas on how to address this issue.
2. Become a model on how men might lead this charge.
3. Move from talking to action that will end domestic violence.

Hanke spoke at a meeting of Memphis Conference UM Women. During that meeting he noted:

- We have a society that overtly degrades women.
- Being a real man means not tolerating attitudes that assume a lower status of women.
- One in four women will be abused, typically by a significant partner or family member.
- Men are both the problem and the solution.
- A domestic violence case is referred to Nashville police every 20 minutes.

## White House meeting

Hanke, Harriet Olson, top staff executive of UM Women, and other agency heads met with White House staff to discuss several concerns,



*Members of the General Commission on UM Men consider ways to decrease the incidences of domestic violence.*

including sexual violence.


The late-September conversation occurred days after the launch of a White House campaign called "It's On Us" to call attention to sexual violence after a string of sexual attacks on young women on college campuses.

Kyle Lierman, the White House staffer leading the campaign, said the initiative is based on partnerships with organizations outside the government so it will continue after changes in the administration.

The campaign ([itsonus.org](http://itsonus.org)) calls for men to pledge:

- To recognize that non-consensual sex is sexual assault.
- To identify situations in which sexual assault may occur.
- To intervene in situations where consent has not or cannot be given.
- To create an environment in which sexual assault is unacceptable and survivors are supported.

Launching the campaign, President Obama cited estimates that one in five women have experienced sexual violence in their college years and only 12 percent of those incidents are reported. He said only a fraction of offenders are punished.

Olson affirmed the initiative and spoke of the joint effort with UM Men. "Sexual assault is not about sex, it's about gender violence and how women are viewed and treated," she said. 

## Actions that can be taken by UM Men:

1. Create a church climate of openness, acceptance, and safety that encourages victims to speak of their pain and seek relief and healing.
2. Encourage clergy and lay leaders to work collaboratively with community agencies on prevention strategies and to provide for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of victims, offenders, and other family members.
3. Adopt procedures to keep abused children and vulnerable adults safe.
4. Assess currently available prevention and response resources in the community and work with other community groups and churches to initiate new programs and services as needed.
5. Recruit a professional counselor to establish peer-support groups for battered spouses, adults who were sexually abused as children, and rape victims.
6. Encourage trained church members to serve in shelters and crisis centers.
7. Re-examine, and change if necessary, scriptural and theological messages, cultures, and traditions that validate violence or abuse or support a view of women as subordinate to men or children as property of adults. Pay particular attention to church teachings on repentance and forgiveness.
8. Maintain a library of printed and video resources on domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and the role of the church. Develop a utilization plan.
9. Participate in Domestic Violence Awareness Month each October and Child Abuse Prevention Month each April.
10. Urge clergy to preach on domestic violence and sexual abuse topics; urge congregants to host or cooperate in community education events and to highlight opportunities for involvement in prevention activities.

*These suggested actions are adapted from the 2012 Book of Resolutions pages 487-488.*



# The day I lost Momma

by Bishop James E. Swanson Sr.

**H**er name was Arnola Verna Triplett. She was 33 when I was born.

The doctor instructed her not to have any more children but, despite the warning, she gave birth to me on February 2, 1950.

She was a great momma. She taught me many life skills—how to develop lasting relationships with people and how to iron my own clothes. She taught me to respect my elders and to have confidence in myself despite growing up as a black boy in a racist United States.

It was a little more than six months after my 18th birthday that the man she chose to marry killed her because she was tired of his drunken ways and abusive language.

It was Saturday evening, July, 1968. I was dancing to music on my portable record player on the front porch of Yvette, a girl I hoped would become my girlfriend. I was happy she was finally giving me some attention.

Little did I know that this would be the last time I would see her.

Above the sound of the music I heard someone calling my name. My next-door neighbor was running toward me. "You need to hurry home," she shouted. "Your mother has been hurt."

I told Yvette I needed to go and left the record player with her (by the way, I never saw the record player again either).

## EMS on the scene

I ran the five or six blocks and arrived home in time to see an EMS team loading my mother in an ambulance.

My head was spinning and I didn't know what had happen or what to do.

Someone got in touch with my oldest sister, Helen, and she and her

husband took me to the hospital where we stayed all night.

I finally went to Helen's house the following day. On Monday, my brother in law woke me up to tell me what I instinctively already knew. "Man, your momma died this morning," he said.

I rolled over and went back to sleep. I didn't cry until the day of the funeral a week later.


## Many victims

I tell you this story because victims of domestic violence are not only the "mommas," but the children, as well.

I'm now 65-years old; it still hurts just as much today as it did 47 years ago.

I have lived without the comfort of my mother for these 47 years. She never saw any of my children, never saw me graduate from college or seminary. She didn't attend my wedding. She never heard me preach—not a single sermon. She never saw me give an invitation to Christian discipleship or celebrate Holy Communion.

I missed all of this because one man was determined to control her life.

Now, Momma, I'm trying to stop this from happening to other 18-year olds. I want women to live full and productive lives because I still hurt from a summer in 1968 when R C Calhoun killed you. 



*The Rev. James E. Swanson Sr. is the bishop of the Mississippi Area and president of the General Commission on U.M. Men.*

# Forms of intimate-partner violence



*There is a temptation to think that domestic violence is physical violence. That's just one of a number of ways that one can look at domestic violence. It can be spiritual, it can be economic, it can be sexual. It's a way of saying you can't be in charge of your own destiny.*

—The Rev. Willard Ashley

Director of field education for the New Brunswick Theological Seminary

**D**omestic violence is a pattern of behavior where one person tries to control the thoughts, beliefs or actions of a partner. The violence does not have to be physical. Domestic violence can also take the form of emotional, verbal, mental, sexual and economic abuse.

## Sexual

**Any non-consenting sexual act or behavior:**

- When she says "No."
- When she is afraid to say, "No."
- When she is sleeping.
- Any unwanted touch.
- Degrading or sexually attacking comments.
- Jokes aimed at the victim's sexuality, body, etc.

## Physical

**Any forceful behavior:**

- Hitting.
- Slapping.
- Kicking.
- Choking.
- Pushing.
- Burning.
- Throwing objects.
- Denial of physical needs.
- Use of weapons or other objects.

## Verbal

**Any verbal assaults or threats to do bodily harm to partner, children, pets, or self:**

- "I'm going to let you have it."
- "You'll be sorry!"
- Threats to disclose confidential information.
- Yelling, screaming.

## Economic/financial

**Creating economic dependency:**

- Refusing access to money for food, clothing, basic needs.
- Controlling the assets.
- Putting all bills in partner's name and running up the charges.

## Psychological/emotional

**Renders partner emotionally helpless and insecure about self-worth or ability to escape further abuse:**

- Continued attacks on self-esteem.
- Repeated harassment, interrogation or degradation.
- Blaming the partner for all that goes wrong.
- Minimizing concerns, ignoring feelings of the victim.


**Using privilege to maintain power and control:**

- Always claiming to be right.
- Giving commands.
- Using religion, culture and/or gender roles to impose authority.
- Intimidation.

**Any act which imposes fear:**

- Destroying possessions.
- Threatening to call social service agencies and/or law enforcement authorities.
- Threats other than physical (take the children, have an affair, etc.).
- Isolation.

**Attempts to make the victim feel alone:**

- Limiting contact with friends and/or family.
- Restricting access to transportation.
- Monitoring phone calls. 





## RESOURCES

“I Believe You—Faiths response to intimate partner violence” (a video) <http://www.divacommunications.com/programs/i-believe-you/>

UMM/UMW discussion guide to the video <http://www.gcum.org/ministries/men/resources.html>

It’s On Us to stop sexual assault <http://itsonus.org/>

Understanding safety issues: [www.ncadv.org/protectyourself/GettingHelp.php](http://www.ncadv.org/protectyourself/GettingHelp.php)

Faith Trust Institute resources on domestic violence: [www.faithtrustinstitute.org](http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org).

Teen dating violence: [www.pcus.org/resource/2009-domestic-violence-congregational-packet/](http://www.pcus.org/resource/2009-domestic-violence-congregational-packet/)

Resources provided by the General Board of Church and Society: <http://umc-gbcs.org/issues/domestic-violence>

A DVD – Domestic Violence: What Churches Can Do from UM Women e-store <http://www.umwmissionresources.org/>

If someone you love has been killed by domestic violence, include him or her in the “Remember My Name Project” to continue to raise awareness and help future victims: [www.ncadv.org/programs/RememberMyNameProject.php](http://www.ncadv.org/programs/RememberMyNameProject.php)

# How do I know if someone is a victim of domestic violence?

**A**mong the more obvious signs of domestic violence are frequent bruises and broken bones. Less obvious signs relate to emotional abuse that results from harassment, stalking and excessively possessive, controlling or jealous behavior.

Another warning sign is isolation: Victims of domestic violence are often cut off from systems of support by their batterers, becoming distant from friends, relatives or neighbors.

Women who are being battered are as different from each other as non-battered women. They come from all walks of life, all races, all educational backgrounds and all religions. A battered woman might be the vice-president of your local bank or your child’s Sunday school teacher.

## Why does she stay?


She stays because she is terrified that he will become more violent if she leaves, that he will try to take the children, or the belief she can’t make it on her own. He has probably threatened her life.

She may also believe that divorce is wrong, that the violence is her fault, that she can change his behavior, or that the violence is temporary. She may also be experiencing pressure from her family and her church. Since batterers often isolate victims, she might feel cut off from any social support.

## Who are batterers?

As with their victims, individuals who batter fall into no specific categories. They come from all class backgrounds, races, religions and walks of life. They may be unemployed or highly paid professionals. The batterer may be a good provider, a sober and upstanding member of the community, and a respected member of his congregation.

## What can I do to be helpful if an abusive situation is revealed?

- Listen to the victim and believe her. Tell her that the abuse is not her fault, and is not God’s will.
- Tell her she is not alone and help is available.
- Let her know that without intervention, abuse likely will escalate in frequency and severity.
- Seek expert assistance. Refer her to a specialized domestic-violence-counseling program—not to couples counseling.
- Help her find a shelter, a safe home and advocacy resources. Do not suggest that she return home.
- Hold the abuser accountable. Don’t minimize his abusive behavior. Support him in seeking specialized batterers counseling to help change his behavior. Continue to support and protect the victim even after the batterer has begun a counseling program.
- If reconciliation is to occur, it can be considered only after the above steps have taken place. 

Information adapted from FaithTrust (<http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org>)

# Putting an end to domestic abuse

by Chaplain Steven Davis

One of the dirty secrets is that domestic abuse exists in Christian communities.

Any local police officer can tell you stories about showing up at the scene of a domestic dispute, and being greeted at the door by someone with a Bible. The officer will tell you he was dismissed because “this is between me, my wife and the Lord.” Occasionally a domestic abuse call will involve a member of the clergy.

As a law enforcement chaplain for more than 20 years, I have run across all forms of domestic abuse, and I have heard abusers try to justify their actions with Bible verses.

When an abuser is a Christian, he not only abuses his wife and/or children, he generally abuses the Bible as well.

It is amazing how a bully is able to find Bible verses which he claims support his behavior, while being clueless about passages that forbid him from engaging in abusive acts.

Many abusers feel that, since they never hit their partner there is no abuse going on. He may rightly feel that no man should ever hit any woman, yet engage in other forms of partner abuse.

Abuse begins when one partner asserts control and dominance over the other.

## Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse takes place when the husband demeans, disrespects, insults, curses, or vilifies his wife.

When confronted, the abuser may deny it. A couple once came to me, with the husband denying any verbal abuse whatsoever until the wife played a recording of his filthy diabolical rants that she had made on her phone.

When finally confronted a husband is likely to say his wife “pushed him into it.”

For some, verbal abuse comes in the form of threats. When the man is angry or upset about not getting sex or something else that he wants, he then makes threats about going to a prostitute, or of finding another woman who WILL give him what he wants.

Some men threaten to hurt their partner, throw her out into the streets, or commit suicide. Others threaten to take away the children, empty the bank account, or destroy the wife’s car or other possessions.

Some men see nothing wrong with calling their wives stupid, dumb, and incompetent. They may try to get her to think she is crazy, and they think nothing of insulting her in the presence of others.

An abuser may try to get the woman to think she is



lucky to have such a tolerant and patient man—that she is so messed up no other man would want her.

Proverbs 21:8 says that death and life are in the power of the tongue. A relationship may be built into something beautiful with words, and a relationship can be destroyed with words. A man can make a woman feel wonderful, loved, beautiful and awesome with words, or he can make her feel inferior, incompetent, crazy and dependent with his words.

James 3:6-9 talks about the power of the tongue, and how the only way we can control it is to seek God's help.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse occurs when the victim is made to engage in sex acts against her will—forcing her to submit to acts that she feels are wrong or injurious. It occurs when the man uses sex as punishment and as a means to demean the woman.

Increasingly, pornography plays a role in sexual abuse. The husband watches porn actors engage in various activities that he wants to try out on his wife. She may resist, or participate very grudgingly, while he berates her for not having the gusto of the porn actress. He may demean her for not looking like the 25-year-old women in the video.

The abuser may say that since the woman is his wife, she needs to submit to him in all things, so it is impossible for his forced sex to be called rape. He may tell his wife that her body is not her own, and paraphrase 1 Corinthians 7:3, where it says that the wife's body is not her own, but her husband's, while omitting the rest of the verse that says that the husband's body is not his own, but his wife's.

In his wedding vows, the husband promised before God to cherish his wife.

Invoking male privilege is a form of abuse.

Male privilege reveals itself in an overuse of such phrases as: "I'm the man of the house, I decide what goes on here;" "I'm the king of the castle, and what I say goes."

While the husband does have responsibilities to head up the house spiritually, he is also told to love his wife, even as Christ loves the church, and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25). Christ does not demean the church, threaten it, cuss at it, slap it around, humiliate it or in any other way dishonor or disrespect it.

A man may invoke male privilege by keeping his wife isolated, keeping her from getting a job or having a life of her own. If she does have a job, he may insist that she turn all the money over to him. If she needs money, she has to ask for it, and justify why she needs it. Some abusers give their spouse a minimal allowance, as one would do with a child.

An abuser may insist on making all decisions, even if his wife may know more about given situations. He may intimidate her, threatening to expose her failings and weaknesses to others.

An abuser may say, "A woman's place is in the home," and may make reference to Titus 2:4-5, where it says that wives should love their husbands and children, to have discretion (meaning "don't tell our business to anyone!"), keep the house, be good and to do what their husbands say. Rarely does such a person read Proverbs 31, where it talks about the virtuous woman having her own business, her own money, conducting real estate transactions and being active in the marketplace.

Some abusers intimidate their wives with threats, removal of "privileges," such as taking her car keys or her phone. An abuser may smash his wife's posses-

sions and then blame her for pushing him too far.

### My brother's keeper

Someone in your circle of friends may be an abuser if he displays any of the following attitudes:

- He portrays his wife or partner as stupid, incompetent or crazy.
- He controls her finances and her interactions with friends and family.
- He talks about their frequent fighting and arguing.
- He says his wife wants a divorce, but he doesn't believe in it.
- He says, "If she left me, I would hunt her down and make her come home."
- He talks about having to slap her, shove or hit her because "she needs it," "she has it coming," "it's for her own good," and he "warned her."
- He talks about how some women need to be slapped around, and that there's nothing wrong with that.
- He talks about "teaching her a lesson."
- He has low self-esteem, and is jealous of his wife's success on the job, or recognition at church or other things that may make him feel like she is outshining him.


### What you can do

- Tell a suspected abuser you are bothered by what seems to be happening. Ask him to talk with you, the men's leader or the pastor.
- Have your wife or other women from the church reach out to his wife to provide a trusted and safe support group.
- Pray for him.
- Have your men's group sponsor a couple of sessions on marriage, relationships and domestic abuse. It may be a good topic for a retreat.

### Discuss biblical passages

1 Peter 3:7 that says that the husband needs to learn about his wife, to live with her according to knowledge (in other words, don't be a bonehead), to honor her, to treat her like you would treat a piece of fine china, as an equal partner in in life, so that his prayers are not hindered. There is a definite connection between how we treat our wives and God's honoring our prayers.

Ephesians 5:25 -29 says husbands should love their wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it. Point out that Christ doesn't degrade, demean and humiliate the church, but He loves it, nurtures it and provides well for it. This is how men ought to love their wives, just as they do their own bodies. The man who loves his wife loves himself. The man needs to nurture and cherish his wife.

You can make a real difference in your marriage and in the lives of those around you as you become alerted to various forms of partner abuse, and help bring peace and harmony in a prayerful and biblical way. 



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# Talking to young people: How to help not hurt

*A UMC commentary by Joe Lovino*

## ***“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.”***

Yeah, right. Every one of us who has survived puberty knows just how powerful words can be. Broken bones heal in six to eight weeks. Words like “stupid,” “fat,” and “ugly,” can hurt for years.

Often those comments can be shrugged off as things kids say before they know better. Other times, they come from trusted adults. People working with youth, such as parents and church youth leaders, most often use their words to build up and inspire, but there are times when we inadvertently say something very poorly.

Those poor word choices can have quite an impact on both the students to whom they are addressed and those who overhear them. Despite the intention to be helpful, humorous, or hurried, a leader’s words can sometimes be hurtful for the recipient. Here are some tips from UM youth and children’s ministry leaders to help us keep miscommunication to a minimum.

- **Pause.** Take a deep breath before you speak, tweet, post, send, or otherwise communicate. The Rev. R. Scott Miller, a youth ministry veteran of more than 20 years serving as associate pastor of Gaines UMC in Cincinnati, Ohio, tells about a time he is glad he paused. A student wrote something on social media “that really bothered me,” he said. “I considered writing a quick IM to them that would have cut to the core. Instead, I stopped, thought

about the situation, and prayed.


I am glad I did. Because of this, I was able to turn the situation into a solid conversation. I know now that if I would have responded the way I wanted to initially, I would have pushed this student away.”

- **Be realistic about the relationship.** You are a parent or youth leader and not a peer. Robby Balbaugh, youth minister at Weatherford (Texas) First UMC, says, “In our effort to connect with kids we can rush the relationship by joking too early or about things we haven’t earned access to. We also have to realize the effects of our jokes are amplified and if it hits on a personal level, it can be internalized.” We must know the relationship well, and have permission to speak into the life of the other, with humor or otherwise.
- **Consider how you will be heard.** Put yourself in the place of your audience. “Be careful... especially when it comes to social media, text messages and email,” says Rafael Bellinni, youth pastor at First UMC of Land O’ Lakes, Fla., because in those media “inflection and intention are even more difficult to communicate.” Have someone read your message before sending it to see if it comes across differently than intended.
- **Take your time.** It is tempting to share with a student everything you want to say on a particular topic

about which you are passionate. While you may not want to compromise or misrepresent your conviction, you may overwhelm the student and create distance between the two of you. Remember, you will have time to revisit this issue and others over the years. Parenting and youth leading are marathons, not sprints.

- **Talk less and listen more.** Adults can sometimes be quick to give an answer when the student might benefit more from talking it out. Hannah Kan., interim children's pastor of Korean UMC of San Diego, advises parents and leaders to draw out the answers within the student. "The less you talk," she said, "the more you can teach and learn from them."
- **Be aware of your own "stuff."** When you are sleep-deprived during a lock-in, or stressed from things in other areas of your life, beware. Factors such as these make us susceptible to communicating poorly. Knowing you are at risk will help you slow down and think through your response.
- **Ask for help.** When you find yourself in an uncomfortable situation or handling something for which you feel ill equipped, get help. That might not always be possible in the moment — you'll just have to tough it out — but ask for feedback from a mentor or friend later. An "after action" conversation can go a long way toward growth when similar situations arise in the future.

- **Become comfortable saying, "I don't know."** Many adults and leaders feel the need to have answers at the ready, but no one knows everything. Become comfortable telling students what you do not know, but that you care enough to consider and research their issue. This is a sign of respect that will help deepen your relationship.
- **Apologize.** Inevitably, you will make a mistake. Someone will be hurt by something you have said. When that happens, don't make excuses, ask for forgiveness. Wonderful relationships between youth and adults can grow over Frappuccinos while the adult admits his or her error.

Words have power, especially those used with youth by people in authority. Sometimes those words can have devastating effects. Choose wisely. R. Scott Miller sums it up well, "We need to always remember, we are modeling Christ through our words. Are our words Christ-like or hurtful?" 



*Joe Lovino works for UMC Communications. This article was posted at the UMC.org website.*



*The Rev. R. Scott Miller, a youth minister for more than 20 years, speaks at Gaines UMC in Cincinnati, Ohio. Photo courtesy of Miller.*

# Western North Carolina men seek ways to reduce domestic violence

*By Darryl Wilburn*

**T**he concept for Western North Carolina Men against Domestic Violence (MADV) originated from a men's breakfast I attended a couple years ago.

The speaker, a retired police officer, said he was responsible for his sister's death. He had allowed a man to come into his sister's life without doing any research on his background. She later died at the hands of this abuser.

The former police officer urged us to conduct research on any man who wants to become involved with females in our families.

At an April 2014 Western North Carolina rally of UM Men, I had the privilege to relay his advice, and in October, Mike Bizon, a member of Denver UMC, and I proposed the

creation of MADV to the Western North Carolina Conference Executive Board of UM Men. They overwhelmingly voted to promote the movement and the accompanying resolutions we asked men to sign.

Quoting the UM Social Principles statement, the men rejected "the erroneous notion that one gender is superior to another," and rejected "the idea that God made individuals as incomplete fragments, made whole only in union with another." They called "upon women and men alike to share power and control, to learn to give freely and to receive freely, to be complete and to respect the wholeness of others (2012 Book of Discipline ¶161)

While we accept our roles as men created in God's image (Gen 1: 27),





we must realize that we have the responsibility to satisfy the needs of the oppressed (Isaiah 58: 10). In doing so, we can no longer stand idly by while the cries of abused women are suppressed. As a society, church and unchurch, we have turned away from their bruised bodies and offered a deaf ear to their battered souls.

In the five minutes it took to read this article, 53.3 women in the US were assaulted or beaten! 



*Darryl Wilburn is a member of Faith UMC in Mooresville, N.C. He serves as president of the Lake Norman UM Men sub-district and president*

*of Western North Carolina Conference Catawba Valley District. He is a board member of the Lincoln County Coalition against Domestic Violence and a men's ministry specialist candidate. He believes in the concept that "If we get men right we'll get families right, if we get families right we'll get church right and if we get church right, God will transform the world.*

# Men against Domestic Violence

## Mission statement

We are men who advocate a relationship that is peaceful, respectful and equal to all parties. We are committed to promote domestic peace by our example, our conversation, and our association with other men.

## Objective

In our conversations and association with other men we will advocate peaceful living not just in our house but in our brother's house. Peaceful living is a healthy, safe and mutually respectful living environment in all relationships.

## Resolutions

1. We want to have a conversation and listen to anyone who is struggling with changing their abusive behaviors that create domestic violence.
2. In my commitment to Men against Domestic Violence, I will respect and honor all women at all times. This leads me to be intolerant of abuse in words or actions.
3. In my efforts to promote peaceful living, I assume the responsibility to promote and create a peaceful environment and to be an example to other men.
4. If at any time in my efforts to promote peaceful living I am aware of abuse occurring, I will take action with love and concern to break the cycle of abuse while directing them to professional help.
5. Children live what they see. Through my conduct and behavior I will be an example of peaceful living.



# The ultimate choice

By Walter Albritton

**J**esus understood the human predicament.

It is the same in every generation: a tug-of-war between people and property. To live in the kingdom of God one must learn to value people more than possessions.

The gospels reveal a Jesus who valued individuals more than things. Jesus, for example, never owned fine china or stainless steel silverware.

He invested in people rather than property.

There is peril as well as power in property. If a church uses its resources primarily to acquire more property, maintenance may soon consume the mission of God. If, however, a church invests in people, to persuade “whosoever will” that they are loved by their Creator, then the battle of mission over maintenance may be won.


Jesus teaches us that God wants us to value the eternal more than the temporary. Desire determines destiny. What we do, how we live, the choices we make, the values we embrace – all of these determine our destiny. Each of us is free to choose but none of us can love both money and God. This Jesus makes plain. He says we “cannot” serve both God and money.

“Cannot” is not vague. Jesus leaves no middle ground.

The danger for some of us is that we don’t really believe what Jesus says—not enough to actually practice it in daily living. We comingle riches with righteousness and hope that God will ignore our divided loyalty. The good news is that we have an alternative; we can change

the way we live. Sometimes God motivates us to change by putting people in our lives who truly love people more than things.

Some years ago I met “Mama KuKu,” a retired missionary to Africa who had served there 40 years with her medical doctor husband. She was 80 years old. Her husband was dead. She had no home and drove a very old car someone had given her. But her spirit was captivating. She had nothing of this world’s goods, yet she had everything! She radiated with contagious enthusiasm and love. Mama KuKu never spoke about her favorite silverware or china. Her possessions could all be loaded in the old car she drove. The only thing she wanted was a chance to share her love for her Lord Jesus.

People like Mama KuKu are rare. But there is a nagging wake-up call in meeting such a person. God seems to drop one here, and one there, to remind us that life can be lived on a simpler level where people matter more than investments and things. I reckon Mama KuKu is in Heaven now but the memory of her Christlike countenance reminds me that I need to do a better job of following the example of Jesus when it comes to people and possessions. 



*The Rev. Walter Albritton is pastor of congregational care at St. James UMC in Montgomery, Ala.*

# Should parents use corporal punishment?

By Tom Tozer and Bill Black

The subject of child discipline is a lightning rod for debate.

Opinions on the effectiveness of spanking run wide. We have all seen a parent give a child a whack on the rear in the grocery store to get the child's attention. Not much harm there perhaps. But we've also seen the images of cuts and abrasions on a child's arms and legs as the result of an impatient, angry and out-of-control parent.

Several high-profile athletes and other celebrities have been caught in the crosshairs of this shootout—and those media-charged stories are no doubt just the tip of the iceberg.

## Open for discussion

Most of us cringe—even declare outrage, at animal abuse. The photos of a helpless creature's droopy and sad eyes tug at our heartstrings. Yet, when it comes to corporal punishment, there are degrees of agreement and disagreement and a greater tolerance for discussion.

## So goes the child as an adult

Dr. Murray Straus, a leading researcher on the topic, found "the more a person was disciplined with corporal punishment as a child, the more likely that partner abuse would be found in that child's later relationships." Straus continues, "It appears that the more severe, frequent and prolonged the physical punishment, the worse the outcome. With these children comes the increased likelihood for depression, suicide, alcohol abuse and abuse of their own children ('intergenerational transmission') over those individuals who did not receive corporal punishment as children."

## Opposing view


In fairness to proponents of occasional spanking, however, Dr. Diana Baumrind

found that "... children spanked only occasionally, not severely (e.g. not using wooden spoons, belts, paddles, or willow branches), and not impulsively, did not appear to experience any long-term harm." Baumrind believes that "if administered within an authoritative, warm and caring child-rearing context—infrequent, mild, non-impulsive spanking is not detrimental to the child."

Dr. Ellen Slicker, professor of professional counseling at Middle Tennessee State University, delineates four parenting styles: authoritative; authoritarian; indulgent; and neglectful. "These four parenting styles are determined by looking at the amounts of 'responsiveness' (involvement, warmth, nurturance) and 'demandingness' (behavioral control, limit setting, monitoring) that are predominant in the way parents interact with their children." Slicker, who also has a private practice, notes that most of the couples she counsels are "indulgent" parents.

## Bottom line

Slicker emphasizes that the bottom line as an authoritative parent (preferred of the four types mentioned above) is to ask yourself why you are spanking your child. "If it is out of anger—if it is because I can't think of anything else to do—if it is because that's the way I was disciplined, then don't do it!

Make sure you have a sound reason for spanking before you impose this on your child." 



Tom Tozer and Bill Black write a syndicated column on fatherhood and are authors of *Dads2Dads: Tools for Raising Teenagers*. They are available for workshops. Contact them

at [tomandbill@Dads2Dadsllc.com](mailto:tomandbill@Dads2Dadsllc.com). Like them on Facebook and follow them on Twitter at [Dads2Dadsllc](#).

# The sides of peace

By Larry Malone

A few peace stories are running inside me, like open windows on my mind's laptop. It began when I gave blood at the Red Cross office. I give blood occasionally, but my wife Diane has donated platelets every two weeks for more than 15 years. She is a blood platelet hero. Blood and peace are linked, and that's what woke up these peace stories.

## Does peace take sides?

Recently my 91 year-old father told an amazing story of his last days in Europe, as World War II ended. He was in a tank destroyer battalion that rolled through death camps as they were being liberated. He saw naked, starving people trying to kiss their armored vehicles as they rolled by.

"I have seen the very best and worst of humanity," he said.

## This is a side of peace.

I remembered the day when the fighting in Vietnam stopped—a "cease-fire" on January 27, 1973, officially ended the war.

Just hours before the end of hostilities, men flying a F-4 Phantom were shot down and killed on the last mission launched from the USS Enterprise. For them, it was not enough to be near a side of peace.

## A warrior's wound

Years later, I discovered that I carried a warrior's wound that robbed my soul of peace. My role as a bomber pilot left behind some unexploded ordinance in my soul. My wound was slowly killing me, until the un-peaceful business of killing came painfully into light, and my soul began to heal.

## This is a side of peace.

In 1999, I travelled to Israel in my new job as director of men's ministries for the Commission on UM Men. Our tour bus

driver and guide were local men whom we came to know. These men were a complex blend of humanity. They were Arabic by descent, Palestinian by homeland, Christian by faith, and Israeli by citizenship. Think about this for a moment; Arab Palestinian Israeli Christians.

The bus pulled to the side of the road, and our guide pointed to a beautiful plot of farmland nearby. He said that for the past 1,000 years, this land belonged to his family. In 1947, when the post-world war state of Israel was created, the land was seized, and his family was evicted. More than 50 years had passed by 1999, and no reparations or acknowledgment had been made.

## This is a side of peace.

Gino

I have shared war grief with Gino, a young Marine who served in Afghanistan and suffered severe war-related PTSD symptoms. Gino has sought relief from the pain of his memories, and peace has begun to invade his inner spaces, dispelling toxins within his soul. Gino is on a path of healing that is permeated with the presence of the Prince of Peace.

See Gino's story at <https://vimeo.com/111440190>.

Every hour, a veteran takes own his life, desperate and hopeless. There is an epidemic of trauma victims of war violence that includes those who fight and kill; warriors who become victims of the violence they bring to others.

## This is a side of peace.

My life experiences shape the sides of peace that I see. These things I believe;

- It all begins with love.
- Peace begins deep within the soul.
- Peace results from receiving love, forgiveness and healing.

- Killing wounds the soul because humans are inherently life-giving beings.
- Inner harm from death and violence transcends moral and sovereign boundaries.
- Victims of war violence include warriors who host the wounds of their communities.
- The wounds of war violence are rightfully assumed and carried by the warrior and community.
- The healing of warriors and community can begin when wounds, grief and healing are shared.
- Interpathy is when a community outsider develops true compassion for that community.
- Interpathy transcends sympathy and empathy; it requires radical love.
- It all ends with love.

Imagine this: Community and church members gather around soul-wounded warriors for the solemn purpose of collective healing. In sacred settings, warriors are invited to tell the stories that surround their soul wounds to one or a few community members. They tell all they are able, including stories of failure, mistakes, moral injury and even collateral killing that reached beyond enemy combatants.

Grief can now be shared with, rather than for, the warrior. As trust and mutual respect develop, stories of life wounds of community members can be shared, giving honor to warriors as confidantes. Authentic relationships can become a conduit both human and divine love, healing souls inside out.

In this sacred place of compassionate hearing, there can be NO judgment, politics, second guessing, religious or moral supremacy. Personal views and beliefs held by participants can be expressed

elsewhere. Here, we join together to hear, receive, absorb, share, and acknowledge community responsibility for inner wounds heretofore borne tragically alone by warriors.

### **An invasion of light**

When a soul-piercing story is told, heard and shared by others, a very dark room is invaded by a pinhole of light. Eyes can now focus on the light, not the darkness. The sharing of each story opens other pinholes of light. A grief expressed lessens pain. A grief heard reduces burden. A wound shared grieved with another is a healing catalyst and balm. Sad souls and broken hearts find rays of hope in grief. Anger and pain can yield to the power of love and forgiveness.

Soul peace makes its way from inside out. Could it keep going, even across the most ragged edges of the sides of peace? It would take a movement of community concern, compassion, cooperative responsibility and shared ownership of the price and cost of peace and war. 



*Larry Malone flew an A-6 Intruder bomber from the USS Enterprise in the Vietnam War. Years later, he discovered some inner wounds and moral injuries related to war that surfaced through counseling and therapy. Well before Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) diagnosis and treatment were available, he walked a path that can help others provide spiritual care for wounds of the soul and conscience. He retired as a Navy Captain (O-6). He had an extensive business career and served as director of men's ministry for the General Commission on UM Men from 1997-2010. He is president of the World Methodist Council men's affiliate. He works through Operation Stand Down Tennessee, to help homeless veterans find hope and healing for soul wounds.*



# Across the Nation

AUBURN, N.Y.—

## **Church gives 40,000 pounds of potatoes**

A tractor truck from Maine with 40,000 pounds of potatoes was expected at sun-up but did not arrive until 11 a.m. The awaiting charities and families chatted in the parking lot or munched on doughnuts inside Auburn UMC. When the truck arrived volunteers made up for lost time by hustling bags of potatoes to waiting cars, vans and trucks.



*Raegan Lawton, 10, carries a bag of potatoes to a car during the UM Men potato drop in Auburn, N.Y.*

The giveaway is one of three sponsored by UM Men in New York and the Society of St. Andrew. There were also potato drops in Campville, near Binghamton, and in Utica.

GARDENA, Calif.—

## **Police chaplains receive devotional books**

Thirty police chaplains received copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* during an October, 2014, meeting led by Larry Coppock, a General Commission on UM Men staff executive, Jim Jeffery, a member of the Strength for Service Advisory Board, and Larry Dozier, president of the Western Jurisdiction UM Men.



*Jim Jeffery tells police chaplains of his 32-year career as a California fire fighter and how Strength for Service books helped him address post-traumatic stress issue. Photo by Stephanie Saldana.*

KEEZLETOWN, Va.—

## Men raise \$3,805 for Salvation Army shelter

Keezletown UM Men raised \$3,805 for the Harrisonburg Salvation Army shelter at their annual "Par 3 Golf Tournament."



*From left: Jim Dillard, president of Keezletown UM Men; David Sears, Salvation Army finance chair; Major Hank Harwell, Salvation Army commander; and the Rev. Joel Robinette, pastor of Keezletown UMC.*

STANLEY, N.Y.—

## Churches glean 15,000 pounds of produce

Forty-five members of Seneca Castle UMC and other churches in the Syracuse area gleaned 1,500 pounds of winter squash, carrots, beets, peppers and cauliflower. The produce was given to Food Link of Rochester which distributed it to food pantries across western and central New York.

"This is a very rewarding experience for many folks from



*Gleaned produce was picked up by a Rochester agency for delivery to local food banks.*



*UM Men sponsor a recycling effort that provides about \$60 a month to send youth to camps and youth and adults on mission trips.*

UM churches in central and western New York with many good laughs and we look forward to seeing each other annually," said Rich McFadden and Cliff Kunes, leaders of the Seneca Castle UM Men. The pair also led efforts to construct a box to recycle bottles and cans at the church.

CENTREVILLE, Md.—

## A 'soul-searching' swing

Brad Powers, president of UM Men from St. Mark's UMC in Easton, Md., led an effort to build a set of six swings at Pecometh Camp (the name is derived from the first syllables of Peninsula Conference of the Methodist Church).



Fourteen men from St. Mark's spent 225 hours planning and constructing the swings. The words "Grace," "Hope," "Prayer" and "Fellowship," are on the cross beams above each swing. One beam has the name of "St. Marks UMC in Easton." The sixth beam carries the name "Soul-Searching Swing," a name given by Phil Rekitzke.

An October dedication service was led by the Rev. Missy Rekitzke, wife of Phil and pastor of St. Mark's UMC, and Jack Shitama, executive director of Pecometh.

"I believe that we envisioned a 'God-sized' project that will benefit folks who visit the retreat center for generations to come," said Powers.

The \$3,600 cost was paid for by generous donors.

MOSS POINT, Miss.—

### **Men support prison ministry and aid elderly**

Two men of St. Paul UMC participate in the Kairos Prison Ministry while others help pay off a debt for the Family Life Center and make home repairs for elderly church members.



St. Paul men are collaborating with members of smaller UM congregations where no charters exist in an effort to form one UM Men group in the Seashore District.

The Rev. Robert Pittman is the pastor and Kevin Shaw is president of St. Paul UM Men.

GREENSBORO, N.C.—

### **Golfers raise \$1,400 to feed 2,500**

A golf tournament sponsored by the Northern Piedmont District UM Men of the Western North Carolina Conference raised \$1,400 to feed hungry people at the Potter's House in Greensboro.



*William Waddell, president of Northern Piedmont District (left), presents a check to the Rev Mike Aiken, executive director of Greensboro Urban Ministry.*

NEWPORT, N.C.—

### **Church honors first responders**

In 2013 and 2014, UM Men of Core Creek UMC presented 100 copies of the *Strength for Service to God and*

*Community* devotionals to four first-responder groups in Harlowe, Mill Creek, and Beaufort in eastern North Carolina.

In addition to giving books to 25 first responders at each fire and rescue company, the men presented each unit with a framed certificate of appreciation. The certificate quotes John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."



*The Rev. Judy Billings, pastor of Core Creek UMC, and UM Men participate in a Strength for Service program.*

CHARLOTTE, N.C.—

### **Church honors a saint**

St. Mark's UMC celebrated Men's Day on Nov. 9, Alzheimer's Awareness Day in North Carolina churches.

As part of the occasion, the congregation held a special presentation to honor the memory of Brother Willie L.



Witherspoon, a pioneer of UM Men who died as the result of complications from Alzheimer's.

UM Men made a donation to the Western North Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and presented Witherspoon's family with a letter of recognition from the association.

The Rev. Dr. Jessie C. Keaton is pastor of St. Mark's.

RICHLAND, Iowa—

### **Church sponsors ninth potato drop**

Men of Prairie View UMC distributed some 30,000 pounds of potatoes to 37 community service groups.

"We do it to provide for the people who are in need of food at this time of year and we try to do it a week before Thanksgiving," said Bill Anderson, potato drop coordinator. "You've got to get them into the hands of churches, food banks, and other organizations who will distribute them to hungry people."

REDLANDS, Calif.—

### **Men record church members**

David Holsinger, a member of UM Men of Redlands UMC, recorded church musicians in a sound room in his home. John Grossman provided the technical assistance required to make 100 CDs; he also designed the cover and coordinated the advertising.

UM men sold nearly 100 copies resulting in about \$1,000.

"It was a celebration of the talent that we have in our church and at the same time, the effort enabled us to raise money for mission projects," said David Caminiti, president of Redlands UM Men.



*David Holsinger (right) recorded church musicians and John Grossman provided technical assistance to produce the CDs.*

DOUGLASVILLE, Ga.—

### **Men and children visit fire station**

The theme for the Vacation Bible School at New Covenant UMC was "Do Something." Instead of staying at the church to play games and assemble crafts, children engaged in acts of service.

One group of children partnered with UM Men to deliver spaghetti dinners and copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to the staff of a local fire station.



ST. SIMONS ISLAND—

### **Conference presidents gather**

Presidents of Southeastern Annual Conference UM Men organizations gathered at Epworth-by-the-Sea for a time of training, sharing and inspiration.

Jurisdictional President Larry Price led the group as they learned from one another.



BRICK, N.J.—

### **Ten Eagle Scout projects enhance church property**

Eagle Scouts frequently improve church properties.

St. Paul's UMC tallied all the improvements made to their property by Eagle Scouts of Troop 33.



In 2006, Chris Niedzwiecki removed a decaying tree in the church's picnic areas and added wood chips. In 2007, Vladimir Federoff built new picnic tables.

In 2009, Michael Olkowitz planted shrubs, trees and plants near church signs. In 2010, Austen Lameiras built a horseshoe pit and a fire pit for the picnic area.



In 2012, Dylan D'Entremont repaired the cross and steps in the Garden of Remembrance. In 2013, Joseph Giunta upgraded the dugout benches on St. Paul's softball field and added a storage shed, and Matthew O'Neill improved the landscaping and added a directory sign in the Garden of Remembrance.

In 2014, Shawn Cardone installed two benches on a walkway; Jayson Sprague installed a handicap picnic table, a concrete walkway and a new grill; and Shawn O'Neill added an angel to the Garden of Remembrance.

SHELTON, Wash.—

### **Chaplain gives devotional books to fire fighters**

Ken Ford, chaplain of Central Mason Fire & EMS, received a copy of *Strength for Service to God and Community* at the Federation of Fire Chaplain's Conference in 2013.

"I gave the book to a firefighter who was injured and unable to perform his normal duties," said Ford. "He said it was just what he needed. Now, he is back on duty and continues to read the book."

Ford also gave a copy to an injured

volunteer firefighter. After his recovery, he passed the book on to full-time firefighter in another department. "That book has legs of its own," said Ford.

NATCHITOCHES, La.—

### **Men support students at nearby university**

UM Men of First UMC gave two \$1,000 scholarships to students at Northwestern State University (NSU); they also served breakfast to the NSU men's basketball team and coaches, and they provided meals for the NSU women's basketball and soccer teams.



*Men of First UMC in Natchitoches, La., serve 250 hot dogs and chili sausages to children at "Trunk or Treat" in the church parking lot.*

The active group meets monthly for a "Men's Night Out" on Sibley Lake for fun and games and last year they delivered watermelons from Grapeland, Texas to local food banks and the Council on Aging.



*From left: Craig Annis, Harold Collier, Jackie Steadman and Leslie Winham prepare Thanksgiving dinners for Meals on Wheels recipients.*

Coy Birdwell, a tutor in the Kids Hope Program, repairs bicycles for children in the program. Other men participated in a clay shoot to raise funds to educate Nepali girls. UM Men contributed \$500 to the cause that ultimately raised \$10,000.

Ten men participate in a weekly 6:30 a.m. Bible study with Pastor Doug DeGraffenried, and many more participated in a Stop Hunger Now event at which 10,000 meals were packaged. A total of \$3,000 was raised by selling t-shirts.

BLACKSTONE, Va.—

**Virginia men invited to leave a legacy**

A total of 137 men attended the Virginia Conference UM Men retreat at the UM Assembly Center. Dan Schaffer, president of Building Brothers and author of *Spiri-*



*A sharing group discusses a Dan Schaffer lecture.*



*Former Virginia Conference UM Men Presidents Jim Green and Larry Burian receive certificates of appreciation.*

tual Fathers, led four sessions on “Leaving a Legacy.” Following each session, attendees adjourned to sharing groups to discuss reaction to Schaffer speeches.

Men participated in the Upper Room Prayer Line along with golf, a corn-hole bag toss, a 5k run/walk, and a horseshoe tourney. They also raised several thousand dollars for Heart Havens, Camp Rainbow, Disciple Bible Outreach prison ministry, Society of St. Andrew and a new leadership mission to Cuba.

DECATUR, Ga.—

**Men raise \$27,500**

Men of Oak Grove UMC served 5,095 meals during their 53rd annual October barbecue.

The event raised more than \$27,500 for 34 church, community, and mission causes.

“We have over 500 workers, including 145 Boy and Cub Scouts,” said Clayton Webster, treasurer of Oak Grove UMC Men. “We cooked 6,944 pounds of meat, made 480 gallons of Brunswick Stew, prepared 900 pounds of coleslaw, and served 110 gallons of secret-recipe barbecue sauce and 462 loaves of bread.”

In 53 years it has rained only twice at the Oak Grove Barbecue. **UM Men**



*Decatur pigs portrayed on the back of t-shirts appear to be less enthusiastic about the barbecue.*



*Some 400 red-aproned servers provide 360 barbecued hams to customers while gospel and blue grass bands entertain those outside.*

**Send news of your men’s organization to Rich Peck (rpeck@gcumm.org).**

## Men's ministry specialists — a thoroughfare to discipleship

*The vision that holds my heart is that of a nationwide, well-equipped and passionate field team of hundreds of men's ministry specialists" —Mark Lubbock*

"The most important ills of society can be directly tied back to the behavior of men," says the Rev. Mark Lubbock, a deployed staff member of the General Commission on U.M. Men. He notes the *Wall Street Journal*, Barna Research, U.S. Health & Human Services, and *Psychology Today* all point out how the behavior of men is the over-arching influence on children.

"When men behave in ways taught in the Bible, family members are measurably benefited, and make much better choices in life," says Lubbock. "The reverse is true, of course, and as men fail to behave well, families suffer significantly.

"Crime, poverty, disease, education can all be impacted in a positive manner when the chain of bad behavior is broken."

Lubbock says the church offers the greatest opportunity to introduce positive influences to men, but "statistics show that today's church is not succeeding in the execution of this mission."

"In order to help churches reach and impact men, the commission worked in partnership with Vanderbilt University to establish the position of certified men's



*The Rev. Mark Lubbock serves as master of ceremonies at the 2013 National Gathering of U.M. Men in Nashville. Phot by Bob Vogt.*

ministry specialists. These trained volunteers assist local churches in their mission to make disciples.

“The vision that holds my heart is that of a nation-wide, well-equipped and passionate field team of hundreds of men’s ministry specialists,” says Lubbock. “These specialists offer training and consultation in order to help each church craft a custom-tailored process that fits with their local church needs.”

### **Making the vision a reality**

Lubbock is taking steps to make that vision a reality.

He serves as a member of the national leadership team developing study materials, DVDs, books, and courses for men’s ministry specialists. He also conducts international, national, regional and local training on “No Man Left Behind,” “Reaching Every Man,” “Understanding Ministry for Men,” and he serves as a keynote speaker at local and regional events.

“When I look at the incredible support the commission offers to the church, I stand amazed,” said Lubbock. “The commission supports the second largest scouting organization in the nation, and offers a solid moral and spiritual framework to shape the character of future leaders.

### **Work begins in Louisiana**

United Methodists in Louisiana need no introduction to Lubbock.

They know him as a pastor who has served five Louisiana churches, a men’s ministry specialist, a trainer for Man in the Mirror, and the founder and top executive officer of Gulf South Men and Louisiana Men of Christ.

Lubbock took courses at Kirkwood College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he maintained a 4.0 grade average, and, as a local pastor candidate, he also took course of studies at Millsaps College in Jackson, Miss.

Prior to receiving a local pastor license in 2001, Lubbock served local churches as a layman and chair of a local church Stewardship Committee, the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, and nearly every other church committee.

### **UM Men**

No one would be surprised to learn Lubbock has served UM Men as vice-president of Louisiana Conference UM Men and president of Broadmoor UM Men. He

currently serves as director of training for Louisiana Conference UM Men and secretary of the Baton Rouge District UM Men.

In ecumenical circles, he served as co-founder of Men Mentoring Men Ministries in Louisiana and regional director of Iron Sharpens Iron ministry. He is an ambassador with Promise Keepers, regional director of Men at the Cross, and a member of the National Coalition of Ministry to Men.

Active in prison ministries, he has served as chair of Louisiana Kairos Prison Ministry a former member of the Angola Prison Kairos Council, and a certified instructor of Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries.

He has served as master of ceremonies at a National Iron Sharpens Iron National Conference and the National Gathering of UM Men in Nashville.

Louisiana business leaders also know Lubbock as the founder and chief executive officer of Louisiana Data Systems. He provided them with computers, software and web hosting. He also advised them about workflow automation, security and backup solutions.

If you are interested in becoming a men’s ministry specialist, visit <http://www.gcumm.org/ministries/men/specialists.html>.

Contact Joe Strausbaugh ([jstrausbaugh@gcumm.org](mailto:jstrausbaugh@gcumm.org)) for further details.



*The Rev. Mark Lubbock*

# Cal Lackore becomes first member of the Strength for Service Society

SUN CITY WEST, Arizona—

If you think a college degree is necessary for a successful business career, you haven't met Cal Lackore, owner of Lubrication Specialists, an independent dealer of Amsoil Synthetic Lubricant business.

Lackore is the first member of the Strength for Service Society, an organization of people who promise to give planned gifts to the Strength for Service Fund. These gifts include trusts, bequests and wills designed to ensure the *Strength for Service to God and Country* book never goes out of print again. The financial gifts will also enable the publication of future books such as *Strength for Service to God and Community*.

Raised on a farm near Rudd, Iowa, Lackore served as a journeyman electrician in a factory making farm tractors. He subsequently worked as an office equipment repairman for the Remington Division of Sperry Rand.

Later, he spent 25 years repairing computer terminals and mini-computers for the Univac Division. He finished as a senior data-processing consultant and launched a successful synthetic lubricant business in 1985.

Lackore was enrolled in an MBA program at Baldwin Wallace University in Berea, Ohio, when his major professor asked him for a transcript of his undergraduate degree. "I never graduated from college," said Lackore. "Well, you have a 4-point grade average and obviously, you are qualified for a graduate degree, but we can't give you one until you complete your college degree," said the professor.

Lackore received neither an undergraduate nor a graduate degree.

## Active in UM Men

The 80-year-old business leader lived in Brunswick, Ohio, for 32 years (1972-2003). During that time he served for 12 years (three 4-year terms) as a UMM district president for the East Ohio Annual Conference and as the UMM conference treasurer. He also attended seven National Gatherings of UM Men at Purdue University.



*Cal Lackore and wife, Norma, celebrate their 2009 wedding at the chapel of Shepherd of the Hills UMC in Sun City West, Ariz. The couple met at a grief class at the church after each of them lost their prior spouses.*

After moving to Sun City West in 2003 and being named president of Shepherd of the Hills UMC Men, he attended the 2005 UM Men gathering where he was introduced to Evan Hunsberger, the Boy Scout who republished and expanded the 1942 *Strength for Service to God and Country* book for members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

"He is a remarkable young man," said Lackore. "I was so impressed with his action and with the possibilities the book offers, in 2008, I led a Strength for Service financial campaign at the Shepherd of the Hills UMC."

The congregation gave \$19,000, and Lackore added \$12,000 so the \$31,000 gift enabled the books to carry the name of "Shepherd of the Hills UMC" on the back covers. The church gave 1,000 copies to the chaplains at Luke Air Force Base near Glendale, Ariz.

"I thought that Air Force officers might visit our congregation after they saw we were

responsible for the books,” said Lackore, who serves as the outdoor greeter of members and visitors to the church.

### Response to 9-11

Asked why he responded so generously, the Army veteran who spent 14 months in Korea said, “When God gives you a mission you have to respond.

“After I viewed the remains of the 2001 attacks upon the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, I wanted to do something for

combatants.

“I read the September 11 devotion in the *Strength for Service* book titled ‘Chosen to Suffer,’ I saw how prophetic and appropriate it was and I wanted to help give the books to all members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

“I wish I would have had access to this daily devotional during my time in Korea,” said Lackore. “I want to nurture these young guys and no one can be with them all the time; this book stays with them.”

## In Memoriam

### Robert L. Schou

ROCKFORD, Ill.—

**B**ob Schou, 87, former president of the North Central Jurisdiction, the Northern Illinois Annual Conference and Rockford District UM Men, died Oct. 11.

“Bob was not only a friend, he was mentor to me and several other men in our district and conference,” said Steve Nailor current president of Northern Illinois Annual Conference UM Men. “Bob was a leader and shepherd of men and their commitment to Jesus Christ.”

Bob started his ministry in 1972 when he became president and established the Rockford District UM Men. He was later inducted into the John Wesley Society and he was named a life member of the Northern Illinois Conference UM Men.

During Bob’s district presidency, he chaired the ushers for the 1984 Rockford District Bi-Centennial Celebration, where more than 5,000 people celebrated 200 years of Methodism.

As district president, he was also instrumental in bringing the Society of St. Andrews to the Northern Illinois Conference. In 2013, the district contributed \$9,795.00, and the conference provided \$21,101 to the effort to eliminate hunger in America.

From 1996 through 2013, the

conference provided \$249,000, an amount that provided 16.6 million meals.

Bob was a member of Beth Eden UMC where he served as chair of Finance Committee, Administrative Board, and Building Committee. He also served as president of Wesley Willows Corporation and a board member of Junior Achievement, Boy Scouts of America, Tinker Swiss Cottage, SWIFTT (Southwest Ideas for Today and Tomorrow) and OIC.

Survivors include wife, Mary Ann; son, James (Linda) Schou; daughter, Patti Luevano; grandchildren, Jenny Schou, Brian (Melinda) Schou, Mindi Luevano and Staci (Steve) Otradovec; great-grandson, Brandon; brothers, Frank (Florence) Schou and Wayne (Gayle) Schou.

“Bob was one of the great gifts Christ provided and his legacy will live on for many years,” said Nailor



## Every Man Shares

# A lesson from Jackson

By Bishop James Swanson

One of the most difficult missions to send a man on is that of winning another man to Christ; yet this is at the heart of UM Men ministry.

I am reminded of a story told by the late Bishop Cornelius L. Henderson:

David Johnson, a veterinarian, was driving along the road not far from his home which doubled as his office. Along the way he noticed an injured dog lying beside the road.

Touch by the plight of the animal, David pulled over. The dog was severely injured but still alive. He placed the dog in his car and took him to his office.

Days after surgery, the dog began to heal until he was well enough to walk around.

David named him Jackson

It was not long after that when he entered his office he would find Jackson wagging his tail waiting to greet him. The dog was given the run of both the house and the office and was soon allowed to play in the yard.

One day Jackson did not return, and he stayed missing for several days.

“What an ungrateful mutt,” said David. “I nursed him back to health, spent all my skills on him, fed him and provided shelter and love for him and this is how he showed his gratitude by running away.”

One day he spotted Jackson not far from the house. The dog saw him and began to wag his tail as if to say, “I missed you too.”

David stopped his car, got out, and went to retrieve him, but just as he was about to pick him up Jackson ran away just a little bit and stopped.



David pursued him and once again reached to pick him up and once again just as he was about to pick him up, Jackson scurried away just out of reach.

This act was repeated several times until they reached the corner of a building and once again just as the man reached for Jackson, the

dog scurried around the corner of the building.

David looked around the corner where he found Jackson standing over another dog with a badly injured leg.

It was then that Jackson licked David's hand and looked at the injured dog.

The vet knew then what he had to do.

You see my friends Every Man Sharing Christ is simply one man having experienced the healing touch of Jesus bringing another injured friend to the Great Physician.

Don't let a dog do that better than we can.



*Mississippi Area Bishop James Swanson is president of the General Commission on UM Men.*

# UM Men Awards

## Harold Reid

### **92-year-old CPA fails retirement**

COLUMBIA, S.C.—

**H**arold Reid became a charter member of Ashland UMC in 1978. Since that time he has served the church as a volunteer administrative assistant (1980), treasurer (2004-2013), president of UM Men (1980), and treasurer of the Columbia District UM Men.



*Harold Reid*

After years of counting offerings, preparing bank deposits, and writing checks, the CPA

was named treasurer emeritus in 2013, and UM Men presented him a Life Membership Award during a December 2014 Christmas Dinner for the ladies.

“When, after more than 60 years of marriage, his wife, Freda, died, Harold showed us all how to honor her life by continuing to serve others,” says Chuck Sovick, president of Ashland UM Men. “He is a fixture at the church as an office helper, kitchen helper, bulletin publisher and the ‘go-to’ person at the Shepherd Center, a ministry to people over 50.”

## Dr. Sarah Anne Sloan Kreutziger

### **Men honor five-time delegate to General Conference**

METAIRIE, La.—

**M**unholland UMC presented a Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence to Dr. Kreutziger, associate professor emeritus of the Tulane School of Social Work.

She has served the Munholland Church as lay leader, chair of the Staff-Parish Relations

Committee, president of the church council and has been a member of the Louisiana Annual Conference for 26 years. She was elected to attend the 2016 General Conference in Portland; the fifth time she has been elected as a lay delegate to the global gatherings.

She served the Louisiana Conference as the lay leader and served on the extended cabinet, the Mission Cabinet, the Wesley Board, the Disaster Recovery Center and the Conference Ministry Team.

She has served the general church as a member of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the General Board of Church and Society. She is a trustee of the Foundation for Evangelism and member of the Conference and Jurisdictional Committees on the Episcopacy. She has been elected president of six civic New Orleans organizations.



*Dr. Sarah Sloan  
Kreutziger*

## Jack Preston

### **Men honor retired Navy commander**

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.—

**M**en of Community UMC presented a Life Member Award to Jack Preston.

The Rev. Lee Seibert, pastor of the church, described Preston as a “worker at heart.” He frequently operates the dishwasher and cleans



*Jack Preston*



up the kitchen after UM Men events.

Preston served in the U.S. Navy for 33 years and concluded his career with the rank of lieutenant commander.

He serves the church as a Sunday school teacher and a district trustee.

Jack and his wife, Barbara, have two daughters and five grandchildren.

## **Dr. Lee H. Arnold** *Vietnam veteran serves church and community*

WARWICK, R.I.—

**U**M Men of Asbury UMC presented Dr. Lee Arnold with a Life Member Award.

Following his graduation from the University of Rhode Island, Arnold was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army and achieved the rank of captain. He served a one-year tour in Vietnam and was awarded the Bronze Star.



*Dr. Lee H. Arnold*

He served the city of Warwick as the budget director, and he served the state as the director of Human Resource Investment Council and a member of the Governor's Cabinet.

He also served as a director in the U.S. Department of Labor in

Washington, D.C.

He taught at the University of Rhode Island, and following his retirement he formed his own business, and he serves as an adjunct professor at Roger Williams University.

Arnold was one of the founding members of Asbury UM Men and has served on most committees, chairing many of them.

## **Steve Draeger** *The Santa of Christmas trees*

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.—

**M**en of St. Andrews UMC honored the chairman of Christmas tree sales by presenting him with a Life Member Award.

Steve Draeger helps set up the trees, sells trees and cleans up the lot after Christmas. He also serves as a church trustee and is the first to respond when building repairs are needed. Well, yes, he did burn the garlic bread at the annual spaghetti dinner, but most of the time he is a pretty good cook and always cleans up afterwards.

## **Jackson Bell** *Master Mason and Sunday school superintendent*

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.—

**M**en of St. Andrews UMC presented their Sunday school superintendent with a Life Member Award.

Jackson Bell also serves UM Men as a member of the executive board, chair of the Valentine Day dance, co-chair of the annual spaghetti dinner and a leader of UM Men barbecue dinners and breakfasts.

The master Mason assists with Vacation Bible School and is active in community affairs.

## **The Rev. Dr. George Warren** *District men honor superintendent*

BARTLESVILLE, Okla.—

**B**artlesville District UM Men presented the Rev. Dr. George Warren with a Life Member Award.

Ordained in 1979, Warren served seven churches prior to his appointment as superintendent of Bartlesville District.

The former president of the Ada (Okla.) Ministerial Alliance he also chaired



*The Rev. Dr. George Warren*

the Oklahoma Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry.

## Earl Sides

### *Men honor former president*

SALISBURY, N.C.—

**M**en of Milford Hills UMC presented Earl Sides, 86, with a Life Member Award for his service as a 49-year member of UM Men, a member of the church choir, a leader of the monthly Friendly Neighborhood Club, a senior adult coordinator and a volunteer for Meals on Wheels.

The former president of UM Men has also served as a scoutmaster, a Sunday school teacher, and a member of the Highway Clean-up Committee.

This is certainly not the first honor he has received; he has also been named “lay person of the year,” and the choir room is named after him.

## The Rev. Dr. Deborah B. Smith Pastor presented Susanna Wesley Award

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—

**T**homas Milam, chairman, and Dr. Charles Parker UM Men president, presented the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence to the Rev. Dr. Deborah B. Smith, pastor of Centenary UMC since 2011.



*The Rev. Dr.  
Deborah Smith*

“Dr. Smith personifies all aspects of the award—nurturing motherhood, faith, perseverance, intelligence, compassion and devotion,” said presenters. “Like Susanna Wesley, she is a mother of children who support the church with their

gifts and service; she provides guidance to those entering ministry, and she serves as a nurturing spirit to all members of the church. A survivor of one of the greatest disasters in

our country’s history, Hurricane Katrina, she remained faithful and helped others to regain their trust in God.”

Prior to her current appointment, Smith served Germantown (Tenn.) UMC and the New Orleans District of the Louisiana Conference. She currently serves as chair of the Memphis Conference Outreach Advocacy Action Team.

Under the direction of Smith, Centenary provides neighbors with more than 300 bags of food each month along with clothes, health services and school supplies. Centenary also serves breakfast to the homeless, provides youth-development opportunities and senior citizen programs, participates in prison ministries and provides mentoring and tutoring for area school children.

## Alice Dietz

### *Men honor day care manager*

NORFOLK, Neb.—

**M**en of First UMC presented Alice Dietz with a Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence following her service as the manager of the Wesley Day Care Center and chief cook for the weekly Early Risers for Christ prayer breakfasts attended by some 50 men.

Dietz was instrumental in relocating the day care center to a new facility one block west of the church. “I go in and play grandma,” Dietz says of her role with the 90 children served by the center.

She is a past president of the UM Women organization, and currently heads the church funeral committee. She also participates in rummage sales and July 4 pancake meals.



*Alice Dietz proudly  
holds her Susanna  
Wesley Award. Photo by  
Bernie Auten.*

## National survey finds strong support for scouting in UMC

IRVING, TEXAS—

**T**he national office of Boy Scouts of America surveyed leaders of the top 10 faith-based charter organizations as determined by total youth membership in 2014.

A total of 1,144 leaders of Scout units in UM churches and UM leaders responded to Voice of the Scout Surveys conducted in March and October, 2014.

### Net promoter score

The national survey found 64.9 percent of UM congregations would actively encourage other churches and organizations to charter scouting units; 20.5 percent were passive supporters and 14.6 percent said they would not recommend charting a unit of the Boy Scouts.

The “net promoter score” of the UMC is higher than the overall national faith-based chartered organization net promoter score of 36.6 percent.

“*The Voice of the Scout Surveys* demonstrate some important information about the UMC’s relationship with the BSA,” said Larry Coppock, national director of UM scouting ministries. “The UMC continues to be a vital chartered partner, in serving youth in our church communities, including effective outreach.”

### Driver statements

The national office of the Boy Scouts also wanted to find which drivers had the largest influence on the likelihood to recommend chartering a Scout unit.

More than 86 percent of UM leaders agreed with the statement “My organization sponsors units because scouting builds tomorrow’s leaders and citizens.” That figure compares with 82.4 percent of the national average.

More than 86 percent also agreed that scouting provides “positive youth programs” compared to 84.8 percent of the national average, and 74.4 percent agreed scouting is “a great value for the money” (68.1 percent of other faith-based organizations agreed).

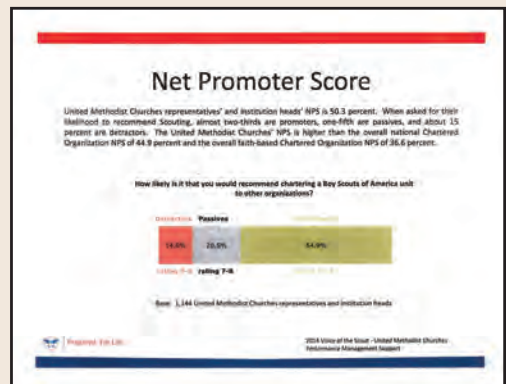
### Lower rankings

While 72.9 percent of UMs agreed “Scouting is our partner in providing positive youth programs to meet the goals of my organization,” that figure was slightly lower than the national average of 74.3 percent.

Only 48 percent of UMs said they are satisfied with interactions between the church and Scout councils. The national average of 52.9 percent was slightly higher.

“We do need to improve our lower scores for more effective communication and building stronger relationships with local BSA councils,” said Coppock.

UM leaders also expressed some disappointment in the involvement of Scout families. Only 47.2 percent gave positive ratings to that category, compared to 53.9 percent of all faith-based charter organizations.



## Here's what a scouting ministry specialist can accomplish

HOUSTON, Texas—

**T**he Sam Houston Area Boy Scout Council may soon sponsor a day or a weekend event to explain, encourage and support participation in the religious emblems program sponsored by Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY).

District religious emblem coordinators may also invite representatives of various faith communities to conduct council-wide classes for underserved communities.

These actions will be the result of programs proposed by task forces on which

Caroline H. Rudisill serves in her capacity as a scouting ministry specialist. She attended the 2014 Philmont training class and will serve as a shepherd at the 2015 camp at the New Mexico Scout ranch.



*Carolyn Rudisill*

### Work with neighboring churches

Rudisill, a member of First UMC, Houston, and chair of a district Religious Emblem Committee, is working with three neighboring UM congregations to initiate PRAY programs, and she is working with multiple churches to start Scout units connected with their church-related schools.

She serves on a Sam Houston Council committee that encourages Scouts to increase their understanding of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and the NOVA Award program that provides activities in various STEM topics. She completed her Wood Badge ticket in 2012, which focused on the transition of Scouts from packs to troops, and retaining those Scouts through to the rank of Eagle.

### Encourages advancement

The assistant chair of the District Advancement Committee, Rudisill serves as a merit

badge counselor and encourages Scouts to advance in the ranks. Her own sons, a First Class Scout and a Life Scout, are working toward the rank of Eagle and the Hornaday Award. Dr. William T. Hornaday, director of the New York Zoological Park and founder of the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., began the award to recognize those who have made significant contributions to conservation. She is a Duty to God/Land Stewardship instructor for the Council Conservation Committee.

In addition, the active scout leader is a district camp director, a member of an International Scouting Committee, and is the UM representative on the BSA Executive Leadership Youth Protection Task Force.

In 2013, she attended the BSA National Youth Protection Seminar and Executive Leadership Meeting, and in 2014, she attended the BSA National Annual Business Meeting. She also plans to attend again in 2015.

### Active in retirement

Rudisill is a retired veterinary trauma specialist with a degree from Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. She has taken advanced classes from the University of Edinburgh (Scotland) in "Psychology of Children and Young People," Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) in "Forensic Science," and Emory University in "Understanding Violence"

She serves as the UM representative on the Anti-Defamation League (Houston) Coalition for Peace.

She is married to John Rudisill, a Wood Badge trained scouter who serves as a BSA unit commissioner.

# My Philmont mistress

By Cliff Coan

**“So, I finally get to meet your mistress?”**

**T**hat was my wife’s response to an invitation to join me for a UM training conference at the Philmont Scout Ranch.

I guess all the stories I’ve told and all the Philmont caps and t-shirts I wear made an impression on Tracy.

I’ve been to Philmont a total of 10 times as a trekker—two as a Scout and eight as an adult leader, and Tracy knew of its magical gravitational attraction for me.

Tracy was anxious to meet my New Mexico mistress, and the Scouting in the UMC conference would combine two organizations I hold in high esteem.

In the UMC, I serve as a sometime-Sunday school teacher, a praise-and-worship band bass player, a nominating committee member, a certified lay servant, a member of the church audio-video team, and the person who maintains the church’s website and Facebook pages.

In scouting, I serve as an assistant scoutmaster, a scouting ministry specialist, a Venturing Committee member, a troop committee member, a council executive committee member, and a Venturing Crew adviser.

## False starts

I founded a Venturing Crew and kept it in theoretical existence up until my conscience and pocketbook told me that I could no longer maintain a “paper crew” for the few times we used it.

Trying to do things right, I worked to get the church on board with a new crew. This turned out to be a lot harder than I expected.

I had one pastor ready to go, when the bishop relocated her and we ended up with a short-timer who retired before I could



*Cliff Coan at his tent home during the Scouting in the UMC Conference.*

convince him of the value of a Venturing Crew.

The new pastor was a by-the-book, full-blooded, several-generations-born-and-bred, old-school Methodist, and she didn’t have scouting on her radar screen.

I needed to find a better approach to scouting in the UMC before I could march back into the church office.

So, I was extremely happy when Tracy agreed to go with me to the Philmont Training Center for the UM Conference.

I bit the bullet and paid the (highly-reasonable) fee for the conference, threw down the (much-less-reasonable) cash for updating my “official” Venturing uniform, and we left our home in DeLeon, Texas and headed for New Mexico.

## At Philmont

On Sunday evening, we checked into our palatial (by my standards) tent, with a floor, cots, a closet and electricity.

When class began on Monday morning, it felt like somebody had turned on a fire hose — no, make that opened a floodgate of knowledge — and I was trying to drink from it.

### Information came at us in tsunamis.

I took notes frenetically, recognizing quickly that these old hands knew pretty much everything about these two organizations and how they were designed to work together, and the new hands had lots of ideas. Everyone was willing and eager to learn from one another. If somebody had a difficulty, somebody else had an idea of how to overcome that difficulty.

While I was in class, Tracy played. We've now been to Philmont twice, so I don't remember which activities she did in which year, but I know she whitewater rafted, participated in COPE (Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience), made pottery, beaded, painted, welded, and shot 22s.

In the evenings, spouses and conferees went to opening and closing campfires, a buffalo barbecue, a cobbler night and concert, a performance by the Kwahadi Indian dancers, and chapel services. And there was one free day families could use as they wished.

Tracy and I persuaded the Jewish chaplain to give us a marriage blessing in Hebrew on our anniversary. As every Philmont staffer I have encountered, he was more than willing to be of service, and apparently got a kick out of the service.

The week ended far too soon.

### Back home

I came away with a major in understanding of how things are supposed

to work when they involve scouting and the UMC, a minor in the two languages (Methodist and Scouter) and a ton of tools to help coordinate activities between the two. I also came home with a bunch of awards I can use to recognize Scouts and church leaders along with a plethora of ideas.

Did it make everything daisies and sunshine when I got back to the church and crew? Honestly, no. But I was able to put together a killer proposal to convince the church to reinstate our lapsed Venturing Crew, and to begin the hard work of actually being a chartered organization — rather than just sponsoring our Scout troop.

I also hope to help make other local churches, the district and the conference become more aware of how scouting can and should be integrated into the daily life of the church.

And Tracy is again willing to visit my mistress any time.



*Cliff Coan has a BA and a MA from Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, and he serves as a computer science teacher at DeLeon (Texas) High School.*

## Plan to attend the Philmont Training Center in July

**Does your congregation charter a scouting unit? Plan to attend the July 19-25 “Scouting in the UMC” seminar at Philmont Training Center to learn how to expand your ministry to youth. For information, visit [www.philmonttrainingcenter.org](http://www.philmonttrainingcenter.org) or [www.scoutingumc.org](http://www.scoutingumc.org).**

## UMC tops list of PRAY awards

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—

**A** total of 23,972 young people earned PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) awards in 2014.

The UMC continues to give the highest number with 5,716 awards.

Independent Protestant churches were second high with 4,709, followed by Baptists with 3,163.

PRAY offers study/award programs in 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). Young people who complete all four studies receive a Four Star Award. A total



*The Rev. Mark Dicken, pastor of Trinity UMC in Elkhart, Ind., presents PRAY Awards to five Scouts and a Cross and Flame Award to Craig Fulmer (right).*

of 290 young people received Four Star Awards in 2014.

A total of 16,405 awards were given through Boy Scouts of America and 2,116 through Girl Scouts in 2014.

## New Bible Patch Series

“Bible Basics RP3” is a new patch series from PRAY. It is designed to help families, Sunday school classes, and scouting groups get into the Bible. Scouts earning these patches may wear them on brag vests or on non-uniform clothing.

Bible Basics RP3 will guide youth to Read the Bible. Youth will be challenged to visualize or Picture the passage, then Ponder its meaning, and finally Put it into action.

PRAY provides three patches: “The Good Book,” “Out of the Water,” and “Birds of the Air.” The Good Book is the first patch; it focuses on getting to know the Bible and why it is important to read it. Other patches may be earned in any order.

Bible Basics RP3 is a series for all ages. Each patch includes questions for younger children, older youth, and adults. It is designed to be done in a family or group setting with all participants (including parents and leaders) earning the patch.

These patches are separate from the PRAY awards and do not have the same strict guidelines. These guidelines make the new patch series ideal for weekend campouts and retreats.

See [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org) for details

# Cub Scout recovering from surgery advances in rank

ARLINGTON, Tenn.—

**C**onnor Nettleton, a first grade soccer player and a wrestler, was not able to attend a Cub Scout ceremony at Arlington UMC as he was recovering from kidney surgery.

Earlier Connor was rushed to the emergency room with severe stomach pains, and in April, 2k014, surgeons at LeBonheur Hospital performed an emergency operation in which stents were placed in both of his kidneys.

“We had no idea he had this, so his kidneys have been very slowly failing over the last 7½ years,” said Connor’s mother, Kira. Two additional surgeries repaired his right and left kidneys.

The rest of the pack celebrated rank advancements during a May “crossover service” in which they received neckerchiefs indicating their new ranks.

Connor was disappointed that he could not attend the service to mark his advancement from Tiger to Wolf.

After the crossover service and prior to two additional surgeries, Mickey Keaton, a pack leader, asked Kira if he could have a private ceremony at Connor’s home.

What Connor, Kira and CT Nettleton (Connor’s father) didn’t know was that when Connor walked outside, the entire pack—110 kids and their parents stood on the driveway to congratulate him on his advancement.

“Having everyone show up for the crossover ceremony meant much more to us than the pack could imagine,” said Kira. “Connor still got to feel like he was part of the group, and he was so happy that night. It felt great to see him smile. We are truly blessed to part of such an amazing group of people.”



*Mickey Keaton, a leader of Cub Scout Pack 452, presents Connor with a kerchief indicating his advancement from the Tiger to Wolf rank.*

*Buddy Burkett looks on.*

*Photo by Kira Nettleton*



*Cub Scouts walk up the driveway at Connor’s house to congratulate him on his advancement.*

*Photo by Kira Nettleton*



# Scouting Awards

## **Megan Hamilton** **Volunteer of the year**

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

**M**egan Hamilton, a recipient of the Girl Scout Gold Award and a Good Samaritan Award, was named “Rising Star Youth Fundraising Volunteer of 2014” by the Nashville chapter of the National Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Megan raised \$13,950 in cash donations and \$1,000 in donated materials to build “The Garden of Sacrifice, Service, and Hope” at First UMC in Columbia, Tenn.

The award was presented at a Nov. 5 luncheon in Nashville.

## **Alex Herring** **Eagle Scout provides book bags for children**

LAWRENCEVILLE, Ga.—

**A**lex Herring is an Eagle Scout, a valedictorian graduate of Mountain View High School, and he is now a 4.0 student at the University of Georgia.

Prospect UMC presented Alex with a Good Samaritan Award following his completion of all four religious award studies with Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) and after providing book bags and school supplies for underserved preschool children.

Alex attended the Northern Tier Canoe Base, Philmont Scout Ranch, and the 2010 National BSA Jamboree. The son of a UM



*Megan Hamilton joins Michael W. Smith at the Association of Fundraising Professional Awards Luncheon. Smith, a Grammy and Dove award winner, who has sold more than 18 million albums, was named “2014 Philanthropist of the Year.”*

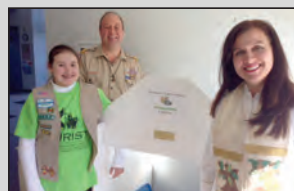
clergyman, he also participated in three mission trips.

“I learned about the Good Samaritan Award and immediately thought of Alex, said Dr. Dean Milford, a retired UM pastor in the North Georgia Conference. “I got the UM Men’s president, an assistant scoutmaster, and church member to join me in applying for the award.”

## **Abigail Herrin** **Girl Scout builds printer cartridge recycling center**

ROSWELL, Ga.—

**A**bigail Herrin, a 13-year-old Cadette Girl Scout, built a printer cartridge recycling center for Christ UMC. The center simplifies the recycling of cartridges and enables the church to receive credit for additional office supplies. The center was Abigail’s Silver Award project.



*Abigail and father Barry proudly show the recycling center to the Rev. Nancy Johnson, pastor of Christ UMC. Barry serves as coordinator of scouting ministries for North Georgia Conference.*

## **Ethan Ainsworth and Nathan Faucheux** **Scouts gather food and staff Scout camps**

LONGVIEW, Texas—

**E**than Ainsworth and Nathan Faucheux received Good Samaritan Awards from Winterfield UMC for providing hundreds of volunteer hours playing music for Sunday worship services and participating in Scouting for Food drives. The pair also cooks, cleans, and mentors younger Scouts at summer and winter camps.

## Scott Alan Engelhardt

### **Eagle Scout receives Cross and Flame Award**

WOOSTER, Ohio—

**T**he Church of the Cross presented Scott Engelhardt, 21, with a Cross and Flame Award for many years of service to the church and community.

His Eagle project was the installation of water lines at the Wooster cemetery and he participated in conservation projects from 2008 to 2013.

Now in his second year with the Fire and Emergency Services program at Stark State College in Canton, Ohio, he participates in the Summa Akron City Hospital Paramedic Program and is involved with the American Red Cross and People-to-People Ministries.

“I could not think more of Scott if he were my very own son,” says Jo Anne Page, charter organization representative who nominated Engelhardt for the award.

## Fran Gillis

### **Scoutmaster enables 100 boys to achieve the rank of Eagle**

JOHNS CREEK, N.C. —

**M**ount Pisgah UMC honored Fran Gillis; a man who has been the scoutmaster for the 86 Scouts of Troop 629 since 1999.

Gillis has enabled 100 young men to achieve the rank of Eagle.

The Massachusetts native has served six different scout troops during his 52 years with the scouting.

During several deployments with the U.S. Army, the lieutenant colonel served as a Scout leader in Korea, Honduras, China, and Germany.

“Each individual scout’s journey is special and seeing their future bloom is a great reward,” says Gillis.



*The Rev. Mike Roper, caring minister pastor at Mount Pisgah UMC, presents a special award of appreciation to Scoutmaster Gillis.*

## Chris Karabinos

### **Conference presents Torch Award**

JOHNS CREEK, Ga.—

**T**he North Georgia Conference presented a Torch Award to Chris Karabinos, a member of Johns Creek UMC and the religious emblems coordinator for the Northern Ridge District of the Atlanta Area Council. He was instrumental in the explosion of the scouting ministry at Johns Creek, which now sponsors several Boy Scout troops, Cub Scout packs, Girl Scout units, and a Venture Crew.



*Participants in the presentation service included (from left): Barry Herrin, coordinator of scouting ministries for the North Georgia Conference; Chris Karabinos; Dr. Dee Shelnutt, senior minister at Johns Creek UMC; and Jerry Stillabower, Johns Creek UMC charter organization representative.*

## Sean Crozier

### **Scout creates award winning garden**

VISALIA, Calif.—The Boy Scout Sequoia Council honored Sean Crozier for creating a raised garden and storage shed for Linwood Elementary School in Visalia. The project was selected as the council-level Adams’ National Eagle Scout Project of 2014.

“It was a well-done project of significant benefit to the students of the school, and very visible

to the community as a symbol of scouting excellence,”

said Michael Feist, chairman of the Sequoia Council NESA Committee.



*Sean Crozier (left) receives an award for his Eagle Scout project from Michael Feist (right), a scouting ministry specialist, and Richard Egan of the Sequoia Council Alumni Association (center).*



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