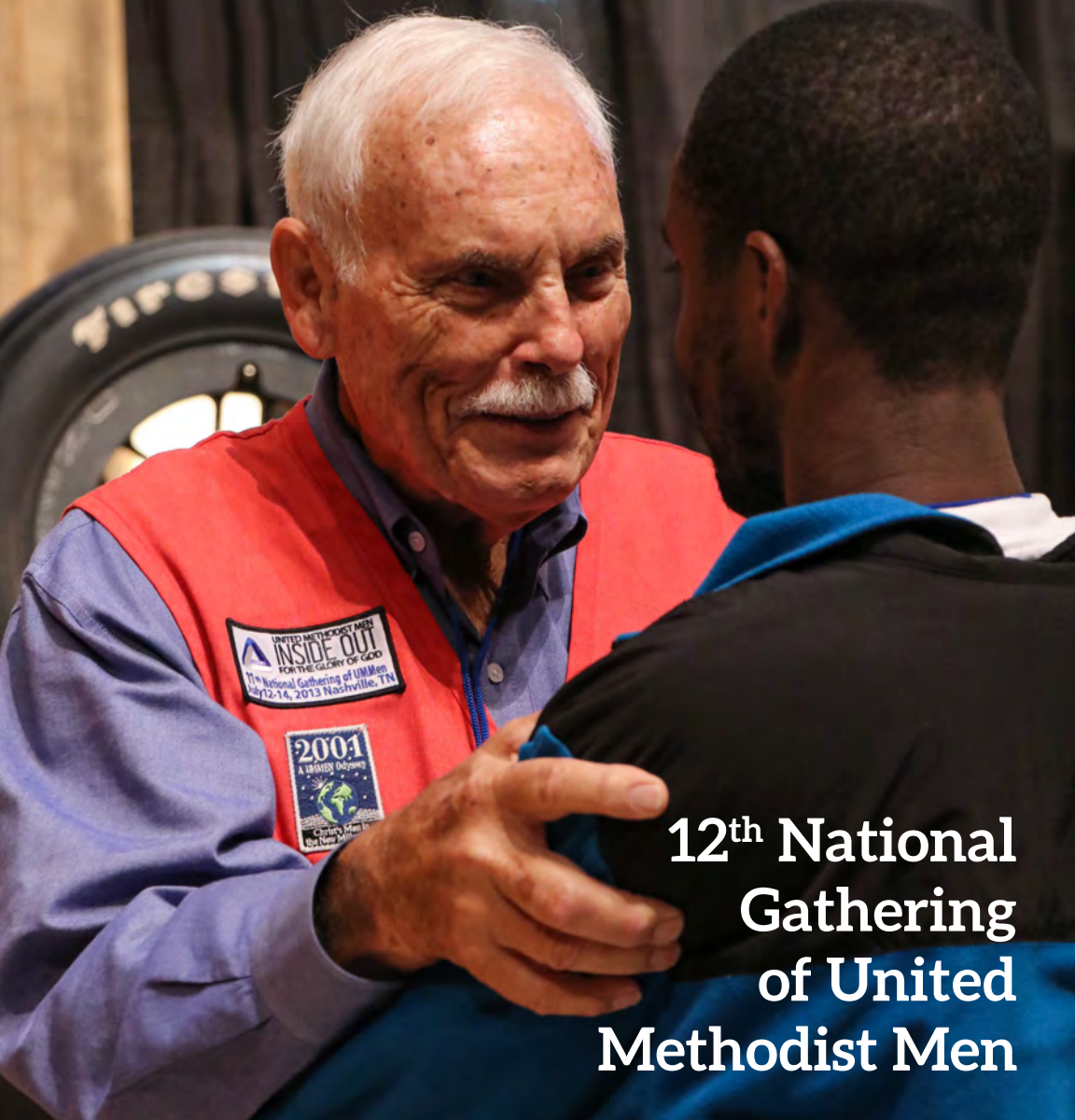


UM MEN

The magazine of United Methodist Men



UNITED METHODIST MEN
INSIDE OUT
FOR THE GLORY OF GOD
12th National Gathering of UM Men
July 12-14, 2013 Nashville, TN

2001
A 100th Odyssey
Christ's Men in
the New Millennium

**12th National
Gathering
of United
Methodist Men**

A letter from the General Secretary

Reflections on the 12th National Gathering

I was very pleased with the National Gathering.

Apparently, that joy was shared by all who attended.

As you know this gathering was in a new place, and we used a new model for the event.

The place was St. Luke's UMC in Indianapolis. They were perfect hosts. The facility was awesome, the staff, and about 100 volunteers were outstanding. We could not have picked a better place, and many attendees expressed a strong desire to return to St. Luke's for our next national event.

The format is one taken from the experiences of South Carolina UM Men. This model allows for more personal choice in where you stay, eat, and what sessions you selected to attend to meet your interests. There was a wonderful list of possibilities: four major speakers, 19 different workshops, three hands-on mission projects, spirit-filled worship, and a large number of ministries represented in the ministry fair.

We had excellent support from other UM agencies and entities, and we welcomed several guys who head up men's ministries in other denominations. I was particularly blessed to have representatives from two very different "think tanks": Project 12, a multi-denominational group, and the Southeast Jurisdiction's Younger Men; now including guys from other areas of the U.S.

Six bishops attended along with several members of the board of directors of the General Commission on UM Men.

There were guys from Alaska to Florida and from southern California to Maine.

As you will read in this issue, it was a great event. For many reading this issue, you will get to re-live what you experienced; but for many more your reading may lead to an "I-wish-I-had-come" response.

For those of you who did come, it was great to be with you. For those of you who were not there, I want you to know that we planned for you and you were missed.

DVD's of the event can be ordered, and watch for multiple webinars hosted by some of our workshop leaders in the months ahead.

The most common comment from the event was, "God showed up!"



Striving to be a servant,
Gil Hanke

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



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UM Men

Fall 2017

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The cover photo and all photos from the National Gathering without photo credits were taken by Bob Vogt.

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.



This was my fifth National Gathering of UM Men.

I had the opportunity to attend two previous gatherings at Purdue University in Indiana and two at Belmont

University in Nashville.

I'm not sure I can say the gathering at St. Luke's UMC in Indianapolis was my favorite, but I can say that I have never attended a gathering where the hosts were more gracious and helpful.

This was also the first conference I attended on crutches, a temporary condition caused by my own stupidity. I annually participate in the Tennessee Senior Olympics, and I survived cycling, several track events, the high jump, triple jump and a javelin throw without injury.

No intelligent person can get injured in a swim event, but I managed to do so by jumping in the pool for a backstroke event. I caught my foot on the deck causing my knee to bend in a way a knee is not designed to bend. The

event put me on crutches for a month.

It was an inconvenient time to be hobbled, but a great time to find out how sensitive and helpful UM men can be.

What a great event.

I never saw the racetrack that hosts the Indianapolis 500, but I did see a race car that entered the event and I saw men racing hand-crank Mobility Worldwide carts designed for Third World countries. I saw some of the 600 attendees run potatoes to trucks from food distribution centers, and men building handicap ramps.

I also heard four stirring platform speeches and listened to men tell about the helpful ideas they received in 19 workshops.

It's a joy to now share information with those of you who were unable to attend the assembly in Indianapolis.

The following photos and articles will not do justice to the actual events, but they may give you a glimpse into some of the insights gained during our two-day stay in Indianapolis.

I am indebted to Bob Vogt who provided most of the photos of the gathering.

— Rich Peck



UM Men race Mobility Worldwide carts in the parking lot of St. Luke's UMC.

Videos of the gathering are available by calling 615/620-7269.

The 12th National Gathering of UM Men — July 7-8, 2017



“Discipleship — The Contact Sport” was the theme of the 2017 gathering. The logo occupies center stage of St. Luke’s UMC in Indianapolis, and the concept was at the core of the four plenary addresses, 19 workshops, and three mission projects.



Fifty-four United Methodist men delivered 21,000 pounds of white potatoes to eight local agencies and three UM churches. It took 60 minutes to unload the truck and 90 minutes to load smaller trucks for churches and agencies. Wade Mays, a staff member of the Society of St. Andrew, coordinated the distribution.



Indianapolis, home of the “Indianapolis 500,” served as the host city for the gathering. This is the same site as a similar national gathering of Methodist Men in 1913. The Rev. Robert Fuquay, pastor of the host St. Luke’s UMC, led a workshop on flags used in auto racing and how they relate to the signals God send us in our fast-paced lives. The 630 people registered for the event were impressed and grateful for the church staff and volunteers who made two days in July comfortable and memorable.



Men join with Servants at Work (SAWs), a ministry of St. Luke's UMC, that constructs wheelchair ramps. Many of the men involved in the project were from Parkway UMC in Milton, Mass.



UM Men join with Mobility Worldwide to assemble hand-crank Personal Energy Transportation (PET) carts. The three-wheel vehicles provide mobility for people in Third World nations who are unable to walk. Photo by Heather Hahn, UMNS.





Mark Barrow, executive director of Aldersgate Renewal Ministries, serves as music director for the assembly.



Chris Karabinos leads a workshop on reaching youth and young adults. Participants could attend three of 19 workshops.



Gil Hanke (left) and Larry Coppock (right) present Nick Hiratsuka with a Good Samaritan Award. Nick was honored for producing "It's Not Just a Joke, Stop Cyberbullying" a video produced for his Eagle project. A high school senior in Tucson, Ariz., Nick serves on the technology team at St Mark's UMC and is president of his high school film and television club. He also participates in a community theater group featured in the video. He led a workshop on cyberbullying.



Become 'the more'



We can't expect others to change if we are not willing to change, Bishop James Swanson tells those attending the 12th National Gathering.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.—


We could become better people if we would be willing to drop old habits, attitudes and values, said Bishop James E. Swanson Sr.

"The genius of God is not that God was able to create humanity, but that God created us with the capacity to adapt and grow into someone even better than what God originally created," the bishop told more than 600 people attending the 12th National Gathering of UM Men.

Now in his second term as president of the General Commission on UM Men, Swanson said, "It is a disservice to expect change in others with no commitment to change oneself." But, he noted, while it is easy to expect others to change, it is far more difficult for us to change because we fear the grief that comes from losing the familiar.

"Sometimes you refuse to change because we know the 'new you' will demand more out of you. And you are not at the point where you are willing to 'up your game'."

At the conclusion of his July 7 address, the bishop gave the assembly a promise, "Even when we think God is unwilling to have contact with us, God doesn't disown us. And it won't happen. You are still God's."

The bishop invited those who wanted to respond to God's call to come to the chancel to pray with conference prayer advocates. 



Prayer advocates meet with those responding to invitation at the first session of the July gathering in Indianapolis.

'Bring it to God'

Bishop L. Jonathan Holston



"The disciples could only find five loaves and two fishes," said Bishop Holston during the closing sermon at the National Gathering.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.—

Leaning on Matthew's story of the "Feeding of the 5,000," South Carolina Area Bishop L. Jonathan Holston closed the assembly with a story of how the disciples were sure there would never be enough to feed the multitude.

They could find only two loaves and five fishes.

"They talked out of their poverty," said the bishop.

Jesus asked the disciples to give him the loaves and fishes.

"He took what they had and gave it back to them and said, 'Go,'" said the bishop.

With that modest beginning the disciples fed 5,000 people, and they filled 12 baskets

with the leftovers.

"We too often think of what we can't do instead of what we can do," said Holston. "When you think you don't have enough, give it to God. You'll do more than you ever thought you could do."

The bishop recalled how he used the same principle to increase the number of men attending annual South Carolina retreats.

In 2013, only 150 people attended.

"I thought, wait a minute, I serve a God who has a God-size vision," said Holston. "So, I said, 'Next year, we're going to have 500.' You could have heard the breath go out."

Like the disciples, the bishop said, the men only saw five loaves and two fish.

Nevertheless, they prayed for God's guidance, and they invited their neighbors. The next year, 576 attended the retreat. The number jumped again in 2015 and 2016.

In 2017, 1,200 people attended.

"We stopped saying, what we can't do and gave everything to God," he said. "We aren't perfect people, but we serve a perfect God, and God can change the world.

"Now is the time for UM Men to make a difference," he said. "Bring it all and watch God lift it up, bless it, and give it back to you." 



Bishop Holston breaks bread during the closing Communion service.

Be part of the solution to violence against women

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.—

Shan Foster, a former NBA basketball star and director of a YWCA program to combat domestic violence, urged men attending the National Gathering to be “part of the solution” to violence against women and girls.

“Men and boys have become so desensitized to violence that we buy tickets to games in support of athletes who beat their wives and vote for men in elections who normalize disrespecting women’s body by saying, ‘It’s just locker room talk,’” said Foster.

The all-time leading scorer for Vanderbilt University basketball teams cited five truths men need to know about domestic violence:

- ✓ One in four women experiences domestic violence in her lifetime.
- ✓ One in four women experiences sexual assault or abuse before she reaches age 18.
- ✓ One in five women is sexually assaulted or raped during college.
- ✓ Every day three women are killed by men who say they love them.
- ✓ 15.5 million children witness abuse in the U.S. every year.

“It’s this culture that is objectifying women and girls and it’s this culture that we must challenge and change,” said Foster.


He offered six principles to change the culture:

1. **Be you.** Be who God has called you to be.
2. **Learn and share.** Social media have taken this world by storm with 21.25 million Facebook posts, 347,222 tweets, and 300 You Tube videos posed every minute. But there is little meaningful discussion and learning. Recalling how the marriages of both of his grandmothers ended in divorce because of

violence and how his mother was physically and emotionally abused by her first husband, Foster said, “As a young boy, I could never talk about the violence I saw. It wasn’t manly to do so. So I held it in.” He urged men to share and learn from their experiences.



Shan Foster

3. **Choose wisely.** Foster told about an experience at Vanderbilt when he was challenged to fight. A teammate advised him, “If you fight him, win or lose, it won’t make you a man, it will make you stupid.” “Sometimes being a man means walking away. Who cares what others think,” said Foster.
4. **Speak up.** “Our silence is a problem,” he said. “We have a problem when men find it more important to fit in and not offend, than to call out the sexist jokes that we hear in the locker room. It’s not women’s responsibility to stop men from objectifying them, it’s ours.”
5. **Encourage and celebrate.** “We must celebrate men in our community who get it right and encourage young men and boys so they won’t get it wrong.”
6. **Contribute.** “Find ways to support programs, initiatives and effort that teach healthy manhood and healthy relationships. When you give of your time, money and efforts, it connects your heart to a mission greater than yourself,” said Foster. He reported the UM Men are helping develop an 8-week curriculum where men can discuss the root causes of violence, define healthy manhood, and learn how to safely intervene in situations that objectify women and support violence. 

Christian conferencing is the forgotten discipline, says scholar

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.—

John Wesley regarded “Christian conferencing” as one of the five essential practices of the faith, said Dr. Kevin Watson, a professor at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta.

Wesley defined Christian conferencing as “the practice of cultivating growth in holiness in community through conversation about our experience of God.”

Speaking to a July 8 session of the National Gathering of UM Men, Watson said Wesley considered Christian conferencing in small groups to be as important as searching the Scriptures, receiving the Eucharist, prayer, and fasting.

He told the assembly that early Methodists participated in two forms of Christian conferencing: 1) “Class Meetings” where 7 to 12 people would meet to answer the question “How does your soul prosper?” and 2) “Band Meetings” where groups of three to five were separated by gender to confess their sins and dig deeper into the faith.

“Wesley was adamant that holiness occurs within the context of a community of faith,” said Watson. “We should not pursue holiness in isolation from brothers and sisters in Christ.”

“The classes and bands have often been referred to as the sinews of Methodism, that which connects muscle to bone and makes movement possible,” he said.

Focus on transformation, not information

“Class meetings were small groups focused on transformation, and not information. It was not a group study of a book, or even the Bible. The content was the participants’ lives with God.”

Watson said that as Methodism came to the American continent, class meetings and band meetings were considered essential practices. Weekly attendance was



required to maintain membership.

In 1776, only 2.5 percent of the colonists were Methodist adherents. By 1850, a whopping 34.2 percent of Americans were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

“The class meeting was at the epicenter of the explosive growth of American Methodism,” said Watson. And Methodism decline occurred with the discontinuation of this form of Christian conferencing.

The decline of class meetings

“The rise of the Sunday school movement worked to bring Methodism’s attention away from the class meeting so that it gradually died, not by being rejected but due to a lack of attention and



Dr. Kevin Watson

interest.

“Methodists shifted to learning about their faith instead of practicing their faith,” said Watson.

Watson’s book *The Class Meeting* has helped Methodists recover this “tried and tested vehicle” to shift from sharing information to a focus on transformation.

“The crisis of United Methodism isn’t that people don’t know enough, it is that

they aren’t practicing what they do know,” he said.


Hard wired for connection

“We are hard wired for connections,” said Watson. “And class meetings are places where people can grow in faith and holiness.” He suggested that if men don’t connect with others in Christian conferencing they will connect with less constructive groups.

Watson celebrated the ways in which UM Men have utilized his book to create small group meetings across the U.S. He said some people will be surprised to learn that men are more likely to join these small accountability groups than women.


“Men who love Jesus want spiritual brothers,” he said. “And you don’t need a seminary degree to lead a group of people.”

Watson says the reason some people resist participating in class meeting is because we have to let ourselves “be out of control,” but “every time I create that space God shows up.”

He invited the assembly to “take some time to find a brother and share what God is doing in your life. If you’re not in a class meeting consider starting one.” 

Volunteers operate prayer line

Migdiel Perez, director of the Nashville-based prayer line, provided training for 15 volunteers who served six hours during each of the two days of the gathering. Volunteers received 45 calls from people across the U.S., including one from Indianapolis.

“Out of this experience new remotes will be started at local men’s groups by those who took the training,” said Perez. 



Earlwyn Benjamin answers a prayer request at the Upper Room Prayer Center while Kenneth Hudgins provides emotional support.

Bishop invites men to become ‘vitalizers’

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. —

We’re not sure it’s really a word, but Arkansas Area Bishop Gary E. Mueller invited 130 participants attending a dinner honoring people inducted into the John Wesley Society to become “vitalizers.”

Noting there were 130 people attending the July 7 dinner Mueller recalled a quotation from John Wesley:



Bishop Gary Mueller, vice president of the General Commission on UM Men, addresses participants in the John Wesley Society Dinner.

“Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on Earth.”

Noting that there were more than 100 men attending the dinner, Mueller invited them to become “vitalizers” who can “help men grow in Christ so others may know Christ.”



Following the address, Bishop James Swanson (left), president of the General Commission on UM Men, surprised Bishop Mueller by inducting him into the John Wesley Society and presenting him with a plaque and a pin.



Glenn Wintemberg, president of the UM Men Foundation, welcomes members of the John Wesley Society to the dinner. Rick Vance and Joe Strausbaugh, staff members of the General Commission on UM Men became the 811th and 812th member of the society during the evening. Each member represents a \$1,000 gift to the foundation for men’s ministry and scouting ministry.

“God is calling you to important work,” he said. “We need ‘vitalizers’ to make disciples for the transformation of the world. Are you ready?” **UM MEN**



During the dinner, Johnnie Draughon, a men’s ministry specialist in Virginia Beach, Va., presented his wife, Marilyn with a Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence.



Across the Nation

POWDER SPRING, Ga.—

Volunteers provide free car care

Led by David McCoy, UM Men of McEachern Memorial UMC repair cars for those who cannot afford to fix them. Volunteers at the Car Care Ministry never charge for labor, and if the “customer” can’t afford the parts, they give those too.

Joe Mikos first came to the ministry to get a power steering pump put on his truck.

“A little while later, they start wheeling in four tires. I was like, ‘I can’t afford tires.’”

“Don’t worry about it,” a volunteer told him, “Your tires are bald. You need tires.” So, the ministry gave him four tires.

Joe, a cancer survivor, now volunteers at the ministry nearly every day.



Car Care volunteers also fix up donated cars and give them away.

PASS CHRISTIAN, Miss.—

Men aid flood victims in three cities

Men of De Lisle Mt. Zion UMC worked with men of Broadmoor UMC of Baton Rouge, La., to help families recover from a flood. They provided construction supplies, engaged in demolition work, and gave out clothes and several hundred pairs of new shoes.

The De Lisle Mt. Zion men also joined with UM Women of St. Paul UMC in Pass Christian to provide meals for 300 victims and volunteers in Cosby, Miss. The two churches also provided 500 meals to families in Hattiesburg, Miss., following tornadoes there.



Jim Smith of St. James UMC in Ocean Springs, Miss., removes drywall of Baton Rouge house damaged by flood waters.

NAPERVILLE, Ill.—

Suits for success

Bill Denwood, a member of Community UMC and the Illinois chapter of Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries, was unable to facilitate Disciple Bible studies at the Stateville Correctional Center in Crest Hill, Ill. However, last November the maximum-security prison asked for suits to give prisoners on the days of their release.

Bill responded.

He created a website, received donations from several churches, and secured the cooperation of Illinois Professional Dry Cleaners to provide 612 clean suits to give to the men as they leave prison walls.

Bill hopes to expand the ministry across the nation.



The Stateville Correctional Center.

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—

Truck blows two tires delivering granite columns to church

Two five-foot granite columns once marked the entrance to Vesper Hill at “Epworth among the Hills Retreat Center” in Arcadia, Mo. The entranceway to the prayer area was built by Methodist Men in 1950.

When the Arcadia retreat center closed, the columns were reset at the Blue Mountain Retreat Center in Fredericktown in 2007. Seven years later, that center also closed.

Glenn Wintemberg asked Missouri Conference, the owner of the retreat center, if he could have the columns. The conference granted the request.

In 2015, Matt Beyes proposed building



Glenn Wintemberg and Matt Beyes stand next to 67-year-old pillars.

a labyrinth prayer garden at Mt. Zion UMC for his Eagle project. Glenn suggested the granite columns would make a special entranceway to the labyrinth.

Matt’s father provided a heavy-duty Ford pickup and a trailer to take the columns from Fredericktown to St. Louis.

However the 8-ton columns and worn trailer tires were too much. Not just one, but two tires blew out during the 90-mile trip.

After the second blowout Matt strapped the axle on the side with the blown tire and the pair pulled a trailer riding on only three tires back to Mt. Zion UMC.

Two granite columns now grace the entryway to the prayer labyrinth.

ARLINGTON, Tenn.—

Scouts build ramps for two hospice patients

In 2014, Scouts in a troop chartered by Arlington UMC responded to a request by Rachel Bolik, a staff member of Methodist Hospice. She asked troops in the Chickasaw BSA Council to fund and build wheelchair ramps for children and teens receiving end-of-life care.

Boy Scout Troop 452 responded by building a ramp at a patient’s home. And, in 2015, the troop built another wheelchair ramp for one of their own—Dianne Young, the mother of two members of Troop 452. At that time, she was battling multiple brain tumors. She died in September, 2016.

On Scout Sunday in 2017, Richard Fisher,

chief executive officer of the Chickasaw Council, and Bolik had an opportunity to thank Troop 452 for enhancing the quality of life for two hospice patients.



Scouts build a handicap ramp for Dianne Young.

Teresa Pinkston-Rector, scouting coordinator for the Arlington church, announced that Scouts wished to dedicate the Scout Sunday celebration in memory of Dianne and former Cub Master Jim Gaylor.

The pack and troop both received the Bishop's Award of Excellence and Cub Master Buddy Burkett was named Council "Alumnus of the Year" by the BSA national office.

**BLUE HILL, Neb.—
Rebuilding soil compared to rebuilding Jerusalem wall**

Keith Berns told 65 men from 20 churches in the Prairie Rivers District that rebuilding soil is similar to Nehemiah's epic project of rebuilding the walls around Jerusalem.

Keith, co-owner of Green Cover Seed in Bladen, said just as Nehemiah cared deeply about the destroyed walls, so too, do we need to care about soil erosion and so too, must we prepare thoroughly and act boldly. Nehemiah's workers, like farm workers today, must share a common vision, be willing to learn, and not be overwhelmed by their task.



Keith Berns (right) tells men of the Prairie River District about ways to combat soil erosion.

Finally, Keith told the gathering at Blue Hill UMC that just as Nehemiah used the right tools, so must we use tools based on understanding of the biological principles of soil conservation.

**LAKESWOOD, Ohio—
Volunteers package food for hungry families**

The men's organization of Lakewood UMC recruited volunteers to package food for hungry people in the Cleveland area.



Members of Lakewood UMC.

**AURORA, Ill.—
Men portray Last Supper**

Leonardo Da Vinci's 1497 "The Last Supper" fresco came to life in a Holy Week performance by UM Men of Wesley UMC.



The Rev. John Bell, pastor of Wesley UMC, portrays Judas, and Joe Rigaud portrays Jesus. Photo by Al Benson.

**SMITHBURG, Md.—
Potato drop feeds 5,000 families**

Seventy volunteers from Bethel UMC and Centennial Memorial UMC hosted a potato drop that provided food for 33 organizations in two Maryland counties and a couple of locations in West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Ten volunteers unloaded 880 fifty-pound bags of potatoes for major food-distribution centers and other volunteers broke down the heavy bags into 900 ten-pound bags for churches and senior citizen complexes.

The project provided potatoes for 5,000 families.

“Thanks for all of the volunteers that came from Bethel, Centennial, and all the other churches, as well as the companies that allowed us to use their machinery, equipment and trucks for this project,” said Pastor Mark Claiborne Sr., who served as a staff member of Centennial Memorial UMC in Frederick and president of the Frederick District UM Men.



Seventy volunteers provide potatoes for 33 organizations.

MERIDIAN, Miss. —

Bishop Swanson boosts scouting

Bishop James Swanson Sr., president of the General Commission on UM Men, held an April 25 “Bishop’s Luncheon for Scouting” at Central UMC.

The bishop said the values stressed in scouting help young people develop a sense of responsibility to God, family,

neighbor, and to the civic community.

He also told 90 clergy and lay people of the Meridian District that the religious, vocational, and educational aspects of scouting help shape Christian consciences.

Twenty-eight of the representatives from 45 churches signed covenant cards saying they will encourage youth to participate in PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) classes, observe Scout Sunday, and explore the formation of new Scout units.



Bishop James Swanson Sr. underscores the importance of scouting ministry at a luncheon attended by 90 clergy and lay people from 45 churches in the Meridian District.



Bishop James Swanson Sr. addresses a Bishop’s Luncheon for Scouting.

TAVARES, Fla. —

Men provide breakfast for high school graduates

UM Men annually sponsor a breakfast for graduates of Tavares High School.

Students sign up in advance for the meal, and in 2017, some 150 students enjoyed pancakes and sausages before their first-period classes. The church is conveniently located within walking distance of the school.

“Boy, did we get a good group this year. I believe it’s one of our largest so far,” said

Don Sansone, president of UM Men. "This church is committed to honoring these students who honored their commitment to succeed in their studies and graduate."

The church hosts events for students throughout the year, including pre-game meals for football players and a baccalaureate service.

"I'm thankful they open their doors for us," senior David Miller said. "I'm also a football player so I loved the pre-game meals. The food is always good."



Graduating seniors enjoy a breakfast prepared by UM Men at Tavares UMC. Photo courtesy of the Daily Commercial.

FLORENCE, S.C.—

Men build ramps, clear downed trees

Men of Cumberland UMC have been building ramps for 15 years. They also cut up and removed trees downed by Hurricane Matthew.



Cumberland UM Men gather on a newly built ramp for Thelma Long. From left: Milton Phillips, Long, Clifford Parr, Dr. David Gittens, Wallace Felder, Woodrow Lyde, the Rev. Ted Brown, and Lonnie Davis.

PENSACOLA, Fla. —

Conference honors top local unit

Cokesbury UM Men of Pensacola was named the top UM Men unit in the Alabama West Florida Conference.

The 52-member unit has 31 EMS members and one legacy builder.

Since being reorganized in 1982, the men have presented 17 Life Membership Awards and two Susanna Wesley Awards of Excellence.

Cokesbury men serve meals to the homeless, answer prayer requests for an Upper Room remote prayer line, and provide support for a Scout troop, a Cub pack, the Kairos prison ministry, the Wesley Foundation, and other ministries.



Frank Moore (left), president of the Alabama West Florida Conference UM Men, presents the "2017 Joe Garris Sr. Award for Outstanding Men's Ministry" to Mike Moser, president of Cokesbury UM Men.

GATLINBURG, Tenn. —

Volunteers build homes after fire

Some 125 volunteers spent April 29 building frames for eight houses for low-income families who lost everything in a November wildfire that killed 14 people.

The building effort was coordinated by Holston Conference, the Mountain Tough Recovery Team, and the Appalachia Service Project.

Holston Conference and churches across the nation provided more than \$400,000 for the building effort.

Lunch was provided by First UMC of Pigeon Forge.

"I praise God for having all this. I know everything comes from Him," said Glenna Ogle, 76, the first recipient of a new house.

Volunteers hope to build 25 homes during 2017.



Volunteers carry the framing of a wall for a new house in Gatlinburg.

HAMPTON, Va. —

Church sponsors four PRAY class

First UMC of Fox Hill sponsors all four PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) classes. The largest class was the "God and Life Class." Twelve of the 24 participants were high school students, and four achieved Four-Star (winners of all four awards) status.

"Students saw the Four Star Award as a chance to earn something truly elite, more so than the Eagle or Gold Award," said Shan Sixbey, coordinator of the program.



Twenty-four young people receive PRAY awards.

WICHITA, Kans. —

What makes a man a man?

Dan Schaffer, founder and director of Building Brothers, was the principal speaker at an April gathering of men from several communities in Kansas and a few from Nebraska.

Dan challenged the men to search for answers to the question, "What makes a man a man?" and "What makes his life worth living?" He also asked men to discover the role of repentance in finding the answers to these questions.

The men shared their stories and continued their discussion in small group settings after each of the sessions with Dan.

This third annual gathering raised \$1,000 to support students attending Christian colleges in Kansas.



The Rev Mike Marion and Victor Peterson welcome men to a gathering hosted by Calvary UMC. Men from five communities surrounding Wichita and from as far away as Columbus attended the gathering.

CAPE HATTERAS, N.C. —

A sofa? That's "strictly a luxury"

For 39 years, Cape Hatteras UM Men have provided emergency assistance for Hatteras Islanders.

Following Hurricane Matthew in October, 2016, the 62-member group provided more than \$140,000 in relief along with hundreds of volunteer hours rehabbing



Frisco is the proud owner of a new refrigerator.

houses and providing food.

“Frisco Mo,” an 87-year-old resident, asked Cape Hatteras UM Men to help a neighbor. When they responded, Frisco insisted that he was OK and others were in greater need. But it was apparent that he needed a refrigerator. A friend had given him a bed and he had salvaged his stove, washing machine, and a chair. When asked what else he needed, he mentioned that he missed his sofa where he and his cat used to sit. That, he added, would be “strictly a luxury.”

UM Men bought him a new refrigerator and sofa, and helped him get some heat.

Later, a friend offered to take him to Florida to recuperate; he accepted.



Husband and wife team Ray and Claire Schaaf operate the Cape Hatteras UM Men food pantry. For 17 years, the couple has distributed food along with some comforting and counseling when needed.



Cape Hatteras UM Men, wives, and a middle school softball team, repaint another home for a grateful family.

AURORA, Ill. —

Men build Habitat House

About 35 volunteers from Grace UMC in Naperville, Ill., started a Fox Valley Habitat for Humanity house for an Aurora family.

The Rev. Jeff Barrett, Habitat executive director and pastor of Genesis Community Church, Montgomery, prayed for volunteers before they went to work.

Church teams will work Saturdays to complete the four-bedroom, 1.5 bathroom project by November.



Naperville resident Josh Freeman, a member of Grace UMC in Naperville, cuts a board with aid from Scout House, Photo by Al Benson.

MT VERNON, Ohio —

Ten years of helping others

In 2007, six girls joined a Girl Scout troop affiliated with South Vernon UMC.

During the following 10 years, the girls found numerous ways to love their neighbors.

They collected disaster kits for victims of floods and fires, provided personal hygiene supplies for the homeless, made “blankets of belief” for a combat team in Iraq, held a “shower in a box” for a baby who was born while her father was deployed, and collected toys to replace those lost in a fire at the home of a classmate.

They also filled Christmas stockings for soldiers, built picnic tables for a camp, held a dance camp for children, provided food for families on school breaks, held a health fair for senior citizens, made blankets for an animal shelter, and provided scarves for women in a domestic violence shelter.



Proud members of Troop 214.

OSLO, Norway —

Hanke meets Norwegian Scout leaders

During a May meeting of the Connectional Table, General Secretary Gil Hanke spent an evening with two representatives of scouting programs in Norway.

The meeting was arranged by their host, Nordic and Baltic Area Bishop Christian Alsted.

As they shared information about scouting in their two nations, they found both similarities and differences. For example, in Norway, scouting is co-educational at every level, unlike the U.S. where that happens only with the older teens.

“Following a worldwide tradition, we exchanged patches, information about resources, and wonderful stories,” said Hanke.

The friends hope to see each other again at the 2019 World Jamboree at the



From left: Camilla Gaarn Roed, Hanke, Atle Stokke and Bishop Alsted.

Summit in West Virginia.

NATCHITOCHEs, La. —

Skeet shoot raises \$6,600 for Nepal school

A Father’s Day skeet shoot sponsored by UM Men of Natchitoches UMC raised \$6,600 to help rebuild a girl’s school in Nepal that was destroyed by an earthquake.

Fifty-six shooters in 14 teams vied for bragging rights in the third annual “Pull Together Clay Shoot.”

UM Men have also provided scholarships, career guidance for marginalized and at-risk girls and young women in Nepal.

Winners received hand chiseled slate plaques created by a Nepalese father and his children.

First place for a youth team went to Bryce Moulton, son of Dr. Mike and Patrice Moulton, who had been in Nepal for past two months.



Natchitoches Mayor Lee Posey takes aim at a clay target. Councilman at Large Don Mims stands behind him. Photo by Kevin Shanahan, courtesy of The Natchitoches Parish Journal.

ATLANTA, Ga. —

Scout committee hosts training day

The UM Committee on Scouting of the North Georgia Conference held its first “UM Academy of Scouting” on April 22 at Peachtree Road UMC.

The half-day training event encouraged churches to start Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops and invited adults to participate in Big Brother Big Sister programs. The 37 participants were also invited to start PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) classes.

More than half of the 11 courses offered were designed to help Scouts and church leaders learn how to build “Duty-to-God” activities into their Scout programs.

Early results indicate two churches are planning to start Big Brother Big Sister programs and one is planning to start a Cub Scout pack.

Participants came from three annual conferences, eight Boy Scout conferences, and two Girl Scout conferences.

A second academy is scheduled for April, 2018.



Kyle Redner, a staff member of Big Brothers Big Sisters, explains how the mentoring program can help a church deliver on its commitment to make disciples of Jesus Christ. He is helping two churches start mentoring programs.

PORT ORCHARD, Wash. —

Men rebuild homes destroyed by fire

For three consecutive years UM men of Port Orchard UMC have rebuilt homes

destroyed by the 2014 Carlton Complex wildfire. The lightning-caused fires in the Methow Valley burned more than 250,000 acres and destroyed 300 houses

The men also tutored junior high school students and built a cottage for the homeless in South Kitsap County.

The active group also handouts popcorn and water bottles at a car show and provides coffee at a rest stop alongside of an interstate highway. Offerings from those giveaways provide funds for youth mission trips and church building projects.



The 2014 Carlton Complex wildfire was the largest in the history of Washington state.

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. —

Cub pack receives Bishop's Award

Cub Scout Pack 11, sponsored by Chestnut Memorial UMC, received the Bishop's Award of Excellence for picking up trash at 188 campsites at a local park and for participating in campouts and Scout Sunday activities.

The church received Shepherd Church Charter Recognition and was named “Charter Organization of the Year” by the Monitor Merrimac BSA District.

Julie Merkel and Janet Cooper, leaders of Pack 11, received Cross and Flame Awards, and Dick Barnes received the Silver Beaver Award.



Chestnut Memorial UMC celebrates Scout Sunday with Girl Scout Troop 1260, Cub Scout Pack 11, and Boy Scout Troop 11.

ROANOKE, Va. —

Scouts honor deceased veterans

Scouts from Troops 18, 235, 540 and Pack 30 spent a rainy Memorial Day placing 1,000 flags on the graves of veterans at Mountain View Cemetery.



Scouts are joined by their families in the annual placing of flags on the graves at a Roanoke cemetery.

CECILTON, Md. —

Men clear debris from parsonage property

Men of Zion UMC and St. Paul UMC cleared debris from the parsonage lot of Cecilton UMC Parish.

An ice storm caused an oak tree to fall, and the ice broke limbs off of 23 pine trees

Armed with chain saws, rakes, trucks, clippers and a chipper, UM Men of the parish trimmed the bushes, removed the branches, and raked the property.

The men provided breakfast to the volunteers and finished their work by 3 p.m. as rain moved into the area.



Men put broken branches into a rented chipper.

GENESEO, Ill. —

Troop celebrates centennial

Boy Scout Troop 131, chartered by Grace UMC, celebrated its 100th anniversary.

It was chartered in 1917 by a local Kiwanis Club, and later by the UM congregation.



Present and former Scout leaders celebrate the 100-year anniversary of Troop 131.

From left: Former Assistant Scoutmaster Steve Wildemuth, Life Scout Sam Bridges, Assistant Scoutmaster Nathan Nicke, Life Scout Lucas Nicke, Assistant Scoutmaster Paul Flynn, Scouting Ministry Specialist Mark Lohman, Life Scout Matthew Lohman, Eagle Scout Daniel Lohman, and Committee Chair Jody Rathman.

SPRINGFIELD, Va.—

Scouting program reaches 60 families

St. John's UMC has sponsored a Cub Scout pack and a Boy Scout troop for 50 years. It has sponsored a Venturing crew for 15 years.

Ken Davis, the chartered organization representative, says the scouting ministry engages 60 families in the community. "Most of the



Scouts prepare to observe Scout Sunday at St. John's UMC.

families are not members of the church," said Davis, "so the ministry is serving the community."

Ken reports that each year two to three Scouts in the 35-member troop achieve the rank of Eagle.

With 62 years of experience in scouting, including service as a scoutmaster, Ken encourages local churches to begin scouting ministries.

"It costs us virtually nothing except for some help from UM Men and decent oversight by the chartered organization representative," says Ken. "But someone needs to take the lead and help educate churches and especially pastors."

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Volunteers explain importance of scouting and men's ministry

Every May and June, volunteers provide people attending annual conference sessions with information about scouting and ministries with men.

Some conferences allow time during plenary sessions for reports from these leaders. Nearly all conferences provide display areas.



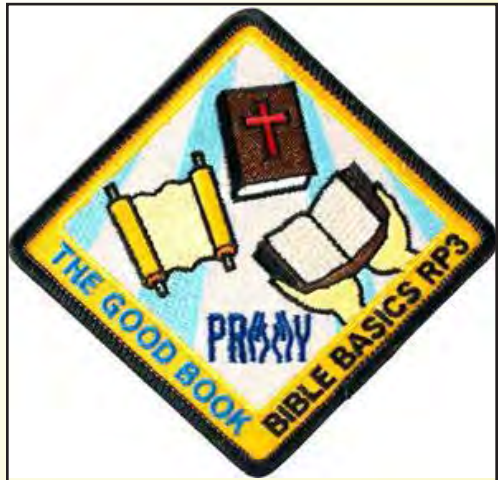
Steve Bays, a scouting ministry specialist, operates a scouting display adjacent to the UM Men table at the Kentucky Annual Conference at the Sloan Convention Center in Bowling Green, Ky.



Scouting and UM Men leaders participate in a Ministry Fair at a June session of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference in Glendale, Ariz. From left: Chuck Moyer , scouting coordinator of the South District; Bishop Robert Hoshibata; Douglas Wright conference scouting coordinator; and David James, conference president of UM Men.

BONNER SPRINGS, Kans.— Cubs receive "Good Book" patches

Following "God and Me" and "God and Family" courses, Cub Scouts affiliated with Bonner Springs UMC wanted to engage in additional PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) classes. Lauren Grant, director of children's ministry, led "The Good Book" studies, a PRAY program for people of all ages. Some parents joined the classes.



Cub Scouts receive "Good Book" patches.

UM Men present devotional books to first responders and military troops

BEAUMONT, Texas

City honors first responders

City residents may have wondered what sort of emergency situation caused police cars, ambulances, EMS vehicles, and fire trucks to be jammed together near the entrance of the 1,800-seat Julie Rogers Auditorium.

In fact, they huddled to mark "Duty Calls: Honoring Our First Responders," a March event at which first responders were given copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community*.

Dan Ramsey told the assembly of the history of the books, and Lieutenant Joe Torrillo, a retired New York firefighter, who miraculously survived the 2001 collapse of both World Trade Towers, was the principal speaker.



New York Firefighter Joe Torrillo tells first responders they were given copies of Strength for Service as a way of saying, "We have your back."

WAVERLY, Tenn.

Church gives 100 devotional books to first responders

Men of First UMC hosted a picnic for first responders, and they presented 100 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to the public servants of Humphreys County.

Tennessee Highway Patrol Colonel Tracy Trott expressed his appreciation for the dedication and sacrifice of the first responders, and the Rev. Thad Collier, pastor of the First UMC, conducted a celebration.



BALTIMORE, Md.

Chaplain distributes devotional books

First Lieutenant Amor Woolsey, chaplain of the 5th Regiment Armory, distributed copies of *Strength for Service to God and Country* to members of the Maryland National Guard.

Amor also serves as pastor of caring ministries for Kent Island UMC in Chester, Md.

The books were provided by World Wide Technology,



a St. Louis-based company, which provided the Nashville-based Strength for Service Corporation with 30,000 copies of the book first published in 1942 by the Methodist Publishing House.

Members of the Maryland National Guard receive SFS books.

GULF SHORES, Ala.

Fire fighters receive devotional books

Members of Gulf Shores UMC presented copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to local fire fighters on May 4, National Firefighters Day.

"The fire fighters received us graciously and we were thankful for the opportunity to thank them for their dedicated service," said Steve Means, president of the church's UM Men.



WAYLAND, Mich.

Church gives devotional books to first responders

Keith Anderson, a scouting ministry specialist at Wayland UMC, raised enough money to provide 26 books for local EMS workers and firefighters.

Keith said he first learned about the devotional books at a national UM Scouter Workshop at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. Since then, he has handed out the original book to new Eagle Scouts and people entering military service.



Keith Anderson presents Robin Nyenhuis, a local EMT official and a member of Wayland UMC, with a copy of Strength for Service to God and Community.

He received the book for first responders at the 2013 National Scout Jamboree in West Virginia and he now uses devotions from the book at the beginning of every meeting of a combined youth group and Venturing crew.

CAZENOVIA, N.Y.
Men give devotional books

George Sanford, president of the Genesee Valley District UM Men of the Upper New York Conference asked men to provide copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to local police officers, fire fighters and other first responders.



John Burrew, a long-time leader of UM Men, presents a book to Joanne Gerbig, a dispatcher for Cazenovia Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas
Books provided on National Day of Prayer

Members of Northwest Hills UMC



Members of the San Antonio Police Department receive Strength for Service books.

presented *Strength for Service* books to police officers and firefighters on the National Day of Prayer.

George Hampton prayed over the books for police and Steven Smith prayed over the books for firefighters.

MANSFIELD, Texas
Church distributes 200 books to first responders

Community of Hope Church purchased and gave out 200 SFS books to first responders in Mansfield. The Rev. Jay Fraze is pastor.



Dan Burdan, police chaplain and victim assistance coordinator, speaks to the Community of Hope congregation about the "Shield a Badge" program in which people agree to pray daily for an officer for a year. The program was begun in 1988 by Bernadette and Peter Henz, parents of three Texas police officers.

HUTCHINSON, Kans.
Chaplain distributes devotional books

Captain Jason Sperling, chaplain of 161st Field Artillery Regiment Military Unit: distributed 25 copies of SFS military books to members of the Kansas Army National Guard.



Chaplain Sperling (left) hands a copy of Strength for Service to a member of the Kansas National Guard. The books were provided by World Wide Technology.

VICKSBURG, Miss.
Men give 300 books

Men from five churches in the UMM Warren Vicksburg Cluster purchased 300 SFS books for first responders. Participating UM churches included Gibson Memorial, Hawkins, Porter's Chapel, Redwood, and Crawford Street.



Members of Porters Chapel UMC unpack SFS books and add labels prior to distribution.

HARRISONBURG, Va.
Spaghetti supper raises funds for devotional books

The Otterbein UM Men sponsored a spaghetti supper to purchase 52 SFS books for the Harrisonburg Police Department.



Tom Murphy, chaplain of the Harrisonburg Police Department (center), presents Lieutenant R. D. Knott with a copy of Strength for Service to God and Community. Bill Pollard, a member of Otterbein UM Men (right), holds a few of the 52 books given to the department.

HOUSTON, Texas
Retired police officer spreads the words

Dan Ramsey, a retired Houston police officer, serves as a one-person distribution center for SFS books. The books were provided by World Wide Technology.

He gave 104 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to Houston-based Emergency Service Chaplains whose members serve as pastoral counselors, crisis-intervention officers, and grief

counselors for 46 agencies in the Houston Area.

The former police officer also presented 90 copies of the books for the military to James Marion a counselor of Camp Hope, a facility that cares for military personnel



From left: Senior Chaplain J.C. Straus, Dan Ramsey, Chaplain Paul Tabor, and Chaplain Tom Reyes



Ramsey, former president of the National Association of Conference Presidents of UM Men, delivered 192 copies of Strength for Service to God and Country, the historic book of daily devotions for military troops, to patients at a Houston hospital that annually cares for more than 7,000 veterans.'



Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center



James Marion reviews a copy of Strength for Service to God and Country, a book he later gave to former military officers under the care of Camp Hope.

Organizer of city-wide celebration named to SFS Board

BEAUMONT, Texas—

The principal architect a city-wide event to honor first responders has been elected a member of the Strength for Service Board of Directors.

Anna Jane Brian (known to her friends as AJ) was elected as the 12th member of the board during a June 28 conference phone call. She joined the board at a September meeting in Nashville.

AJ was first introduced to Strength for Service when her local church distributed copies of *Strength for Service to God and Country* to veterans during Veterans Day in 2015.

A few months later she learned about *Strength for Service to God and Community*, a book which was especially interesting to her as she is the mother of a captain with Beaumont Fire/Rescue Team.

She joined forces with others to plan "Duty Calls," a 2017 event where copies of the book would be given to all first responders in Beaumont.

"As the work continued the event became more than just providing the books, it became an opportunity to recognize and honor each of our first responders," said AJ. "We created and distributed sponsorship packets to area businesses and organizations.


Once the project was shared, the community was eager to be a part of such an opportunity. We located a speaker, an amazing fire fighter from New York City who had not only a story to share, but understood our mission and helped to bring it to fruition."

At the conclusion of the event the group was able to donate \$10,000 to the "100 Club" of southeast Texas.

AJ received her undergraduate degree from East Baptist College in 1971, and her graduate degree from East Texas State University in 1975. Most of 33 year teaching career was spent

teaching kindergarten and music to elementary school children in low socio-economic communities. She retired from teaching in 2008 and became a director of the Claybar Funeral Home.

AJ is married to John Brian, a fellow graduate of East Texas Baptist College. After stint in the U.S. Army, John worked with the Texas Children's Protective and Regulatory Services. After retiring from the state he served as a social worker and grief counselor for a hospice.

The couple have two sons, Russell, a captain with Beaumont Fire/Rescue, and Kevin, a hospice nurse. 



AJ Brian

A PIRATE'S TALE

A sailor was walking along a pier when he saw an old pirate sitting on a bench. At first the sailor supposed him to be an employee of Sea World, taking a lunch break in his costume. But as he drew nearer he saw that the old pirate really had a peg leg, a hook for a hand, and a patch over his eye.

The sailor asked, "Hey mister, how did you lose your leg?"

"Arghhh," the old pirate replied, "a shark on the high seas ate me leg."

The sailor, finding it hard to believe the

pirate, then said, "And I suppose the shark bit your hand off, too, huh?"

"Arghhh," the old pirate replied, "a sword fight with the great grandson of Black Beard the Pirate cut me hand off."

"Yes, of course it did," the sailor answered, totally incredulous, "and I suppose the sword poked your eye out as well?"

"Arghhh," the old pirate replied, "a seagull dropping landed in me eye."

"Wait a minute," the sailor retorted, "you expect me to believe that a seagull dropping put your eye out?"

"Arghhh," the old pirate replied, "it was me first day with the hook!"

What is a **PATH of** **STUDY?**

Often people struggle with what study to use for themselves or their small group. For those who do not have the resources or the time to research how to get started in a study, what to study, or how to go deeper, The Upper Room offers suggestions through paths of study.

These paths of study categorize resources by topics and levels of study to help you choose the best options for you or your group.

Here are the levels:

- ***Knowing Christ***—
for those who desire to have a relationship with Jesus.
- ***Growing in Christ***—
for those who already have a relationship with Jesus and want to build on it.
- ***Serving Christ***—
for those seeking ways to serve God and neighbor.
- ***Sharing Christ***—
meeting people where they are and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.

For details, visit
PathsOfStudy.UpperRoomBooks.com
to find resources to fit your specific needs.

Three precious gems

by Tom Tozer and Bill Black

These are unsettled times. Everywhere you turn people are shaking their heads at the new wave of incivility that has infected our society.

Some attribute the current social high temperature to the rancor of political discourse. Others point to a lack of positive role models. Still others link bad behavior to the pervasiveness of crime linked to poverty, racism and drugs.

At the root of it all

We believe all those things are symptoms of a much larger social ill—the near collapse of the family unit and the breakdown of adult mentoring. We mean teaching our children how to conduct themselves as civilized and respectable human beings. Let's blow the dust off and polish up three old and precious gems—morals, values and ethics.

What's right, what's not?

Morals. Many children (adults, too) need to be reminded that there are definite rights and wrongs. What is unacceptable language? Why is it unacceptable? What is obscene behavior? Why do we consider it obscene? How does inappropriate behavior stick to you like Gorilla Glue and change people's perception of you—or your perception of yourself?

What's it worth?


Values. What does life mean to you? Why is life precious? What would you like your future to be? What does it feel like to be a friend to someone? How do you feel when you see someone who doesn't have a friend? How should we respond when we see someone who is physically or mentally different from us? What is empathy?

What's fair?

Ethics. Is it right to cheat on a test at school? How is cheating unfair to your classmates, to yourself? Is it important always to be first in line? What does it mean to live an honorable life? What does it mean to be fair, to share, to be impartial?

Start a home school

- Teach right from wrong and make it stick.
- Teach forgiveness among your children and be forgiving.
- Teach love as an action and a habit.
- Teach patience and understanding, be slow to anger, and listen.

We've all heard it said that a husband and wife should never go to bed angry at each other. That should be true for the entire family. Estrangement in a family should be no option. If there are wounds, heal them. If you're a young dad, take it from two granddads. The older you get, the more you will regret leaving family wounds untreated. Reintroduce "The Golden Rule." Rebuild the family fortress and make it the keystone of a social revolution. 

A FREE BOOK OR T-SHIRT

Will you help us share our Dads2Dads column with more dads across the country?

E-mail us the name of your local newspaper, the editor, and a contact e-mail or phone #. Send your information to Tomandbill@dads2dadsllc.com.

We will make contact. If that newspaper agrees to run our column—thanks to you—we will send you a copy of our book or a Dads2Dads T-shirt. It's that simple.

UM Men Awards

Deborah Chandler *Daughter joins father in John Wesley Society*

BOULDER, Colo.—

Deborah's father, Joe, died in 1995 at the age of 63.

In 1994, he told his three children to skip giving Christmas, birthday and Father's Day gifts. He asked them, instead, to provide funds to make him a member of the John Wesley Society.

Ever since Joe Chandler's death on Father's Day, 1995, Deborah has been making twice-a-year gifts to the UM Men Foundation to honor her father, a former Marine and the organizer of a UM Men organization in First UMC of Park Ridge, Ill.

In 2016, the foundation inducted Deborah into the John Wesley Society along with her father.

The award was presented to her by Larry Coppock in 2017.

Bruce Pickelheimer *Chief popcorn popper renovates house for seminary students*

XENIA, Ohio—

Men of Faith Community UMC presented a Life Membership Award to

Bruce Pickelheimer for serving as secretary of the UM Men organization, taking



Bruce Pickelheimer helped renovate this house for United church

photos, popping popcorn for church events, and for serving as cashier for the men's garage sale. He also helped renovate a house for United Theological School students and prepared program flyers and bulletins for the church and the Miami Valley District UM Men. He also serves on the executive committee of the District UM Men and maintains their database.

"Whenever you want something done, Bruce is always willing to lend a helping hand," said Bill Brown, president of Faith Community UM Men.

W. Travis Doss *Lay leader officiates basketball games*

AUGUSTA, Ga.—

Men of Burns Memorial UMC presented a Life Membership Award to W. Travis Doss for his service as chair of the Administrative Board, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Board of Trustees. The 52-year member of Burns also served as president of the "Seekers" and "Fellowship" Sunday school classes.

The lay leader, a member of the Nomination and Lay Leadership Committee and head official for the Upward Basketball



Deborah provides a photo of herself as a Blue Bird with her father, Joe Chandler.

league, still found time to assist with UM Men fund-raising activities and service projects, including laying tile in the church sanctuary.

Dennis M. Fairbanks
Curmudgeons induct member into John Wesley Society
 SPRINGFIELD, Va.—

Christ's Curmudgeons, an organization of Messiah UMC, inducted Dennis Fairbanks into the John Wesley Society.



From left: David Stottlemeyer, chair of Christ's Curmudgeons, and Louise B. Mannarino, the woman who nominated Dennis for the award, present a John Wesley plaque to Dennis M. Fairbanks.

The April breakfast at Springfield Golf and Country Club honored Dennis for his “distinguished service to his fellow man and for his commitment to the teachings of the Christian faith.”

Bill Cline
Men honor deceased leader

DAVIN, W.Va.—
UM Men of Claypool UMC presented a posthumous Life Membership Award to Bill “Big Dog” Cline, who died at age 78 in November, 2016.

The men honored Bill as the longest active member of UM Men and a superintendent of the Sunday school, chair of the Board of Trustees, lay leader, a member of the choir, and a certified lay speaker.



Bill Cline

Bill was a 1957 graduate of Man High School where he played football. He was a member of the Old Man High School

Alumni Association, the Man High Quarterback Club, and was a charter member of the Man High School Hall of Fame.

Bill worked for more than 40 years for Island Creek Coal Company and Pittston Coal Company. The former little league coach loved golfing and gardening.

Those left to cherish his memory are his beloved wife of 53 years, Sally Cline; one daughter, Shawn (Terry) Riggins, three grandsons, and two great-grandsons.

Charles Learned
Treasurer generates the funds he sends out

LA GRANGE, Texas—
Men of first UMC presented Charles Learned with a Life Membership Award for his service as treasurer of UM Men.

Charles also coordinates some 200 volunteers who operate barbecue sales during a 2-week annual antique show in Warrenton.



Volunteers assemble a personal energy transportation unit for antique show Brazos Valley Mobility Worldwide.

Barbecue sales support a variety of mission projects including the Brazos Valley Mobility Worldwide. Charles serves on the board of directors of this ministry and every month he leads work crews to build these hand-crank vehicles for those who cannot walk.

The Rev. Dr. Homer E. Morris
Men honor retiring pastor
 DURHAM, N.C.—

UM Men of Aldersgate UMC honored Dr. Morris on June 25, the Sunday prior to his retirement as a UM clergyman.

A graduate of Central Bible College (B.A) and Asbury Theological Seminary (M.Div. and D.Min.), he was ordained deacon in 1977 and elder in 1979. He served churches



The Rev. Dr. Homer Morris.

all over North Carolina prior to his appointment to Aldersgate UMC in 2015.

He is the author of *Utilizing Word Pictures in Narrative Sermons* and *Filling Father's Shoes*, a 1999 book-on-tape.

“Not only has Dr. Morris been a supporter for UM Men over the last 40 years, he has also supported his wife, Debra, and their children: Christy, John and Aaron,” said Brandon Mitchell, president of Aldersgate UM Men.

Judy Cross Lambert

Fifty-three years of treasure storing

ELLOREE, S.C.—

Elloree UMC presented Judy Cross Lambert with the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence.



The Rev. Barry Allen presents Judy Lambert with a Susanna Wesley Award.

The Rev. Barry Allen, pastor of the Elloree Charge, highlighted how Judy, who serves as chair of the Church Council and lay leader, stored up “treasures in heaven” through 53 years of service to Christ and The UMC. Judy also serves as a certified lay servant and a lay member of the South Carolina Annual Conference.

A graduate of Winthrop University and a teacher in Orangeburg and Calhoun County schools. Judy has been married to Warren Lambert for more than 53 years, and they are parents of two adult children, Dr. Elizabeth Lambert and Mrs. Constance Watkins.

George Gilmore

Church honor electrician

SUN CITY, Ariz.—

Men of Lakeview UMC presented George Gilmore with a Life Member-



George and Marian Gilmore proudly display the Life Membership Award following the June presentation at Lakeview UMC.

ship Award for his many contributions to the church and community.

A professional electrician and vice chair of the Board of Trustees, George has provided electrical wiring for a variety of church projects.

Donna Ireland

Men honor

organist and teacher

LEWISVILL, N.C.—

Men of Harmony Grove UMC presented the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence to Donna Ireland for her service as an administrative assistant, church organist, and a teacher of a youth Sunday school class.



Donna proudly holds her Susanna Award.

Donna is also active and holds offices in the local church and district units of UM Women.

The Rev. Richard Vance and Joe Strausbaugh

Two staff members inducted into John Wesley Society

During a John Wesley Society dinner at the National Gathering of UM Men, the UMM Foundation inducted the Rev. Richard Vance, director of men's ministry, and Joe Strausbaugh, charter system administrator, into the John Wesley Society.

In Memoriam

CONYERS, Ga.—

G. Ross Freeman, 90, a leader of men's ministry and a pastor for 52 years, died July 3.

Ross began his ministry at age 17 as a circuit pastor in rural coastal Georgia. He went on to serve for 15 years as director of supervised leadership at Candler School of Theology. He also served for 10 years as executive director of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference Council on Ministries, and seven years as editor of the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, the state-wide UM newspaper. He retired in 1993.



The Rev. Dr. G. Ross Freeman

Larry Price, former president of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of UM Men, delivered the eulogy,

"Ross was a champion for men's ministry," said Larry. "He faithfully used his gifts entrusted to him by God to build dynamic and productive partnerships with Christ's men at the national, jurisdictional, conference, district, and local levels. Ross particularly helped with 15 jurisdictional conferences for UM Men, and he helped set up the website for the jurisdiction."

Ross and Roy Lifsey helped establish the G. Ross Freeman Foundation, an organization formed in 2002 to annually award pastors in the Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Ross was the author of *A Journey Beyond*, a book that traces Ross' 50-year journey from the wrong side of the tracks to positions of leadership in the UMC. In a review of the autobiography, Bishop William R. Cannon, wrote, "Ross said what needed to be said, took a stand on issues, and he

would not compromise his convictions."

Ross is survived by three children, nine grandchildren, 27 great grandchildren and four great-great grandchildren.

WINTER HAVEN, Fla.—

Tony Perry, 68, former vice president of TUM Men in the North Central Jurisdiction and a volunteer for men's ministry, died June 29.

He was born in Ironton, Ohio in 1948, graduated from South Point High School in 1966, and served in the U.S. Air Force from 1969 to 1972.

Tony received a B.S. degree from Ohio University in 1973, and a master's degree from the same school in 1981.

In 2004, after four heart attacks and two bypass surgeries, Tony was forced to give up his position as a school administrator. He and his wife, Margaret, sold their home and traveled around the U.S. to promote men's ministry. Tony told conference presidents of UM Men to "use him and abuse him."

"Throughout all the heart attacks, I died a couple of times on the table. I'm just glad to have this chance to spread Christ's message," said Tony.



Tony Perry in 2007, the day of his induction into the John Wesley Society.



Church's big presence at Boy Scout Jamboree

By Joey Butler

GLEN JEAN, W.Va. (UMNS)—
It wasn't hard to find a UM among the crowd of 30,000 attendees at the 2017 National Scout Jamboree.

The UMC is the second-largest faith group represented at the event, with 3,500 at the quadrennial celebration, held July 19-28 at the Summit-Bechtel Reserve.

West Virginia Area Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball presided over the UM Holy Communion service on July 23. She also received the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence. Larry Coppock, director of scouting ministries for UM Men, was recognized for his 20-year career with the commission. Coppock is retiring in 2018, so this is his last jamboree as director.

UM chaplains

There are 15 UM chaplains on the

85-member pastoral support staff at the jamboree.

During the 10-day event, chaplains play a big role. It's a long time for young people to be away from home, and the same goes for the 1,500 volunteers. Even at such a fun event, it can be a trying experience.

"They use us to diffuse tense situations, maybe arguments, maybe a kid or an adult is dealing with something difficult, homesick or something bad going on at home," said the Rev. Tanya Edwards-Evans, Mississippi Conference. "We're here so people know our faces and are OK coming to us with a problem."

Edwards-Evans is one of only two women pastors on the chaplain staff, so she stays busy as she's often called to counsel girls and women.



UM clergy gather at the Nashville office of the Commission on UM Men during an April event where they received training to be chaplains for the jamboree.



Volunteer chaplains begin their day with a staff meeting at the 2017 National Scout Jamboree. Photo by Mike DuBose, UMNS.

Chaplains serve as peacemakers.

“You’re in a tent with three other people, so you get roommate issues. Volunteers may have issues in their marriages, maybe their spouse didn’t want them to come and there’s tension. It’s just giving people an ear,” said the Rev. Creighton Alexander, Oklahoma Conference.

Alexander said because Scouts have different interests, chaplains move to each program area to pray with them and “tell them we’re here for them.”

The Rev. Terry Tilton, Minnesota Conference, said he stresses how scouting teaches appreciation of the world, “especially nature and our place in it.

Chaplains are on rotation in the medical unit, to minister both to those who are ill

and the staff caring for the injured.

“My whole thing is morale,” Edwards-Evans said. “People are exhausted. I make people smile, and I really try to talk to the volunteers. They pay to be here to do hard work like taking out trash.”

UM exhibit

In the “Duty to God and Country” tent, youth and adults lined up at the UM Men’s booth to learn more about the denomination’s dedication to scouting ministry. Currently, 327,000 youth meet in 7,000 UM churches in the U.S.

Tom McKee, a scouting ministry specialist from Richmond, Va., said working at the booth is “an awesome opportunity we have here to reach out to the kids,” adding that scouting brought him and his family to join a UM church.

Gil Hanke, top executive of United Methodist Men, said the booth had been busy.

“We’ve been active at our booth giving material on our ministries. A lot of people ask how we do what we do and it’s nice to share that good news,” Hanke said.



Rows of tents house Boy Scouts, staff and volunteers at the 2017 National Scout Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in Glen Jean, W.Va. Photo by Mike DuBose, UMNS.



Joey Butler is a multimedia editor/producer for UM Communications.

Scout leader protected U.S. from WMDs

DALE CITY, Va.—

Mark Chipman, a 54-year veteran of scouting, spent 10 years keeping weapons of mass destruction (WMD) out of the hands of terrorists by locking down, monitoring, and destroying weapons and related materials.

Serving as a project manager with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency in Fort Belvoir, Va., from 2006 to 2016, Mark worked with the Military Advisory Group, the Biological Surveillance Group and the Department of Homeland Security to counter WMD capabilities in several nations.

Over the years, Mark has served in many positions with several agencies, but his favorites were serving on teams preparing the 1995 dedication ceremony for the Korean War Memorial in Washington, D.C. and the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Today, Mark is able to spend more time on scouting as he is in the less-stressful post of being a self-employed real estate agent.

Native of Michigan

Mark was brought up in Stockbridge UMC and Westwood UMC in Kalamazoo Mich., and he is a graduate of Western Michigan University (BS '78) and Troy University (MS '88), but he is an avid fan of the University of Michigan Wolverines.

He also began his scouting career in 1963 in Kalamazoo where he earned a God and Country Award and achieved the rank of Eagle in 1970. He also was elected to the Order of the Arrow and hiked the Sangre de Cristo Mountains out of the Philmont Scout Ranch.

Service in several cities

Since leaving Michigan, Mark served for 21 years in the U.S. Army and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel Chemical Officer.

Mark has served scouting and churches in White Hall, Ark. (started a Cub Scout pack and taught a middle school Sunday school class); Anniston, Ala. (played



Mark Chipman.

basketball and softball with the UMM); Lindenhurst, Ill. (chair of Church Board of Trustees and Finance Committee, while teaching a senior high class); Wiesbaden (Germany) Air Base (restarted the scouting program and worked with chapel youth groups); Seoul, Korea (served as merit badge counselor) and Woodbridge, Va. (started a Cub Scout pack and a Boy Scout troop at Old Bridge UMC; he also chaired the Finance Committee and taught senior high Sunday school class).

Scouting posts

It's hard to think of a position in scouting Mark hasn't held.

On the local level, Mark has served as a cubmaster, scoutmaster, chair of pack and troop committees, and counselor for Eagle merit badges.

On the district level, he has served as vice-chair for program, mastered several camporees, and he served five years as the program director of district day camps.

He has served the council as a unit commissioner and as commissioner of the Cub Scout Roundtable. He currently serves as the Occoquan District commissioner of the National Capital Area Council.

Mark earned Wood Badge Beads, God and Service Recognition, Cub Scouter Award, District Award of Merit, Arrowhead Honor, District Committee Key, Commissioner Key, and Silver Beaver.

Mark says he is just starting to get his feet wet as a scouting ministry specialist and he is currently learning who is who in the Alexandria UM District. He has also taken on the lead role in an effort to reestablish the Faith Weaver K-5 Program for Bethel

UMC in Woodbridge, Va.

He was married to the former Janice Miller and is father to Jennifer, a GSA Gold Award winner who lives in Maryland; Patricia, a GSA Silver Award who lives in North Carolina; and Benjamin an Eagle Scout who lives in Virginia. He is currently married to Christina Chipman with four step children; two of whom are Boy Scouts.

Asked about his favorite hobbies, Mark provided no surprise: "Scouting and working in my yard."

We don't know much about his yard, but we do know scouting in the Alexandria District is blooming.



Mark Chipman sits with an ant eater and some of his Cub Scouts following a visit to the Small Mammal House.

Scouting ministry specialist serves four scouting units

WATSONTOWN, Pa.—

Paul Huffman, an Eagle Scout and a scouting ministry specialist, serves as unit commissioner for two Boy Scout troops and two Cub Scout packs.

Paul annually presents awards to outstanding Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts along with Cross and Flame Awards to adult workers with youth at Watsonstown UMC.

Working with Pastor Ryan Kraus, Paul is planning the fall launch of a PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) “God and Life” class at the church.

A career Scout leader, Paul received the God and Country Award in 1969 and achieved the rank of Eagle in 1971. He went on to serve as assistant scoutmaster, and scoutmaster prior to his service as unit commissioner.

Paul attended a 1988 National Camping School and subsequently served as program director of Susquehanna Council Scout Camp

A recipient of bachelor and master degrees from the BSA College of Commissioner

Science, Paul has served as a member of the National Eagle Scout Association since its inception.

Paul has received awards for taking Scouts on hiking and camping trips at Valley Forge, the Gettysburg Battlefield, and the 59-mile Loyalsock Hiking Trail.

Paul and his wife of 37 years have four adult children and seven grandchildren. He is involved in both youth and outreach ministries, including a program to help needy children in the local school district.

Each summer, Paul participates in a “Kids Café,” a ministry at Watsonstown Memorial Park that provides free meals and activities for local children. The ministry operates on the belief that “no child should go without a nutritious meal or some heart-pumping fun.”

“It has been a very rewarding experience to serve as a scouting ministry specialist at Watsonstown UMC,” said Paul. “My service to the scouting movement and furthering its connection to God is very important. I only wish more adults in scouting would look into becoming scouting ministry specialists”



From left: The Rev. Ryan Krauss, pastor of Watsonstown UMC; Charlotte Bryan, chair of Troop 610 Committee; Harry Hefty, chartered organization representative for Troop 610; and Huffman.

Alaska church has presented 114 PRAY awards

ANCHORAGE, Alaska —

St. John UMC has presented a total of 114 PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) Awards since the church began offering the program in 2003.

The Anchorage church surpassed the 100 mark when it presented 15 awards on Boy Scout Sunday in February and three awards on Girl Scout Sunday in March.

The church offers all four PRAY classes (“God and Me” for 1st through 3rd grade; “God and Family” for 4th through 6th grades, “God and Church” for 6th through 8th grades, and “God and Life” for 9th through 12th grades).

John Anderson, has served as a teacher/counselor at St. John for nearly all of the awards.

“I feel called to this ministry because of the time and effort that was given to me by my pastor and scoutmaster when I was young,” said Anderson, who earned a “God

and Country” award as a youth. “Our faith calls us to serve others—to be servant leaders—and, as my life was influenced in positive ways by servant leaders, I want to try to do the same.”

Of the 114 awards, 82 were earned by Boy Scouts, 29 by Girl Scouts (Girl Scouts began participating at St. John in 2011), and three by members of the church’s youth group.

In 2007, the first PRAY “Four Star Award” in the State of Alaska was earned at St. John by Michael Anderson. The “Four Star Award” is awarded to an individual who has earned all four PRAY awards.

In addition to youth religious awards, St. John UMC has conferred 24 adult awards for exceptional service to youth during this same 14-year time period. The church presented 22 UM “Cross and Flame” Awards, one PRAY “God and Service” Award, and one PRAY “Building Faith in Youth” Award.



The 2017 class of Scouts join their families after receiving PRAY awards. The Rev. Andy Bartel, pastor of St. John UMC, is third from left in the fourth row. John Anderson is third from right in the third row.

Scouting Awards

Chase Newsom *Scout provides defibrillator*

ENNIS, Texas—

First UMC presented Chase Newsom with a Good Samaritan Award following a successful Eagle project to provide the church with two defibrillators. He also helped train church members how to use the devices within seconds of a heart attack.



Chase Newsom

Chase received private donations in order to purchase the devices.

“He completed this task with a servant’s heart and with great humility,” said Rodney Rudd, church lay leader.

As president of the youth group, Chase also led community-service projects to provide clothing and meals for people struggling with difficult life issues.

Julio and B.J. Salazar *Church honors siblings*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va.—

Christ UMC presented Julio Salazar and his sister Blanche B.J. Salazar with Good Samaritan Awards

Julio was honored for his Eagle project to build a playground at York Assembly of God Church.

Noting how the high school junior helped with the UM Men Sweetheart Banquet and other activities, Tim Ewing, the scouting coordinator for the York River District, said, “I just wish I had a few more kids as Julio, I just sit back and watch this young man lead the troop or any tasks he is asked to do.”

B.J., a freshman in college and a Silver

Award Girl Scout, was honored for her work with the Girl Scout troop at Chestnut Memorial UMC She helped her brother build the playground, assisted with a “Sweetheart Banquet,” and helped clean up the church grounds.

“She believes in giving back to the community and her church, where she can always be found doing something to help others,” said Ewing.



The Rev. Tom Tipton, pastor of Christ UMC (center), presents Good Samaritan Awards to B. J. and Julio.

Jackson Breaux Munsell *Game programmer serves on mission teams*

LAFAYETTE, La.—

Asbury UMC presented Jackson Breaux Munsell with a Good Samaritan Award following his participation on four annual mission trips to Panama.

He also served on mission teams traveling to Philadelphia Miss.; Quincy, Fla; and San Marcos, Texas.

The president of the Asbury UMC youth group also served on the District and Conference Councils of Youth Ministries.

Graduating first in a high school class of 509 students, Jackson is the founder of Manic Machines, a game-development company. He conceived and engineered Hexaria, a game that has been played 1.8 million times; two additional games have been played 500,000 times.

He spent the summer following graduation as an intern at Roblox, a gaming site for kids and teens in San Mateo, Calif.

Jackson also served as president of the high school Spanish Club and captain of the soccer team.

Hayden Adkins Scout receives PRAY award at national breakfast

ORLANDO, Fla.—

Hayden Adkins, a 7th-grade student at

Sunridge Middle School in Winter Garden, Fla., received the God and



Church Award

during the “Duty to God Breakfast” as part

to the May 24-35 National BSA meeting.

Hayden serves as chaplain’s aide of Troop 210 chartered to First UMC, and he received the award from his father, Virgil Adkins.

Larry Coppock (left) and Greg Godwin (right) congratulate Hayden during the national BSA meeting in Orlando.

Photo by Bob Vogt.

Don Dare Broadcaster serves as emcee at national event

ORLANDO, Fla.—

Don Dare, an Emmy Award-winning reporter for WATE-TV in Knoxville, Tenn., served as the emcee for the “Duty to God Breakfast” at the May 24-25 National BSA meeting.



Don Dare serves as emcee for the “Duty to God Breakfast.”

Photo by Bob Vogt.

A former scoutmaster, cubmaster, and district chairman, Don now serves as president of Southern Region 6, which includes BSA councils in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi.

A recipient of the Silver Antelope and Silver Beaver Awards, Don says his proudest scouting moments were going on a Philmont trip with his son, Brent, and

watching him achieve the rank of Eagle.

Don holds a bachelor’s degree from North Carolina Wesleyan College and a master’s degree in journalism from the University of Georgia.

He served as a U.S. Army officer and broadcaster for the American Forces Radio and TV Network in Vietnam.

He is a lay speaker in the UMC.

Tyler Norris and Marissa Vetter Church honors Boy Scout and Girl Scout

TOLEDO, Ohio—

Epworth UMC presented Good Samaritan Awards to Tyler Norris and Marissa Vetter on Scout Sunday.

Tyler led teams providing 200 service hours at Camp Silver Heights in New Albany, Ind., as part of the requirement to achieve the rank of Eagle. Scouts poured a concrete sidewalk and a pad for a dumpster, built stairs for a cabin, and leveled swing sets.

Marissa served as a mentor to younger Girl Scouts and participated in “Six Super Saturdays of Service.”

Autumn Parker Raises funds and secures books for literacy ministry

HENDERSONVILLE, Tenn.—

Good Shepherd UMC presented Autumn Parker with a Good Samaritan Award for leading a community-drive to provide books and funds for Project Transformation, a literacy-based ministry that serves more than 600 children and youth.

The 18-year-old participates in Room in the Inn, a ministry providing meals and overnight accommodations for homeless people, and she joined a 2016 mission trip to Haiti. She also assists with child care, Communion services, and ushering.

“She has always done more than anyone has asked of her,” says Tiffany Smith, youth minister at Good Shepherd UMC.



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Please share with all of the men of the church.



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