

UMM EN

The magazine of
UNITED METHODIST MEN

SUMMER 2021 ● Volume 24 Number 3



COMBATTING RACISM



letter from the **GENERAL SECRETARY**



GIL HANKE

General Secretary/
Chief Executive Officer

This issue has a wonderful selection of interesting and wonder-filled articles and great examples of men's ministry and scouting ministry at its best. But there are also some articles that might fall into the category of "difficult conversations." While they may be difficult for some, every page and every article are worth reading, and worth praying about.

As you know from my picture, I am a white male. I grew up just a few miles from Washington D.C.

I am of an age that allowed me to experience the passing and implementation of civil rights legislation.

I am also at the age where I have witnessed racism and a patchy path toward justice and equality.

I remember that Thursday night in 1968 when I returned from choir practice at the church. Dad--fighting back tears--said, "Martin Luther King has been murdered."

That event and subsequent riots across the nation triggered many conversations with my family along with discussions with Black, Asian, and Hispanic high school friends.

When I was in college, preparing to begin my student teaching, the white professor in the Education Department had great difficulty telling me that my cooperating teacher was black. "We've never done this before," he said.

Garnell Stamps, the black teacher to whom I was assigned, and I got along famously; I was honored to be mentored by him, even in those seasons of unrest. We had great conversations.

I hope you will be blessed and inspired by this issue to seek out some of those great conversations.



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UMMen is published four times a year:
Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.

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 United Methodist Men. Articles without bylines are written by commission staff.

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REV. RICH PECK
Editor

Painful words

Gil Hanke discussed ways in which we can combat racism with leaders of three African-American Wesleyan denominations (See pages 12 and 13).

A painful memory was offered by one of the participants:

“In the past, all the leaders of white churches would have a meeting and invite the black pastors and make promises they did not keep.”

That statement took me back in time.

When I was serving as a pastor in Providence, R.I., our church engaged in conversations with a neighboring black congregation. We sponsored a joint Good Friday service where seven leaders from our two churches led brief devotions on each of the seven last words of Jesus.

As I recall, the families of the leaders attended and a handful of others. We may have had 15 black worshippers and maybe 30 white congregants. Sadly, there was no second chapter.

I conveniently can't remember why we didn't meet again. Why didn't we plan for additional worship experiences? I wish I could remember.

The leader of one of the African-American denominations told Gil Hanke that things are different now. “There is real follow up. I hope he is right.

There have been far too many promises and false starts and too few long-term experiences.

The sad fact is that Sunday morning remains the most segregated hour of the week. African Americans, Caucasians, Asians, and Hispanics share experiences in offices, work sites, stores, sporting events, and other venues, but there are few UM congregations with such a rich racial tableau.

On the flip side, there are countless stories of UM Men engaging in mission projects where men of all ethnicities work side by side, and our national and regional gatherings include men of all shapes, shades, and sizes.

One of the joys of belonging to UM Men is the high-volume diversity found within our communities. Our national and regional organizations include leaders from a variety of ethnicities with diverse talents and opinions.

Surprisingly we seem able to work and worship together.

Now is the time for us to work together to combat racism in our churches and society.

Read on.

DEEPLY ROOTED PEOPLE OF GOD

The UMC charter for racial justice

In principle, the United States outlawed racial discrimination; but, in practice, little has changed.

Social, economic, and political institutions continue to discriminate, although some institutions have amended their behavior by eliminating obvious discriminatory practices and choosing their language carefully.

The success of some prominent people of color contributes to the erroneous (but widespread) belief

that America is a post-racial society where race is seldom a factor in the opportunities and outcomes in people's lives.

The aim of The UMC is to create an inclusive church in an inclusive society. We, therefore, call upon UM members to perform deeds of love and justice in both the church and community so this aim will become a reality.



Because we believe:

1. That God is the creator of all people and all are God's children in one family;
2. That racism is a rejection of the teachings of Jesus Christ;
3. That racism denies the redemption and reconciliation of Jesus Christ;
4. That racism robs all human beings of their wholeness and is used as a justification for social, economic, environmental, and political exploitation;
5. That we must declare before God and before one another that we have sinned against our sisters and brothers of other races in thought, in word, and in deed;
6. That all women and men are made in God's image and all people are equally valuable in the sight of God;
7. That our strength lies in our racial and cultural diversity and that we must work toward a world in which each person's value is respected and nurtured;
8. That our struggle for justice must be based on new attitudes, new understandings, and new relationships and must be reflected in the laws, policies, structures, and practices of both church and state.

Therefore, as United Methodists we will take the following actions:

1. Eliminate all forms of institutional racism, giving special attention to UM institutions and agencies, beginning with their employment policies, purchasing practices, environmental policies, and availability of services and facilities;
2. Create opportunities in local churches to deal honestly with the existing racist attitudes while providing opportunities for all racial groups and economic classes to come together;
3. Increase efforts to recruit people of all races into the membership of The UMC and provide leadership-development opportunities without discrimination;
4. Establish workshops and seminars in local churches to study, understand, and appreciate the historical and cultural contributions of each race to the church and community;
5. Raise awareness of the continuing needs for equal education, housing, employment, medical care, and environmental justice for all members of the community;
6. Work for the development and implementation of national and international policies to protect the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of all people;
7. Participate in the worldwide struggle for liberation;
8. Employ a nomination and election processes that prioritizes leadership opportunities of people from communities that are disproportionately impacted by racial injustice.
9. Use measures to align our vision for racial justice with actions that accelerate racial equity.

**UNITED
METHODISTS
STAND AGAINST
RACISM**

UMC.org/EndRacism

Edited copy from the 2016 UM Book of Resolutions

Racism is like a volcano waiting to erupt

By Reginald Grant

On May 18, 1980 Mount St Helens erupted, it initiated as a series of phreatic blasts from the summit then escalated as a major explosive eruption. Within hours, the ash covered more than a dozen states and volcanic ash could later be found around the world.

The eruption triggered the largest landslide in the United States, killed 57 people immediately, and caused \$1 billion in damages. ([Here is a short video](#) by the Smithsonian Museum,

On May 17, 1980 I had just returned to Seattle from Miami, where I attended the Miami Dolphins pre-season minicamp for free-agents and rookies. I was with the Ottawa Rough Riders of the Canadian Football League for the remainder of the 1979 season after I was released from the New York Jets.

The following morning, I was awakened by the violent shaking of my bed. None of my family knew a volcano, some 125 miles away, had erupted.

Eruption in Miami

To aid to our disorientation and discomfort, the same morning I heard about the riots in the Miami community of Brownsville which started in Lincoln City, home of the Dolphins training facilities, where I had been the previous day.

The Miami riots were sparked by the acquittal of four white police officers who had brutally beaten a black, handcuffed insurance agent to death with their flashlights. The 75,000 square-foot Norton Tire Warehouse was lit by people so enraged by the failure of the justice system they destroyed their own neighborhoods. The consequences of the damage lasted decades, and in Brownsville, after Arthur McDuffie's killers walked free, the scar of the Norton tire fire remains.

The race riots claimed 18 lives and destroyed \$100 million in property.

Racism is like the Mount St Helens volcano; it simmers out of sight for decades and unexpectedly erupts.



Reginald Grant (MS Ed.) is a member of the General Commission on UM Men. He is a business strategist, author, and speaker.

Forty years later

On May 35, 2020, 40 years and seven days after the Mount St Helens eruption, the George Floyd volcano erupted.

George Floyd's death was the equivalent of Mount St Helens volcanic eruption for racial inequity, racism, and systemic economic inequity. It not only impacted the community in Minnesota, and the United States it quickly circled the globe.

People were appalled and shaken by the video. Oh how technology has impacted our lives. For those from disenfranchised communities, black and brown people it was nothing new. But, for the world at large it was an eye opener, because racism is not something that affects them daily.

Young people were especially surprised and appalled by the actions of the Minnesota police with George Floyd. Peaceful protest, riots and the reaction by governments and police worldwide surprised and inspired young people to call for change.

As expected, racists blamed the victims, but those affected by racism, understood, and expected that reaction.

Reactions

In the days following the George Floyd "volcano," I received calls from friends from a wide spectrum of races and demographics.

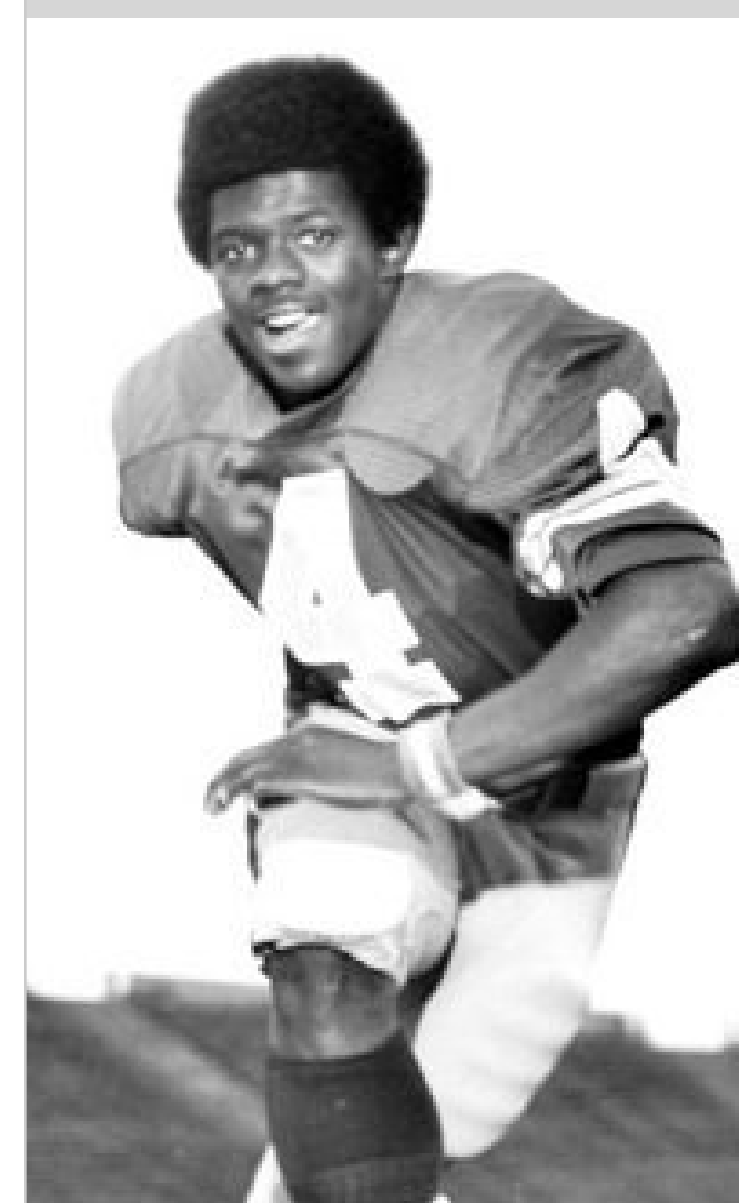
A white college roommate that I have known for 40 years reached out to discuss the incident and the state of American.

A white teammate from my football years at the University of Oregon reached out and we had an open and frank discussion.

A business associate now living in Utah reached out. As a naturalized citizen from Hungary, he was flabbergasted and outraged.

My African American, Asian, and Latino friends were dismayed and stressed, but, of course, they were not surprised.

I have had an exceptional life here in the United States. One of my former students described me as having lived the "American dream" -- a child who was born into poverty, who attended college on a full-athletic scholarship, who was drafted into professional sports and who successfully transitioned into the professional workforce.



REGINALD GRANT, A STAR DEFENSIVE BACK WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON WAS DRAFTED BY THE NEW YORK JETS IN 1978.

Daily struggle with racism

My reality as a black man in America is shaped by the racism I have had to deal with every day of my life.

My parents moved us nearly 3,000 miles from Atlanta, Georgia, to Seattle, Washington, to escape the deeply entrenched racism of the south in the early 1960s. Was there racism in the northwest? Of course, but the opportunities open to us were completely different from Atlanta at that time.

On the train trip from Atlanta to Seattle, my two-year-old brother suddenly became ill. I was six and my sister was one. A white lady on the train had complimented my mother during the trip, saying that "we were such well-mannered kids."

When we arrived in Spokane, Washington, an ambulance whisked my brother off to the hospital.



REGINALD GRANT WAS THE FOURTH OF FIVE DEFENSIVE BACKS DRAFTED BY THE NEW YORK JETS IN 1978. "THE COMPETITION TO MAKE THE JETS TEAM WAS INTENSE," SAID GRANT. "WE HAD 17 DEFENSIVE-BACKS IN CAMP UNDER CONTRACT, FIVE SAFETIES AND TWELVE CORNERBACKS. THE TEAM KEPT THREE SAFETIES AND THREE CORNERBACKS AND TWO OF THREE CORNERS INCLUDING MYSELF WERE ROOKIES.

Kindness comes in all colors

The kind lady from the train offered to let my sister and me stay with her while my mother took my little brother to the hospital. Turned out she was very wealthy, and I slept on silk sheets for the first time. More importantly, I learned the life lesson that people of all colors and backgrounds can be kind and giving. That lesson has stayed with me my entire life, we all have unconscious biases, but I judge people by their character and their ethics.

Essentially, we all want the same things— a safe home, educational opportunities for our children, equal opportunities to compete on our merits, and financial stability.

The simple truth is we are all more alike than we are different.

Get off the sidelines

How can we embrace our diversity and use it to provide a more equitable system for everyone?

Research shows that diversity improves performance with sports teams, business, and organizations. The fact is diversity is America's "superpower;" when (and if) we fully embrace that concept, we will be unstoppable.

If we do not, we are doomed to become just another footnote in history.

Those who stand quietly on the sidelines are just as guilty as the blatant racist for the continued inequity in the systemic racist systems that exist. Simply put, you are either a part of the solution or a part of the problem.

People who claim to be disciples of Jesus have no excuse for inaction.

What are you doing to improve the lives of others?

What are you doing to improve the systems stacked against so many?

How are you putting the teachings of Jesus into action?

The George Floyd volcano focused the spotlight on the inequities and unfairness of our system.

We can and must do better.

Thoughts without actions are nothing.

UNITED METHODISTS STAND AGAINST RACISM

[UMC.org/EndRacism](https://umc.org/EndRacism)

A conversation about hope with my colleagues in men's ministry

By Gil Hanke

On March 8, Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men, hosted a Zoom conference with leaders of men's ministry in African American denominations: Dr. Leo Pinkett of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Pastor Scot Moore of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion and Brother Monroe Miller, president of the Sons of Allen Church of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The four friends set their theological compasses to John and Charles Wesley. They agreed to allow Gil to report on the meeting focused on race relations and where they see hope.

I asked for summary statements of our conversations:

"Trust your heart and get ready for change."

"Retool your mind for a new norm."

"Don't try to be color blind; you never will be able to completely empathize; we do have a different experience. But you can show compassion and take personal responsibility for your current actions."

Hope in younger generation

All three leaders agreed that the younger guys get this.

"We really need to educate our older guys in all our churches. Younger guys are much better at this," said one.

Younger men are different because of their experiences in integrated schools, colleges, workplaces, and communities. That was not the case in the past. "A younger man's relationships are based on character, not race," said one. The more life experiences he has the more diverse are his friends.

A painful memory

One remembered when he was a youth and cleaned up a yard for a white family. As he finished his work, he was offered some food for dinner, but he was asked to eat it in the barn.

We agreed that we would have difficulty taking food from anyone who told us to eat in a barn.

He asked me, "If the roles were reversed, as a young teen, would you have accepted food from a black family who welcomed you to the table?"

"I think I would have, and I think my folks would have been fine with that," I responded.

He said, from his earliest memory everyone was welcome at his table; anybody his son knew, regardless of race or gender. But in their integrated community, he thought blacks are more likely to invite a white person to dinner than the other way around.

What is working

When I asked what is working well in race relations, one recounted that in the past, all the leaders of white churches would have a meeting and invite the black pastors and make promises they did not keep.

"It's different now; there is real follow up."

Another commented that these same efforts have resulted in groups meeting to study books that offer solutions that have worked in other churches and other communities.

"They agree on action steps and hold each other accountable." They put together a "political statement" that gives direction to their combined communities.



THE REV. LEO PINKETT OF THE CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



MONROE MILLER, PRESIDENT OF THE SONS OF ALLEN CHURCH OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



THE REV. SCOT MOORE OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH ZION

New ways to welcome people

One of the church leaders lives in Atlanta where blacks have held political offices since the early 1970s. The inner city has changed and there is a greater mixing of races. He says downtown churches can attract this new community "if the messaging is right."

Because of the pandemic, a sporting event had limited seating, so he invited people to watch the game on large screens at his church, while observing social distancing. Many non-members from near-by homes accepted the invitation. Some of these neighbors returned for church services and some participated in the church's feeding program.

Each one had examples of churches that welcome younger men and women. Most of these faith communities have social action as a significant part of their ministries. It is not just talk—it is real action. "This has to be intentional, and, as a pastor, it is important for me to talk about my own change in spirit."

As we finished our Zoom call, one of the men smiled and said, "If God wanted me to be single minded, I never would have met you three!"

I am thankful to count these great men as Christian brothers.



Gil Hanke is the top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men.

African-American denominations derived from the Wesleyan tradition



The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church

The AME Church was founded in 1787 when Richard Allen, a deacon in the Methodist Episcopal Church, led African Americans out of St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. Allen was consecrated as first bishop in 1816 by a conference of five churches from Philadelphia to Baltimore.

The 3.5 million-member denomination has 20 districts, each with its own bishop: 13 are based in the United States, mostly in the South; seven are based in Africa. The denomination supports a dozen colleges and seminaries.



The African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church

The origins of this church can be traced to discriminatory practices within John Street Methodist Church in New York City. Many black Christians left to form their own churches. The first church founded by the AME Zion Church was built in 1800 in Harlem and is considered the Mother church. One of the founders was William Hamilton, a prominent orator and abolitionist. The 1.2 million-member denomination has churches on all continents except Australia. It has nine episcopal areas in the U.S. and three in Africa.



The Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church

The CME church was organized in 1870 by 41 former slave members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in Jackson, Tenn. The 1.2 million-member denomination is organized into eleven episcopal districts, nine in the United States and two in Africa. Its theological school is Phillips School of Theology, part of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta. The denomination sponsors four colleges in Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Texas. The headquarters and publishing operations are located in Memphis, Tenn.



The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) comes alongside those who suffer from natural or human-caused disasters – be it famine, hurricane, war, flood, fire or other events – to alleviate suffering and to be a source of help and hope.

Your generosity ensures that vulnerable communities around the world will receive support when they need it most.



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umcmission.org/umcor

Pan Methodist Agreement approved in 2012

The African Methodist Episcopal Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, The African Union Methodist Protestant Church, The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, The Union American Methodist Episcopal Church, and The United Methodist Church hereby:

1. recognize in one another the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic faith as it is expressed in the Scriptures, confessed in the Church's historic creeds, and attested to in the common doctrinal standards of the six churches;
2. recognize the authenticity of each other's Baptism and Eucharist, and extend sacramental hospitality to one another's members
3. recognize the validity of our respective ministries, including:
 - a. each other's ordination of persons to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament;
 - b. the authentic diaconal service of deaconesses, home missionaries, and ordained deacons in the six churches; and
 - c. each other's polity and ministries of oversight (including the interpretation of church doctrines, discipline of members, authorization of persons for ordained and lay ministries, and provision for administrative functions);
4. recognize the full interchangeability and reciprocity of all ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, subject to the constitutionally approved invitation for ministry in each other's churches;
5. applaud one another's ecumenical conversations with other church bodies acknowledging that each church remains free to pursue additional full communion agreements as each deems appropriate, so that the world may believe.

PAN-METHODIST CHURCH LEADERS JOIN TOGETHER ON MAY 1 AT THE 2012 UNITED METHODIST GENERAL CONFERENCE IN TAMPA, FLA. FROM LEFT: BISHOP SHARON ZIMMERMAN RADER, THE UMC; BISHOP THOMAS HOYT JR., CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH; THE REV. W. ROBERT JOHNSON III, AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH; AND BISHOP JOHN F. WHITE, AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

UMNS PHOTO BY MIKE DUBOSE.



Leaders of men's ministry from 11 denominations tackle racial issues

By Rick Vance

The Denominational Men's Ministry Leaders, an ecumenical group of leaders in men's and scouting ministries, tackled racial issues during their March 9-10 annual meeting.

Monroe Miller of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and Alex Ruth of the Disciples of Christ Church suggested transformative racial dialogue must begin with honest dialogue, including the courageous telling of personal stories.

Doug Haugen, retired chief staff executive of Lutheran Men in Mission, and Bryan Champion, a leader of men's ministry in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, discussed ways to frame difficult conversations so that, men feel they are heard and valued, even when the conversations reveal different perspectives. They underscored the importance of preparing for the discussion, listening with empathy, and being open to other perspectives.

Technology increase opportunities

Nearly all 11 participants agreed that ministry and ministry opportunities have increased exponentially over the last year. Virtual resources have enabled increasing numbers of men to become involved in prayer, study, and accountability groups. Men who had been resistant in using these new resources are now using the technology regularly.

John Sundquest, chief staff executive of Lutheran



The Rev. Dr. Rick Vance is director of the Center for Men's Ministries at the General Commission on UM Men.



Men in Mission, and Rick Vance, director of the Center for Men' Ministry of the General Commission on UM Men, discussed some of the learning and challenges of this last year. They advised the leaders to develop plans to keep men connected and involved in the future. Both men agreed that the use of technology and face-to-face meetings were both necessary for this to happen.

Participants

This group of leaders of men's and scouting ministry includes representatives from the Lutheran Church, Episcopal Church, Assemblies of God Church, International Pentecostal Holiness Church, United Methodist Church, African Methodist Episcopal Church, African American Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Disciples of Christ Church, and Presbyterian Church USA.

Gil Hanke has served as coordinator of these annual meetings for the last 10 years.

The group will gather in 2022 in Louisville, Ky.

Growing up with institutional racism

By Rich Peck

In 1934, I didn't emerge from the womb with any concept of race.

I was shaped by a society that shielded me from understanding the difficulties experienced by people with darker pigmentations.

No, I did not grow up in the deep South, but I still grew up in the largely segregated city of Denver, Colorado.

No buses

There were no African Americans in my neighborhood, none in my elementary school, none on my Pop-Warner football team, none in my junior high and none in my high school.

This was prior to the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education ruling. There were no school buses. We walked or rode bicycles to schools in our neighborhoods.

In the 1950s, there were five high schools in Denver: North, South, East, West and Manual high schools. White students attended the four high schools designated by city areas and took college prep classes; minority students attended Manual High School where they learned manual arts. Even today, Manual High School only has 5 percent Caucasians.

While I was not specifically taught that African-Americans weren't as smart as Anglo-Americans, I am sure, the city structure had an effect on me.

While I can't remember being taught to fear African Americans, not growing up next to people of color and not attending school with them, made me leery.

No television, cell phones or Internet

I grew up without television, without cell phones and without the Internet. I was unaware of all the George Floyd incidents that I'm sure were occurring in Denver and across the nation.

It wasn't until I attended college that I had the opportunity to have a few Black friends who helped me understand they were just as smart (and often smarter), but because of institutional racism, they did not have the same advantages as I did.

Sadly, when I entered seminary, I found the Methodist Church had a structure similar to my city high schools.

The Manual High School of Methodism

When the north and south branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church reunited in 1939, African Americans were assigned to the [Central Jurisdiction](#), a segregated structure similar to Manual High School.

That structure persisted until the 1968 merger that formed the current United Methodist Church.

Institutional racism in New England

Following my graduation from seminary, I moved to New England where I again found institutional racism.

Following the Supreme Court ruling that discontinued the belief that separate meant equal, Providence, R.I., belatedly initiated a plan to integrate the schools.

However, the 1962 plan called for residents in South Providence, a predominately African-American community, to be bused to Caucasian communities, but schools in South Providence were all to be closed.

For the first time, I made a timid response to a call for racial equality. The African-American community demanded that some of their neighborhood schools should be renovated and some White students should be bused into their community.

In order for their request to be heard, Black educators established a [Freedom School](#) at Washington Park Methodist Church. While I was serving as a chaplain at Brown University and had no training as a junior high teacher, I volunteered to serve as a math teacher.

I was given a class room, math books, and some 30 African American junior high students.

After the first few days, one of the students raised his hands and asked, "Are you really an arithmetic teacher?" I had to admit that I was not, but I was doing the best that I could.

In the end, the Providence School Board reversed its position and renovated two schools in South Providence.

Sitting on the sidelines

Fifty-eight years later I lament that I am sitting on the sidelines while people of all ages and colors are demonstrating against racial injustice. I know that most police officers are people who are trying their best to treat all people fairly, but I also know these officers are influenced by decades of institutional racist policies and practices.

I hope and pray the large number of protesters will help us take another step toward creating a community with justice for all.

SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL, DENVER



Plan for a Men's Ministry Sunday

By Dr. Rick Vance

I am frequently asked to suggest ways for a church to raise interest in men's ministry.

One of the best ways is to celebrate a Men's Ministry Sunday.

The 2016 Book of Discipline (¶1264.4) authorizes a Men's Ministry Sunday to be celebrated on any Sunday determined by the local church. Its purpose is to "celebrate the men's ministry within and beyond the local church. This includes organized units of United Methodist Men; male Emmaus reunion communities; work teams; prayer groups; Bible studies; study and enrichment groups; and other places and organizations where men of The United Methodist Church join together for fellowship, nurture, spiritual development, witness, and outreach."

There is a dual purpose for this important event:

1. This special Sunday provides a sacred time and space to celebrate the unique ministries of the men in the church and community.
2. The day highlights all of the opportunities for ministry, small group and activities for men in the church and community.

The essential elements related to the event are prayer, passion, and a plan.

Pray

1. Pray for the congregation to express its enthusiasm for the positive contributions of men as role models, mentors, fathers, husbands, and witnesses.
2. Pray that the congregation will invite others to be part of the celebration.
3. Pray that the congregation will have a spirit of hospitality to non-members.
4. Pray that additional men will become engaged in some aspect of this ministry as a result of this celebration.

Passion

1. Engage all the men of the church in the planning of the event.
2. Include men of all ages, ethnicities, and interests.
3. Make sure you include input from young men.

Plan

1. Consider purchasing (\$3) a [Men's Ministry Sunday planning booklet](#)
2. Speak with your pastor about a possible date for a Men's Ministry Sunday. Seek his or her suggestions for leaders and resources,
3. Select at least two men to serve as coordinators of the event
4. Form a design team that will meet at least two months before the event.

5. Prepare announcements for the church bulletin, newsletter, and local radio and television stations.
6. Involve youth in making posters.
7. Create a video featuring photos of men's ministry conducted at your local church during the past year.
8. Order shirts, caps, videos, or gift items from the [UM Men store](#)
9. Honor your pastor or a leader of UM Men with an [award](#).
10. Prepare a display board. Include photos of activities in which your men, youth and boys have been involved in your local church and community.

- A short-term study on a difficult issue
 - Anger, loneliness, guilt, sadness, shame.
 - Fathers (being one, having one).
 - Health and sexuality
 - Abuse (experienced, discovered)
 - Relationships
 - Love
 - Betrayal
 - Society (roles, problems)
 - Spiritual integrity
 - Sponsor a prayer service

There are a variety of prayer foci that may be used. Pray for your community, pray for frontline workers, pray for unity, and pray to dismantle racism. The commission has videos of some of these services [here](#).

A litany for a service to combat racism may be found on the pages following this article.

Related events

Your Men's Ministry Sunday may include additional events:

- A father-son breakfast or dinner.
- Work on a Habitat for Humanity house.
- A potato drop or gleaning at a local farm with the Society of St. Andrew.

Importance of the day

These special events not only recognize and celebrate men's ministry in your community, they also serve as ways to invite others to participate in these ministries.

MEN OF ST. PAUL UMC IN SAN ANTONIO CELEBRATE MEN'S DAY. THE MEN RAISE FUNDS BY PROVIDING PARKING SPACES IN THE CHURCH LOT FOR EVENTS AT THE NEARBY ALAMODOME. THEY ALSO SPONSOR QUARTERLY SUNDAY BREAKFAST TO PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES. SOME 25 MEN ARE EMS MEMBERS.



The Rev. Dr. Rick Vance is director of the Center for Men's Ministries at the General Commission on UM Men.

A prayer service to combat racism

By Sam McGlothlin and Paula Smith

We raise our hands and we remember Mike Brown who said, “Don’t shoot,” whose innocent cries were unjustly ignored, and we remember all whose bodies are assumed guilty in life and in death.

God in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We touch our necks and we remember Eric Garner who said, “I can’t breathe,” and we remember all those who have had the breath of life choked out of them.

God in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We touch our backs and we remember Freddie Gray, whose spine was severed by police brutality, who asked for medical help and received none, and we remember all who have died at the hands of those who are meant to protect.

God in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We hold our hands at the height of a child and we remember Tamir Rice, who as a 12 year old was not allowed to play, and we remember the many unnamed and unarmed children who have died at the hands of adults who refuse to confront their prejudice.

God in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We lay on the ground with our hands behind our backs and remember Sandra Bland who asked 14 times why she was being arrested. We confess that

systems of white supremacy assert power over black bodies with no regard for explanations.

God in your mercy, hear our prayer.

As we remain on the ground, we remember Breonna Taylor who was killed while she was sleeping in her own home, and we grieve that we have been asleep to this injustice in America for so long.

God in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We stand up and look down at our shoes and we remember Ahmaud Arbery, who was hunted down and killed by white men espousing vigilante justice while jogging in his neighborhood. We remember all who cannot simply walk, run, or live without fear because of the color of their skin.

God in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We fall to one knee and remember George Floyd, who was killed in broad daylight, who said “I can’t breathe”, who called for his mama, who pleaded for his life. We remember the horror and terror black men and women have endured at the hands of white people. And now we hold silence for 8 mins to honor his life, not his oppressor.

Silence.

God in your mercy, hear our prayer.



Rev. Sam McGlothlin is pastor of Belle Meade UMC in Nashville.



Rev. Dr. Paula Smith is pastor of Gordon Memorial UMC in Nashville.



THE REV. PAULA SMITH (SECOND FROM LEFT) STEADIES A CART WHILE VOLUNTEERS TIM MORGAN (IN GREEN T-SHIRT) AND RICHARD WILSON LOAD BOX LUNCHES FOR DISTRIBUTION THROUGH THE HANDS OF HOPE FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM AT GORDON MEMORIAL UMC IN NASHVILLE. AT LEFT IS VOLUNTEER MATTHEW JOB, 80, WHO DRIVES THE CHURCH VAN FOR THE PROGRAM. PHOTO BY MIKE DUBOSE, UM NEWS.

You’re invited to stand.

We cover our mouths and apologize for all the times we fell silent. We confess to you all the times we did not speak up when we should have.

God in your mercy, forgive us.

We uncover our mouths and we ask for courage to speak. We pray to be like Jeremiah, who said, “God’s word is like a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.” We pray to be prophets of your freedom.

God in your power, give us strength.

We cup our ears and we commit to listening to the lament of all bodies put on display, used as a warning, and made to carry their own execution tools.

God in your power, give us strength.

We touch our feet and we commit ourselves to walking with one another; to marching; to teaching; to preaching; to healing; to encouraging; to empowering.

God in your power, give us strength.

We lock eyes with one another and we affirm one another’s goodness. We see one another’s value; we appreciate one another’s gifts.

God in your power, give us strength.

We reach our arms out to one another and we commit ourselves yet again to being one with each other and one in the world. One flesh, one spirit, one body—God’s body.

God in your power, give us strength.

We raise our voices and we say together: “We will speak up against racism.”

We will speak up against racism.

We will act against racism.

We will act against racism.

We will seek God’s justice and peace.

We will seek God’s justice and peace.

God in your power, give us strength.

Depart in silence.

Gil Hanke announces his retirement

Gil Hanke, general secretary of the General Commission on United Methodist Men, announced April 1, that he will retire before the end of the year.

Having served as top staff executive of the Nashville-based ministry since 2010. Hanke is subject to a ruling by the 1988 General Conference that limits elected general program staff to a 12-year term of office.

A search team including Mississippi Area Bishop James Swanson, president of the commission, and Arkansas Area Bishop Gary Mueller, vice president of the commission, will begin a national search sometime after Easter.

Bishop Swanson's statement

"I have thoroughly enjoyed serving these eight years alongside Gil Hanke in my role as the president of the General Commission of United Methodist Men," said Bishop Swanson. "Gil's strong personal Christian witness, his deep devotion to men developing an on-growing relationship with Jesus Christ has fueled our ministry with and for men across the globe. In addition, his personal commitment to engage in Wesley Class meetings have led men to recommit themselves to Christ and to the process of sanctification. In developing these initiatives and in pushing us to become financially stable, leading us to develop real relationships with our Wesleyan brothers (AME, AMEZ, CME, Nazarene, Free Methodists) and other Christian Men's groups have propelled us into a new and exciting era. Gil will

be missed by me personally and by men's ministry across the globe."

Bishop Mueller's statement

Bishop Mueller described Gil as "a faithful leader who is deeply committed to helping men grow in their relationship with Christ. His passion for men's ministry, his work in starting covenant discipleship groups throughout the connection and his vision

for the future of men's ministry in a rapidly changing world will have a lasting impact far beyond his tenure as general secretary."

The beginning

Gil was born July 25, 1950, in Arlington, Va., and he is a 1972 graduate of Lynchburg College (now the University of

Lynchburg) with a bachelor's degree in theater, speech and secondary education.

Faced with the draft following his college graduation, Gil enlisted in the U.S. Army where he did basic training at Ft. Jackson, S.C., and was later stationed at the Ft. Sam Houston, Texas where he trained Army medics serving in psychiatric and drug and alcohol units at the Academy of Health Services.

In 1973 he married Sherril Lyn Gibbin, a former classmate at Lynchburg College.

He was discharged from the Army with a Meritorious Service Medal in 1975.



GIL HANKE LEADS A CLASS MEETING. PHOTO BY KATHLEEN BERRY, UM COMMUNICATIONS

He then enrolled in the Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University) and received a master's degree in speech/language pathology (SLP) in December 1977.

He began work at Brenham State School in January 1978 as a SLP, and then transferred to Mexia State School, to serve as the director of rehabilitation therapies.

In 1981, Gil and Sherril moved to Nacogdoches, Texas, where he formed a private practice in SLP. Son Carl was born in 1985.

Service in the Texas Conference

While in Nacogdoches, Gil served as the president of Perritte Memorial Church UM Men. He was soon elected district president of UM Men and then president of Texas Conference UM Men.

Gil was elected as a delegate to the South Central Jurisdictional Conference in 1992, and in 1996 he was elected as a delegate to General Conference meeting in Denver.

GIL HANKE SPEAKS ABOUT SCOUTING MINISTRIES DURING THE 2012 GENERAL CONFERENCE IN TAMPA, FLA.



At that Denver meeting, he served on the Discipleship Legislative Committee, one of 12 committees that reviewed proposals from individuals, churches and agencies. His committee received a proposal from the National Association of Conference Presidents (NACP) of UM Men to create the General Commission on UM Men. The committee asked Gil, a conference president, to present plans for the proposed commission to the plenary session. Delegates approved the proposal and the Nashville-based agency was established in 1997.

Texas Conference continued to elect Gil as a General Conference delegate; he was a delegate to the 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016 sessions, and the called session in 2019.

Service with the denomination

In 2000, Gil was elected to a four-year term as NACP president, a position which placed him on the General Commission on UM Men.

In 2004, he was elected president of the commission; that position placed him on the UM Connectional Table, a newly formed international group that included presidents and top executives of all general agencies. Gil was one of very small group of lay persons to hold the position of agency president. Most of the top agency officers were (and are) bishops.

Elected top staff executive

In early 2009, Gil qualified as a men's ministry specialist and in December he was elected general secretary of the commission; he began work the following February.

During his time as president, Gil worked with the YWCA of Middle Tennessee to create a study designed to eliminate violence against women. YWCA presented him with their "Community Leader of the Year Award" in 2019.

He coordinated National Gatherings of UM Men in 2013 and 2017. It was at the 2017 conference at St. Luke's UMC in Indianapolis, that Dr. Kevin Watson introduced The Class Meeting, a small group accountability group formed by John Wesley. Dr. Watson was selected at Gil's suggestion, after hearing him speak at a Council of Bishops meeting. Gil soon became a champion of these small groups, meeting virtually. He now juggles as many as four of these Zoom meetings at a time. Thanks to Gil, thousands of UM Men now participate in these spiritually enriching groups.

Leader of several ministries

Gil coordinates the ministry of the commission with 20 affiliate organizations including the Society of St. Andrew, a Virginia-based ministry that provides tons of food to hungry people, and Strength for Service, an organization formed by the commission to republish *Strength for Service to God and Country*, a 1942 book of daily devotions published for members of the Armed Services in World War II. Gil worked with Larry Coppock to publish *Strength for Service to God and Community*, a similar book of daily devotions for fire fighters, police officers and other first responders.

We aren't sure how Gil had the time, but he served as convener of the General Secretary's Table consisting of all the top executives of the UM general agencies, the coordinator of a national group of leaders of men's ministry from 12 denominations, and the host of prayer sessions with leaders of African-American denominations. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Society of St. Andrew, Disciple Outreach Bible Ministries, and the founder and coordinator of Hope of Hearing.



GIL HANKE TESTS THE HEARING OF A HAITIAN.

Gil still found time to make annual trips to Haiti to test and provide hearing aids for children. He made his first trip in 1989, and he went there nearly every year prior to the pandemic. He plans to resume the practice in retirement.

The future

Gil plans to stay in Nashville where he is a member of Antioch UMC, and a leader of scouting ministries for that congregation.

In addition to making annual trips to Haiti, you may be certain that he and Sher will be making frequent trips to Oklahoma City to see their granddaughter Gentry, daughter-in-law Kalena, and son Carl who serves as director of support services for the Boy Scouts of America.

Since he retains his credentials, he may do some fill-in work as a speech language pathologist.

We wouldn't be surprised if the new general secretary makes frequent calls to Antioch.

Bishop Mueller may have spoken for the commission staff, and leaders of UM Men around the world:

"I will miss Gil, but also know that God's got a new mission for him."



Community Picnic

A church had a picnic and invited the entire community to come. The pastor placed a basket full of apples on one end of a table with a sign saying, "Take only one apple please - Remember that God is watching."

On the other end of the table was a plate of cookies where one of the children had placed a sign saying, "Take all the cookies you want -- God is watching the apples."



Secret Service

William was coming out of church on Easter Sunday. The preacher thanked him for his once-a-year visit, but suggested he should join the Army of the Lord. "I'm already a member," said William. "Well, how come I only see you on Easter?" asked the preacher. "I'm in the secret service," replied William.

YOU NEED A PILOT

Terry asked her Sunday school class to draw pictures of their favorite Bible stories.

Kyle drew four people on an airplane and said that was the flight to Egypt.

Terry said, "I understand Jesus, Mary and Joseph are on the plane. Who is the fourth person?"

"That's Pontius, the pilot," said Kyle.



The Turkey

A man stopped by the local church to talk to the pastor. He told the pastor "I stole a turkey this morning on my way home from work". The pastor told him "That was a terrible thing to do". The man replied "Yes, I know that now, do you want it?" The pastor replied "No, take it back and give it to the man that you stole it from." The man replied "I tried to give it back but he refused it". The pastor told him "In that case you keep the turkey." The man thanked the pastor and went on his way.

When the pastor arrived home later that day, he discovered that his turkey had been stolen!



Time to tell the Good News, says Bishop Swanson

Following a catalog of ways in which church members are complaining about actions in the United Methodist Church, Mississippi Bishop James Swanson told some 30 leaders of Scouting and men's ministry on a May 6 Zoom call, that like the Bad News Bears we've become the Bad News Church.

He noted that some people just want to get out of Dodge and leave the denomination.

"I wish we could just get on with telling the Good News," said the bishop who serves as president of the General Commission on United Methodist Men.

Instead of focusing on what's wrong in the denomination, the bishop suggested we focus on actions in local churches and units of United Methodist Men where "so many good things are going on."

Arkansas Bishop Gary Mueller, vice-president of the commission, supported Bishop Swanson's appeal to focus on all the good things going on in the denomination and making disciples. He urged commission members to remember three things: 1) God is still God; 2) Jesus is still Lord; and 3) The Holy Spirit is still at work.

IN OTHER BUSINESS, THE GROUP:

- [Supported an inter-agency effort to reduce greenhouse gasses.](#)
- Thanked six board members leaving the commission following eight years of service.
- Welcomed six new board members.
- Learned about a July 11-17 meeting of [United Methodist Scout leaders at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.](#)
- Learned of plans for an on-line August 28 National Gathering of United Methodist Men; that meeting will focus on dismantling racism and underscoring the importance of evangelism
- Learned that, because of reduced World Service Funds, the commission will have to raise 85 percent of its operating budget and set oct 18 as Give Day, an opportunity to support men's ministry and Scouting ministry. In previous years, the commission raised 75 percent of its budget.
- Learned Bishop Swanson, president of the commission since 2012, will continue as a member of the commission until General Conference in 2022.
- [Approved links with 22 organizations with various levels of cooperation.](#)

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UM Men approve links with 22 organizations

During a May 6 Zoom meeting, the General Commission on UM Men, approved four organizations as affiliate partners, eight organizations as affiliates, and 10 as endorsed organizations.

Affiliate partners are organizations within or attached to the commission with an exchange of funds.

Affiliates have close relationships with the commission, but no funds are exchanged.

Endorsed organizations are ministries and missions the commission recommends to local churches and other UM or ecumenical groups.

AFFILIATE PARTNERS

[National Association of Conference Presidents of UM Men](#)

Conference presidents train leaders of UM Men at all levels.

[Strength for Service](#)

Non-denominational group provides daily devotions for military personnel and first responders.

[The Society of St. Andrew](#)

Volunteers glean farm fields and bag fruit for hungry families.

[United Methodist Men Foundation](#)

Volunteers raise funds for Scouting ministries and men's ministries.

AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

[Boy Scouts of America](#)

Leaders provide training and advancement experiences for young people.

[Big Brothers Big Sisters](#)

UM Men mentor boys, especially those whose parents are incarcerated.

[Girl Scouts of the USA](#)

Volunteers provide scouting experiences for girls and young women.

[Live Bold Ministries](#)

An on-line ministry strengthens the faith of men around the world.

[Mobility Worldwide](#)

Men build hand-crank vehicles for handicapped people in Third World countries.

[Programs of Religious Activities with Youth](#)

Christian education for young people in four age groups.

[The Upper Room Prayer Center](#)

Opportunities for people to post prayers on website.

[Wesley Men](#)

Men provide Advent and Lenten guides and feed the hungry.

ENDORSED ORGANIZATIONS

[Denominational Men's Ministry Leadership](#)

An ecumenical group of leaders of men's ministry share ways to reach men.

[The Hope for Hearing](#)

Children in Haiti receive hearing aids.

[Lead Like Jesus](#)

People learn leadership techniques employed by Jesus.

[Living Waters for the World](#)

A high-tech system changes disease-causing water into clean drinking water.

[Love Packages](#)

People in Third World nations receive free Christian reading materials.

[Man in the Mirror](#)

Men learn ways to reach the unchurched.

[Rise against Hunger](#)

Long-lasting packages of dried food provide emergency meals to hungry people.

[Servants at Work](#)

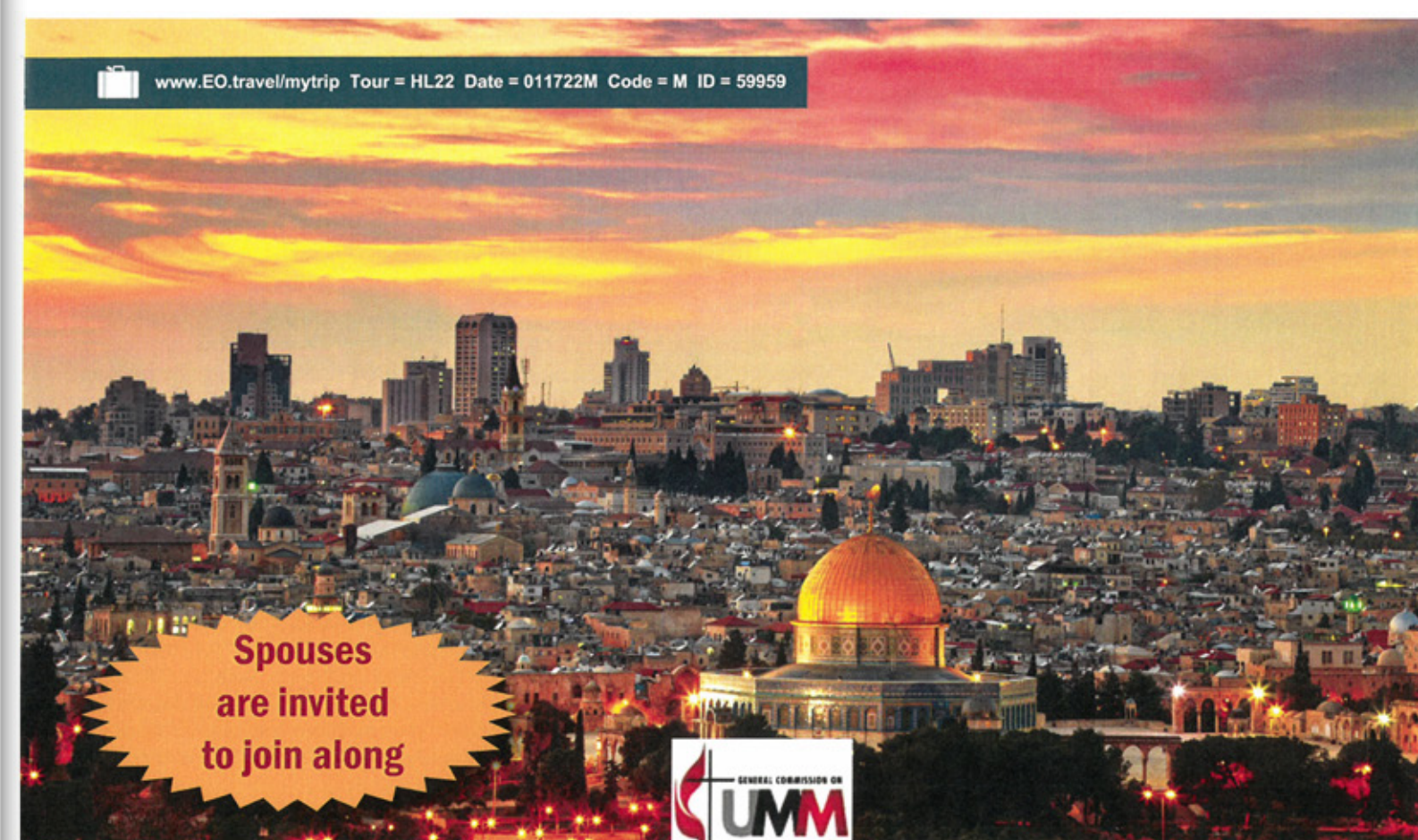
Plans help UM Men build handicap ramps.

[The Upper Room Emmaus Ministries](#)

A weekend spiritual experience changes lives.

[Wesleyan Building Brothers](#)

Men improve relationships with their families and others.



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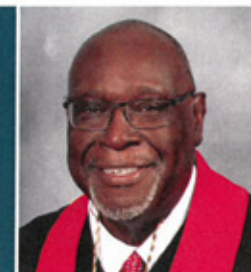
Spouses are invited to join along



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America's greatest hidden treasure

By Mark Lubbock

Whenever treasure is mentioned, people instantly think of imaginative ways to use it to improve their lives. Be it selfish wants or earnest needs, a treasure is envisioned as the answer to obtain what they desire.

However, if the treasure is hidden it is of no benefit to anyone.

Locating the treasure

What would you say if I told you that sitting right in front of me, you, the church and communities is a vast, unbelievably valuable treasure just waiting to be found? This treasure can deliver a much-needed course correction for the entire nation. Moreover, it contains life-transforming potential for all who employ this treasure.

The treasure of which I speak of is **wisdom**.

Born out of a lifetime of personal experience, wisdom is the culmination of what works and what fails. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines wisdom as:

1. the ability to discern inner qualities and relationships : **INSIGHT**
 - a: good sense : **JUDGMENT**
 - b: generally accepted belief
 - c: accumulated philosophical or scientific learning : **KNOWLEDGE**
2. a wise attitude, belief, or course of action
3. the teachings of the ancient wise men

The NRSV Bible has 342 entries regarding wisdom. In fact, the entire suite of Proverbs is called "Wisdom Writings," offering Godly do-and-don't advice.

Where exactly then can this wisdom be found?

In you!

If you doubt me, ask yourself, "Have I ever questioned the actions of a younger man when I knew of a far better way to respond?"

Maybe you didn't think these exact words, but you know what I am talking about. Watching someone do things in a way that you know does not work, you instantly think of advice you'd like to give to the young man.

Share the treasure

The truth is you have a lifetime of experience that should be shared.

Personal interests, career experience, hobbies, talents, skills all come into play here.

An individual may have great potential, but that potential may not be realized if there is no one to mentor him, and the person does not know how to develop it.

It takes a gemologist to see the possibilities in an uncut diamond, and if it is cut incorrectly, a potential thousand-dollar gem may become worthless.

Young men want to succeed, but many of them lack the necessary wisdom and knowledge to achieve success.

Answers to questions regarding marriage, career, child-rearing, self-worth, and purpose elude younger men. They are hungry for an experienced man to share insights with them.

How to mentor?

You might reasonably state, "I don't know how to mentor anyone, and I am not qualified for this."

Mentorship does not require the ability to quote chapter and verse of the Bible. Instead it just asks that you take an interest in a man and be willing to share parts of your life.

I've been asked, "Where do I find men in need of mentoring? No one is knocking on my door asking me for my wisdom."

Like all good discipling processes, this approach does require a little preparation. In the past this process was a natural outcome of the way we once lived. Grandparents used to live nearby and actively engaged with their families.

While mom and dad were still building their lives, grandparents had both the time and wisdom to share with grandkids. Many of you have great memories of times spent with grandparents and likely remember specific things they taught you.

Grandparents no longer live nearby to offer such mentorships.

Who to mentor?

I offer you a new approach--one that will lead you through a process of identifying interested young men and how to connect with them. You'll learn how to share your life's experience and wisdom.

Throughout the years I've taught men about a Cord-of-Three-Strands, a principle which states that you must have a 1) Paul; 2) Barnabas, and 3) Timothy in your spiritual life -- 1) a mentor with whom you meet; 2) a peer with whom you do Christian life; and 3) a young man that you mentor.

Let's concentrate on the man you mentor.

What has worked for me over the years is to approach men in church and even a coffee shop. I introduce myself if we're meeting for the first time and I ask if he would like to get together for a meal or coffee.

It starts off just that simply. Sometimes they beg off, but more often the man will agree to meet. When we get together, I have a couple basic topics that I bring up to encourage the young man to share his interests and life.

Listen

The purpose is not to teach, but first to listen.

I don't come with an agenda telling the man what to do, I meet him where he is at that moment.

Jesus met Zacchaeus while he was a sinful tax collector sitting high up in a tree. Then Jesus went to his home to build a relationship.



MARK LUBBOCK, A LOUISIANA-BASED STAFF MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON UM MEN, AND CLIFF HURST, A MEMBER OF CLEAR CREEK UMC IN CLINTON, LA., MEET FOR WEEKLY LUNCHES. "ON OCCASION I MAY SHARE SOMETHING," SAYS LUBBOCK, "BUT JUST AS OFTEN I ENCOURAGE CLIFF AS HE WORKS OUT HIS OWN ANSWERS. I'M NOT THERE TO TELL HIM WHAT TO DO, BUT TO HELP HIM FIND HIS OWN WAY." BOTH MEN PARTICIPATE IN ACCOUNTABILITY GROUPS AND BIBLE STUDY.

Likewise, we meet men where they are and learn about their lives. As we get to know one another, trust will slowly build. Trust absolutely must be in place before wisdom can be received.

Building that relationship means regular, short meetings or times together. It could be over coffee, but just as easily while repairing a car, golfing, or hiking. When you prove to be a good listener, and not one who responds with a quick fix to everything, the man will begin to trust and open up.

You will find that by listening you've earned the privilege of sharing bits of your life that might relate to the young man's life.

Mentoring is encouragement

Don't tell him what to do -- that is for his coach. Mentoring is encouraging the other to work through his life. Sharing your personal experience should be neither pushy nor offensive. Your wisdom and experience won't always land, but often you'll find that it does connect.

For many years I've reached out to men in this manner. I've constantly had one to three men with whom I meet weekly. Usually, after 18-36 months, they are ready to move on and another will take their place. In every instance we've formed a life-long relationship and stay in contact.

The last thing any of us want to do is to take our experience (and our wisdom) to the grave. You and I have much to share, and there is a huge audience eager to receive. Give this a try more than once or twice, and you will be wonderfully surprised at what develops.

Expand and focus your ministry

By Ronald Sloan

Although I have been active in churches since childhood, only recently, following my retirement from full-time employment, have I been asked to serve in a voluntary leadership post at my small-member UMC in Yorktown, Ind.

Some of us are late bloomers. In my case, it is almost last second.

I wanted to do justice to this opportunity so I read some of the literature about ministry—no time to waste. This was helpful and I could see the prospect of future harvests with God providing the increase.

Ministry should be broader and more focused

As I meditated upon relevant Scriptures and my lay-non-leadership involvement in church, I became convinced our view of ministry should be broader than the literature presents and more focused.

Many biblical texts direct that ministries should involve all believers, regardless of their spiritual gifts, gender, family status, or life stage.

Matthew 25:31-46 states all will be evaluated before the throne of Jesus. Those whose faith is expressed by giving food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, hospitality to the stranger, clothes to the naked, and comfort to the prisoner and sick will inherit the Kingdom.”

Focus on orphans and widows

The Book of James calls for special interaction with orphans and widows. Given the graying of our churches today, this should be a priority.

The [Center for Disease Control](#) states that “loneliness and social isolation in older adults are serious public health risks affecting a significant number of people in the United States and putting them at risk for dementia and other serious medical conditions.”

In our current, relatively unprecedented context, ministry to widows and orphans has been powerfully, and I believe correctly, broadened by [Roland Warren of Care Net](#) to include coming alongside single mothers and their children and single women with unplanned pregnancies. He calls it being “pro abundant life.”

Ministry of the elderly

All who are able yet considered older, such as active members of retirement age, should have a mentoring ministry to those who are younger (Titus 2:2-6). The Titus text seems to imply the mentoring should be gender specific: men to men and women to women.

[Ed Stetzer](#), dean at Wheaton College, found unchurched younger adults need older mentors to provide feedback about life issues; they need to be partners in an authentic relationship. In fact, all the ministry literature I reviewed stressed the need for intergenerational interaction.

There are older members whose life circumstances (especially ill health) prohibit active ministry. Are they now only either forgotten or on the receiving end of ministry? Not according to 1 Timothy 5:5

and Luke 2:37. Prayer is a commanded ministry for all believers, but perhaps those whose lives have been the most pared down from a worldly perspective can have the greatest impact from a Kingdom perspective through earnest and ceaseless prayer.

I have had a few sad conversations with those who feel like ministry has-beens. I tried to commend the value of an extensive prayer, but to little avail. I feel like one of Job’s so-called friends when Job said “sorry comforters are you all. Is there no limit to windy words...I too could speak like you if I were in your place” (Job 16:2-4).

Ministry of parents

What evangelistic and discipleship ministry can compete in terms of importance with that of parents raising their children in the Lord (Ephesians 6:4)? Think about the colossal impact of Samuel’s wayward sons on the governing structure of Israel (1 Samuel 1-5) and Solomon’s unwise son on the splitting of the kingdom (1 Kings 12). Much better models were Timothy’s godly mother and grandmother. We men need to take this ministry more seriously.

As flawed as I was during my child-rearing years, I needed to use everything God gave me to minister to my children. It follows, then, there is no cookie-cutter approach to parenting or other role-related ministries since each believer possesses differing gifts.

It also follows that whenever churches (likely with good intentions) recruit members to be more active in “official” ministries, they should never unwittingly shame parents into thinking they are not already engaged in discipleship ministry or utilizing their gifts.

Gifts of the spirit

All ministries are connected to the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4). Believers should use these gifts “for the equipping of the saints, for the work of service to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to the mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4: 12-13). In other words, these ministry gifts have definite Kingdom purposes, not to be practiced on a whim.



Ronald Sloan is retired from the post of vice chancellor of academic affairs at Ivy Tech Community College. He currently serves as an adjunct instructor at Taylor University. He is a liaison to the Ministry Team at Yorktown (Ind.) UMC.

Ministry on the job

What about ministry on the job?

This is a ministry assigned to any Christian who works for a boss, believer or not (Titus 2: 9-10 and Ephesians 6:5-8).

I looked upon my work at a state-supported institution as ministry, though regrettably my actions may not always have shown it.

Paul says that as Christians we are an “epistle... known and read by all men”—even our unbelieving bosses and coworkers. By submitting to our bosses in a Christ-like manner, which includes utilizing our spiritual gifts, we are advancing the Kingdom while building up the body.

He states that appropriate use of spiritual gifts convicts even the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 14:22-23).

The result: the body is built.

Inappropriate use of these gifts makes unbelievers think believers lack focus and are incompetent.

The result: the body is harmed.

Why would we turn off appropriate spiritual gifts such teaching, administration, service, leadership, and showing mercy just because we are with our boss or coworkers instead of sitting in church? Submitting ourselves to bosses includes using our spiritual gifts. It is building the body, reputationally at least and perhaps eventually numerically.

Now that I have retired, former coworkers who once reported to me now participate in Bible studies with no awkward conflict of interest.

Other ministries

There are other ministries churches may not label as ministry but they should.

For example, what ministry imitates how Jesus sanctifies His church with the cleansing of the Word to facilitate holiness and blamelessness? Sounds as if seminary training is required, but this is a ministry all believing husbands have with their wives (Ephesians 5:23-25).

Several ministries are specified for church leaders. For example, overseers (not recent converts) and elders (suggesting maturity) are specifically charged with teaching and practicing hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:8-9). They also have a healing ministry according to James 5. How often is aptitude in these ministries factored into selecting church leaders?

Our prayer ministry

I remember being inspired years ago when I heard Siang-Yang Tan of Fuller Theological Seminary and First Evangelical Church of Glendale, California, say that he prayed for his 200 church members every day. Somehow Dr. Tan did this while working two jobs.

Now retired from full-time work, I am able to pray for everyone at my church, my students where I teach part-time, my current and former colleagues, my Facebook friends, and even former bosses who did not always celebrate my work.

I am in a joyful “Goldilocks Zone” where I have the time to pray extensively for others while still being physically present to witness some results of these prayers.

My pastor, the Rev. Kate Muhlbaier, recently lifted up the example of the Hebrides Revival of 1949-1952. Two sisters lived together on an island off the west coast of Scotland. Peggy Smith, age 84, was blind; her sister Christine, age 82, was bent double with arthritis.

The sisters were unable to attend public worship, but, according to one account, “their humble cottage became a sanctuary where they met with God.” In a chain of improbable events that began with their fervent prayers, a revival swept throughout the Hebrides Islands.

Prayer was key at the beginning and throughout.

God seems to work best through human weakness. If He can use the aged, the blind, and the bent to stir a revival, He can use the COVID 19-isolated UM men to do the same.

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Men's ministry leaders hear words of possibilities and calls for action

More than 70 people participated in a March 4-6 virtual meeting of the National Association of Conference Presidents (NACP) of UM Men.

The 3-day Zoom session focused on Christian unity and offered ways for men to get out of their comfort zones to reach men beyond their faith communities. Participants also discussed techniques to dismantle racism and learned of ways to heal divisions within the denomination.

Values of a delayed General Conference

Arkansas Area Bishop Gary Mueller said God did not cause the pandemic, but God may be using the virus to protect us from causing thoughtless harm to the denomination

"This is a rich time for us," said the bishop, who serves as vice-president of the General Commission on UM Men. He told participants in the Zoom meeting that 16 months ago everyone seemed certain General Conference would pass the protocol resulting in a divided church.

The bishop said that passage of the protocol is now less certain; many other options are under consideration. "God is not finished with us yet."

Noting difficulties with other nations getting vaccinations and the high cost of visas, Mueller said he is not certain the legislative assembly will even be able to gather for the meeting now scheduled for late August and early September 2022.

Mueller suggested the denomination could learn a lot from local churches. "Every church has figured out a way to make this work. They disagree, but they worship together."

Bishop Swanson calls for patience

"The most important word is patience," said Mississippi Area Bishop James E. Swanson, president of the men's commission. "You need to allow things to unfold [and] not try to speed things up." He noted that the Book of Discipline has a lot of wisdom about what can and can't be done; "it spreads out authority."

"We need time to assess where we are," said Swanson. "Sometimes we're in just too big of a hurry."

The bishop reminded conference leaders that "We've been here before. God has a special mission for the UMC [and] don't let anyone tell you the men are going to break up."

Focus on Christian unity

Mark Lubbock, a Louisiana-based staff member of the General Commission on UM Men, opened each of the 3-day virtual sessions with a devotion focused on Christian unity.

"We don't have to agree with everyone; we don't have to even like them; we do have to love them," said Lubbock. He encouraged the men to get out of their comfort zones and "invest in others that we aren't interested in investing in."

"Don't close the door on people who are different from us," said Lubbock. That includes people with different political opinions, different ethnicities, different ages, and different geographical areas.

Mission is first

The Rev. Dr. Rick Vance, director of the Center for Men's Ministries, reminded the participants that "coaching men to thrive through Christ" is their first priority. He cited a variety of resources available on the website and the commission store, including a needs-assessment tool for local churches, districts and conferences. "Resources are important," said Vance. "One-on-one relationships are essential."

Message is what they receive

Andrew Kissell, president of the Southeastern Jurisdiction UM Men, and Robert Wright, interim president of Texas Conference UM Men, suggested practical ways to reach out to others. "The depth of our relationship will be determined by the level of conflict we are willing to endure," they said.

They added words of caution: "The message is not what you send; the message is what they receive. Words are like bullets they travel far and can do great damage." While it is tempting to contact people by e-mail, the men suggested phone calls are much better. "E-mail is like sending a letter to a fire department saying, 'My house is on fire'."

In other business, the NACP:

- learned that the Upper Room Prayer Center received 94,300 prayer request on the prayer wall;
- received an invitation from Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men, to participate in a virtual Class Meeting. Admission to the meeting is a promise the participant will also begin an 8-week meeting with 8-10 other men;
- received an invitation from Greg Arnold, a Mississippi-based staff member of the commission, to participate in Adventure Men, an on-line meeting of men interested in growing as disciples. The Live Bold app is viewed by 412,000 individuals each month;
- viewed two devotions on dismantling racism by Bishop LaTrelle Easterling and Bishop Hee-Soo Jung.

NACP President Herman Lightsey said there was a lot of time and planning put into revamping this meeting to meet the request of the jurisdictional presidents. He said this virtual meeting was just a "stepping-off point." He is proposing the jurisdictions and/or the commission provide ongoing monthly or bi-monthly training experiences.

This 3-day session followed a February 25 meeting where annual reports from staff and affiliate organizations were received.



DURING A TIME OF SOCIAL DISTANCING, UM MEN HAVE TO FIND OTHER WAYS TO CONTACT OTHERS.



UM Men feed the hungry

In a video report to the National Association of Conference Presidents, Wade Mays, a staff executive with the Society of St. Andrew, said the pandemic has doubled the number of hungry adults and quadrupled the number of hungry children.

He thanked the men for their support of Meals for Millions and reported that their financial support provided 3.7 million servings of food for hungry Americans.

As usual, Mays reported on the top conference supporters. Northern Illinois was again the top giver. He gave the “Bud-the-Spud” Award to Oklahoma as the conference with the greatest percentage increase in giving. That conference increased its giving by 510 percent.



An invitation to support Meals for Millions

You can make a personal commitment to help end hunger.

PRAY for the Society of St. Andrew and for the HRA Initiative.

GLEAN with your Hunger Relief Advocate or with the Society of St. Andrew. If you don't have gleaning in your area, contact the Society of St. Andrew and the agency will provide you with the material you need to get started.

DONATE by becoming a Challenge Disciple or an HRA Sponsor. Twice a year, in the spring and fall, you will receive a call letter from the Society of St. Andrew. You then respond with either a \$25 or \$50 donation to the Society of St. Andrew depending on the level you choose.

A Challenge Disciple commits to feeding the poor through a financial contribution of \$25 twice each year.

An HRA Sponsor donates \$50 or more twice each year. He is recognized by a special certificate. Through this annual contribution, a HRA sponsor provides enough fresh produce to feed a family of four for a whole year.

Meals for Millions top ten conferences in 2020

1. Northern Illinois	\$12,801	6. Missouri	\$2,560
2. Virginia	\$8,520	7. Susquehanna	\$2,560
3. North Carolina	\$4,505	8. Oklahoma	\$2,550
4. Upper New York	\$4,132	9. South Georgia	\$2,210
5. Iowa	\$3,575	10. Ill. Great Rivers	\$1,956



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Night will end and morning will come

By Walter Albritton

If the Bible tells us anything it tells us that God hears the cries of his children. And that is good news when you are distressed. Trouble often seems like night so we speak of times that seem like the “dark night of the soul.” In the midst of such dark nights we are prone to think that God has deserted us, that he does not care about our misery. Darkness can seem heavy and breathing laborious. But somehow we cling to the hope that morning will come. That hope, though weak, enables us to make it through the night.

Assurance from Jeremiah

Daylight is a welcome sight. It has always been so. That is how it was in the days of the prophet Jeremiah. Jerusalem had been destroyed. Most of the people were now exiles and slaves in a foreign land. Some were allowed to remain in Jerusalem where Jeremiah sought to help them understand the ways of the Lord. Overwhelmed by sorrow, uprooted from their homeland, the Israelites had little hope for the future. They had disobeyed God. Now they were enduring God’s punishment for their sins. Most of us know from experience what that feels like. Despite the stubbornness of the Jews, God did not abandon them. God never stopped loving them. In fact, just when they needed it the most, God gave them the precious gift of hope. This gift was “made flesh” in a man – the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah saw

beyond the present suffering; he saw a future full of the goodness of God. The prophet saw that hope is greater than grief, that joy is greater than sorrow. Jeremiah knew that no matter how dark the night morning will come. And wisely the prophet linked “morning” with the grace of God.

Jesus can turn the tears of failure into the wine of victory.

Great is thy faithfulness

Few greater visions of God are recorded in Holy Scripture than this one from the pen of the weeping prophet:

Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, “The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.” (Lamentations 3:22–24, NIV)

It was this vision that birthed the greatly beloved hymn, “Great is Thy Faithfulness.” This soul-stirring song often brings me to my knees in worship, especially the words, “All I have needed, Thy hand hath provided.” I want to cry out for all to hear, “Yes, Lord, Yes! Glory!”

New every morning

God’s mercies are new every morning. No matter what pain or misfortune we endured during the night, God’s mercies are as sure as the morning light, and ours for the asking. We may choose either the word “new” or “fresh” to describe his mercies. Both are beautiful words, though I

prefer “fresh.” Morning suggests breakfast. When we rise from a night’s rest, normally we feel renewed; we have fresh energy. The aroma of fresh coffee makes many of us glad to be alive. Fresh bread smells so good and tastes delicious. Think of our disappointment if all we had for breakfast was day-old coffee and stale bread. Not so God’s mercies; they are fresh every morning.

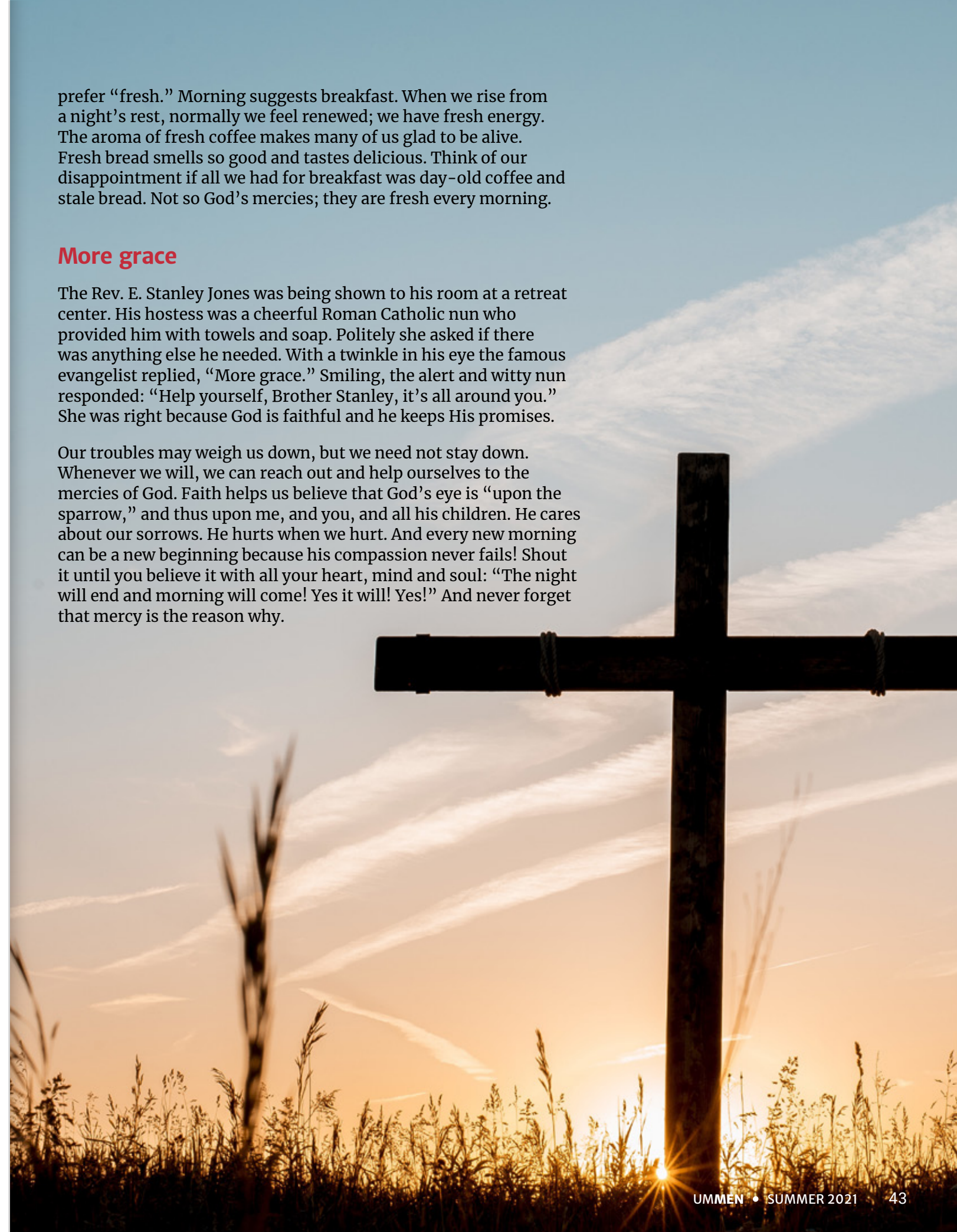
More grace

The Rev. E. Stanley Jones was being shown to his room at a retreat center. His hostess was a cheerful Roman Catholic nun who provided him with towels and soap. Politely she asked if there was anything else he needed. With a twinkle in his eye the famous evangelist replied, “More grace.” Smiling, the alert and witty nun responded: “Help yourself, Brother Stanley, it’s all around you.” She was right because God is faithful and he keeps His promises.

Our troubles may weigh us down, but we need not stay down. Whenever we will, we can reach out and help ourselves to the mercies of God. Faith helps us believe that God’s eye is “upon the sparrow,” and thus upon me, and you, and all his children. He cares about our sorrows. He hurts when we hurt. And every new morning can be a new beginning because his compassion never fails! Shout it until you believe it with all your heart, mind and soul: “The night will end and morning will come! Yes it will! Yes!” And never forget that mercy is the reason why.



The Rev. Walter Albritton is pastor emeritus of St. James UMC in Montgomery, Ala.



Heart attack and stroke symptoms: the difference between men and women

by Bryant Stamford

Until recently, heart disease was considered a man's disease. One of the reasons is that men tend to have heart attacks at a younger age, and the younger you are the more attention it gets.

In addition, women are much more concerned about breast cancer, believing it's their major risk for a fatal disease. Breast cancer is, of course, a major problem, especially in younger women.

But when women hit their 50s, heart disease claims more lives, and by age 75, death from heart disease is eight times more likely than breast cancer.

Because heart disease was believed to be a man's disease, men were the primary focus of research and little attention was paid to heart disease in women.

It was assumed that the established risk factors of smoking, high blood pressure, high serum cholesterol, lack of exercise, etc., applied equally to men and women, and this is largely true.

However, we now know the symptoms that signal a problem may be different, as well as the triggering event, and therefore, if a woman expects to have the same experience as a man, she may misinterpret what is going on.



Bryant Stamford is a professor of kinesiology and integrative physiology at Hanover College in Indiana. This article is courtesy of the Louisville Courier Journal.

Triggers and symptoms

For men, a heart attack is likely to be triggered during exertion, things like lifting and carrying, climbing stairs, cutting the grass, etc.

The triggering event in women is more likely to be stress than exertion. Therefore, if a woman is not exerting herself, she may ignore signals that something is wrong.

For men, the key symptom that something is wrong is sharp, burning pain and tightness in the chest. There also can be nausea, dizziness, difficulty breathing or pain in the upper body, neck or jaw.

Women differ from men and severe chest pain is less likely. Instead, there may be unusual upper body discomfort, difficulty breathing, extreme fatigue or nausea. Symptoms in women are more easily dismissed, which can delay medical intervention.

This is a big problem because during a heart attack immediate medical attention is critical to outcomes and survival.

The underlying cause of a heart attack is similar for men and women. In both cases, the problem is cutting off blood flow and oxygen supply to the heart muscle. But, there also is an important difference here as well.

In men, there is likely to be problems with blockage in the larger coronary arteries that impede blood flow to the heart muscle. Detecting blood flow problems in men is much easier because the blockage in larger arteries is more obvious and easier to measure.

In women, the problem of reduced oxygen supply is more likely to occur in small vessels. Damage to the

inner walls of small vessels can cause spasms that squeeze the vessels closed, stopping blood flow. This is more difficult to determine, which means even with sophisticated testing, problems in women can be overlooked.

Stroke

As with heart disease, men and women differ in some ways when it comes to stroke. Again, men tend to have strokes at a younger age, but overall, more women have strokes because they live longer. Men and women experience common symptoms for strokes.

There may be sudden weakness or numbness in the face or a limb on one side of the body. Trouble speaking or understanding speech and severe headache can occur.

Along with symptoms common for both men and women, women may have "other" symptoms, including hiccups, extreme fatigue, nausea, racing heart rate, sudden pain in the face, arm or leg. Unfortunately, these other symptoms often are ignored because they don't fit the typical pattern we assume will occur.

A big item that also differs between men and women is that women are the caretakers. When a man has a problem, the women in his life make sure he gets immediate attention.

Women, on the other hand, are less likely to speak up about feeling bad and no one notices. This can waste valuable time.

For heart attack, you have about two hours before heart tissue begins to die. For stroke, tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) must be administered within three hours to dissolve blood clots that may be blocking blood flow to the brain.

As to whether or not you are really having a heart attack or stroke, get to the hospital quickly and don't worry about being wrong.

The bottom line

Heart disease and stroke are equal opportunity destroyers of health, impacting men and women alike. Know the triggers and symptoms specific to each gender and act on them immediately.

As always, prevention is the best strategy, and keeping your blood pressure down pays big dividends.

For every 10 point drop in systolic blood pressure, you reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke by more than 30 percent. So, get busy exercising, eating right and losing weight.



I'm a carrot, you're a cucumber

By Tom Tozer and Bill Black

It is often said that our nation is a melting pot—that we are open to all races and nationalities, that we each contribute our unique experiences and gifts to the body complete. It is a noble concept, even though, in these unsettling times, many of us wonder if we are still that welcoming America. We contend that rather than a melting pot, our nation is a tossed salad, composed of many distinct ingredients that comprise a delicious blend of humanity.

A melting pot suggests that we gradually lose our unique identity as we blend with others, creating an alloy of humanity. Instead, we prefer to be carrots living alongside cucumbers and tomatoes and radishes—each of us retaining our unique look and flavor, yet coming together to celebrate the power and beauty of the whole. In other words, each individual is our neighbor, especially as our world shrinks and we bring others into our nation.

Respecting our differences

How can we as parents teach our children to be the best carrots they can be and also respect the look and smell and flavor of an olive? We are a peculiar species. We are resilient and adaptable. We can adjust to changing circumstances almost instantly. On the other hand, we often gravitate to people who look, talk and act like us, finding it easier to make friends with others like us. Is that truly natural behavior? Or have we been taught what's "natural" and what's not?



Tom Tozer and Bill Black are authors of *Dads2Dads: Tools for Raising Teenagers*. Like them on Facebook and follow them on Twitter at [Dads2Dadsllc](#). Contact them at tomandbill@Dads2Dadsllc.com.

We are what we see, hear

We see too much separation, prejudice, "othering." How can we parents teach our kids to accept one another's humanity while retaining our differences? We are taught "love thy neighbor as thyself." But somewhere along the line as we grow, many of us are drawn apart by our differences. We see some as "others." Perhaps we can attribute that to what parents teach and model to their children. How do you explain two 3-year-olds—one white, one black—playing and laughing together. There is only joy in that scenario. There is no suspicion, no distrust, no rejection for any reason. Yet, distance can emerge as the two children grow older until one day they retreat to the comfort of "their own kind." They have learned that behavior from someone.

Realizing our capacity

We are all one kind, humankind. In a speech to students at American University in Washington, D.C., in June 1963, President John F. Kennedy said, "If we cannot now end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity." Almost 60 years later, he would be disappointed in how far we have not come in that regard.

We honestly believe we must start with the very young. Now is the time to teach your kids to look for the good in others. Help them recognize the gifts that people of all creeds and colors bring to the tossed salad. Lead by example. Show them how to examine the content of one's character rather than the color of one's skin. As human beings, we have far greater capacity. We must find it.

In Memoriam

David Belt

TUSCON, ARIZONA

David Belt, 80, former vice-president of Minnesota Conference UM Men, a conference prayer advocate, and a member of the UM Men Foundation, died March 9, 2021.

David served as prayer advocate for the Minnesota Conference since 2003; prior to that he served as vice president of Minnesota Conference UM Men.

A Life Member of UM Men, he was a legacy builder contributor since 2007, and he was elected as the Western Jurisdiction representative on the UM Men Foundation in 2017.

"David was a caring leader" said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men. "He always made sure each member of the staff of the commission was doing well. I know that he prayed for each of us on a regular basis."

The beginning

David was a Jan. 1, 1941, New Year's gift to his parents living in Omaha Neb. They had no idea little David would become one of the major leaders of United Methodist Men.

David married Amy Jo and the couple had two children, Patty and Laura.

Patty and Jeff Yeager now live in Lakewood Ranch, Fla., and Laura and Dirk Elzinga live in Spanish Fork, Utah.

David and Amy Jo were active members of Blaine (Minnesota) UMC for many decades. In recent years, David was active at St. Marks UMC in Tucson during the winter months.



Joint participants

David and Amy Jo never missed coming together to NACP meetings in Nashville.

"David was committed to the ministry of United Methodist Men and was very appreciative of the UMM Staff," said Martha Davis, a staff executive with the commission since its creation in 1996. She notes that David traveled from Minnesota to Nashville just to help celebrate the 2012 retirement of Ann Waller. "He was always ready and willing to help whenever he could during the meetings and other UMM gatherings."

David used to tell how Amy Jo supported him in his work and service as a prayer advocate. "Amy Jo is the only woman to be a life member of the Minnesota UM Men," he joked. "She attended more men's meetings and more of the goings on than a lot of the men who were office holders."

Amy Jo died in 2011 following a long battle with cancer. When she died, David honored her by asking that, instead of flowers, gifts should be sent to The Upper Room Living Prayer Center.



AURORA, ILLINOIS

Church sponsors 'Stop Asian Hate Day'

The Rev. John Bell, pastor of Wesley UMC, is one of many UM pastors engaged in activities opposing anti-Asian activity following the killing of Asian women in Atlanta.

Bell and members of his congregation participated in a March 26 "Stop Asian Hate Day" vigil sponsored by Black, Indigenous, People of Color Community.

"As part of this action, we will also have a small vigil in memory of the victims and an open mic for community (members) to express their grief," said Bell in an invitation to Wesley UMC members. "Everybody is welcome to attend this peaceful demonstration and all that we ask is for folks to please wear their masks and practice social distancing throughout the event."



Pastor John Bell leads members of Wesley UMC in prayer prior to the vigil. Photo by Jason Crane/The Voice newspaper, Aurora, Ill.

CENTER POINT, IOWA

Have chainsaws, will travel

Men in the Iowa Annual Conference grabbed their chainsaws and traveled across the state sawing up fallen trees for several months following an August 2020 derecho.

"I think sometimes we put (our mission) in a box and say that we do it by prayer meetings or going to church," says Andrew Happ, associate pastor at Center Point (Iowa) UMC.

"We met people who were distraught. Everything they've placed identity in is compromised and we have an opportunity to be there and remind them they are loved."



UM volunteers Darren Garrett (front) and Dale Krohn use chainsaws to clear downed trees at a home in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, following an August 2020 derecho. Photo by Mike DuBose, UM News.

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Troop contributes 456 hours of community service

On Scout Sunday, the Rev. Leanne Hadley told members of Christ UMC that during the past 12 months, their three Scout units contributed 456 hours of community service. These hours included placing flags in a cemetery and raising funds to provide 700 Strength for Service books.

She reports that three members of the Boy Scout Troop 317 achieved the rank of Eagle and three Cub Scouts received the Arrow of Life Award. In total, members of the three Scout units received 325 merit badges.

The pack conducted a virtual Pinewood Derby race in which each Scout left a hand-carved racing car at the church and then watched the races from their homes.



Scouts couldn't meet inside the church, so the portico was a perfect spot for a group photo.

WEST AUSTINTOWN, OHIO

Church provides 8,000 meals

Providing a community meal has been a ministry of First UMC since 2016. There's never a cost for the meal, just a basket inviting the 80 to 100 diners to give if they wish, but a resounding assurance that it's not an expectation.

"It wasn't just your run-of-the-mill dinner. We tried to produce some good food, especially for the folks who are not able to go out to eat on a regular basis, so it was really focused on building community and reaching out to the community around us as well," said the Rev. Jeffery Harrison.

COVID restrictions do have their upside. There are no tables to set up. Cleanup is minimal at the end of the evening. And with no more than 10 people allowed at a time helping serve, 30 volunteers can rotate their serving times and not succumb to burnout.



Please support the global ministry to men and young people.

GIVE NOW

FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Scout receives Silver Beaver Award



Kenneth McIver

The Pee Dee Area Council of the Boys Scouts of America presented Kenneth McIver with the Silver Beaver Award.

Kenneth, a scouting ministry specialist for the Marion District of the South Carolina Annual Conference, serves as adviser to Santee

Lodge and Scoutmaster for Troop 828.

The Silver Beaver is presented by the National Court of Honor on behalf of local councils to adult leaders of exceptional character who have made an impact on the lives of youth in and out of Scouting.

Kenneth is also a recipient of the Founder's Award, an honor presented to members of the Order of the Arrow who have given outstanding service to their lodge.

JOHNS ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA

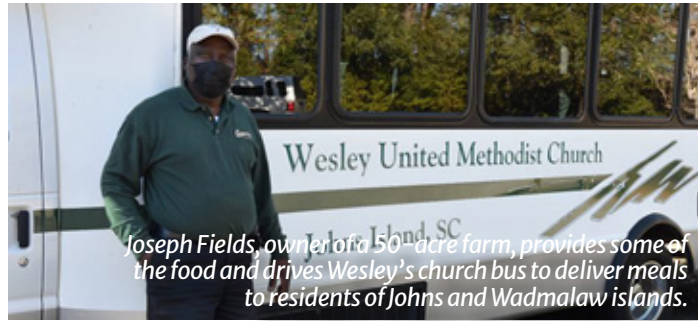
Church delivers meals to seniors

Wesley UMC Temple Take-Out Ministry, established in 2016, is a community-wide meal delivery service that provides those in need with a friendly greeting and weekend meal free of charge.

This ministry provides tasty meals once a month to more than 80 seniors aged 65 or older in need or with disabilities who are living on the Johns and Wadmalaw islands.

On the second Sunday of each month, volunteers deliver meals to individual homes using Wesley's bus and personal cars.

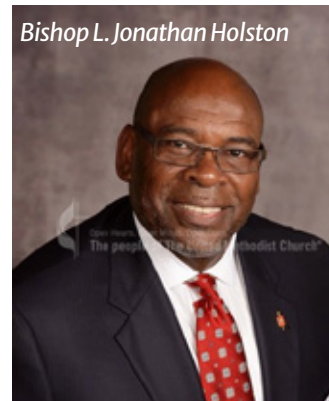
Every month, volunteers call Temple Take-Out Ministry participants to find out what is going on in their lives and to remind them of the upcoming delivery date. On these calls, participants share their latest joys and pains, enabling volunteers to build strong relationships with those they serve.



Joseph Fields, owner of a 50-acre farm, provides some of the food and drives Wesley's church bus to deliver meals to residents of Johns and Wadmalaw islands.

LEXINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

'One in the Spirit' retreat focuses on unity



Bishop L. Jonathan Holston

UM Men of the South Carolina Conference gathered for an on-line two-hour "One-in-the-Spirit" retreat. Men participated from their homes and churches located in Lexington, Aiken, Murrells Inlet, and Boiling Springs.

In an interview, South Carolina Bishop L.

Jonathan Holston said unity is achieved only with authentic relationships.

"Jesus teaches us there's power in proximity—the closer you get to God and His grace and mercy to experience Him, the more you want to be involved," Holston said.

It's the same with people.

"We have to get close to each other. Conversation opens the door to us being vulnerable and share in ways we never have before."

The best way to start, Holston said, is to be yourself.

"Often we're trying so hard to be right that we find ourselves stepping into places unknown. Let's start with, 'Who am I?'"



ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA

Men provide 117 coats for children

For the second year, members of Woodland UMC provided winter coats for children.

Sponsored and coordinated by the Woodland UMC Men, 80 new coats were given to preschool children of the Rock Hill Head Start Program, and 37 coats were given to children at Ebenezer Avenue Elementary School.

This is the second year the Woodland UMC Men have sponsored this mission. Last year more than 100 coats were bought or donated to children of the same schools. The goal for next year is to expand the mission to reach more disadvantaged children in the Rock Hill area.



A cart full of new coats for children of the Rock Hill Head Start Program.

BAYTOWN, TEXAS

Scouts honor deceased leader

On Scout Sunday at St Mark's UMC Janet Valdes was posthumously recognized for 45 years of service to youth and Scouting programs with the Silver Torch Award.

Janet, wife of Eloy Valdes, was actually to have received this award in the summer of 2020 at Philmont during the cancelled UM training conference.

Sadly, Janet was called home by our Lord in January 2020 and never knew she'd been awarded this honor.



Eloy Valdes is next to a photo of Janet and her Silver Torch Award.

WOODLANDS, TEXAS

Geezer squad gets it done

Eleven years ago, UM Men of Woodlands UMC learned that an elderly church member was raising two grandchildren in a trailer without a wheelchair ramp. They went to work.

That was the beginning of the Geezer Squad, a 25-member group of retired men who provide basic home repairs.



Allan Schneider, left, cuts drywall as Jerry Neuberger measures a wall while helping repair a water-damaged home. Photo by Jason Fochtman, Houston Chronicle.

SOUTH CHESTERFIELD, VA.

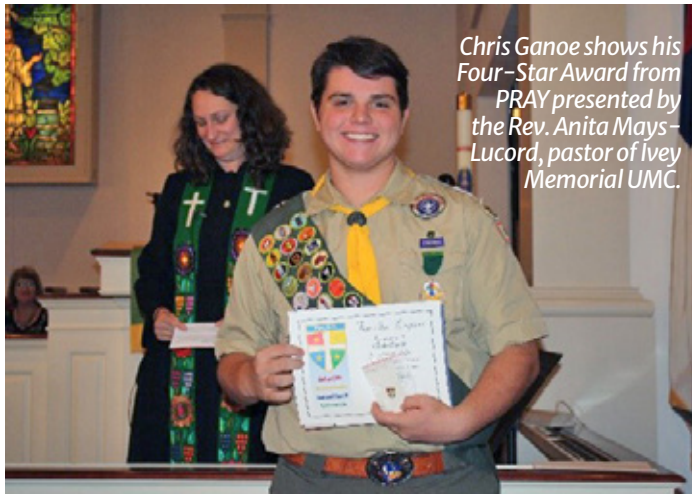
Lone Scout follows difficult trail

Chris Ganoë, the only Scout of Ivey Memorial UMC, achieved the rank of Eagle and received all four PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) Awards.

When a Scout cannot join an existing troop, he is accepted in Boy Scouts of America as a "Lone Scout." It is a difficult pathway as that individual does not have the support of other troop members.

Chris co-chaired the Council of Youth Ministries for the Virginia Annual Conference for three years, and he served as a district youth delegate for five years. He also served as a mentor for local youth at a 4-H Camp.

For his Eagle project, Chris built a prayer labyrinth and reworked the outdoor chapel at Ivey Memorial UMC. For a crowning achievement, Chris received the PRAY Four-Star Award by completing God & Me, God & Family, God & Church and God & Life courses. The Foundation of Evangelism presented him with the Harry Denman Evangelism Award for his exceptional faith journey and his impact on the faith of others.



Chris Ganoë shows his Four-Star Award from PRAY presented by the Rev. Anita Mays-Lucord, pastor of Ivey Memorial UMC.

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, WEST VIRGINIA

Bishop presents award for scouting

Some of the girls made Little Free Libraries, Blessing Boxes, and collection bins for retired American flags. Others wrapped gifts for the less fortunate, facilitated recycling programs, and collected items for a local animal shelter. One girl created a puppet studio for a local preschool, and one made cigarette butt disposal stations along with a presentation about the litter's impact on wildlife.

The Girl Scouts of Troop 37400, sponsored by Emmanuel UMC, received the Bishop's Award of Excellence for Scouting from Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball.

"There are so many in our community, younger all the way to our older-aged persons, that really need to know that someone somewhere really does care about them," the bishop told the troop in a Zoom meeting in which she presented the award. "So, thank you for caring. Thank you for sharing your love and your resources with the people in your community."



Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball



PYEONGTAEK, SOUTH KOREA

Chaplain returns to native Korea

The Rev. DooSoo Lee, a clergy member of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference, is now serving as a U.S. Army chaplain in his native South Korea.

Lee cares for soldiers at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys, not far from Seoul.

"One of the main missions of chaplains is to 'be there,' to be a comforting presence for soldiers in a tough and dry military life," said Lee. "Christians who are regular churchgoers make up less than 10 percent of the total soldiers in the battalion. As a servant and ambassador of Christ, I am sent to serve people of various religions and even atheists."



Chaplain DooSoo Lee at his desk in South Korea.

GIVE

LOVE JOY HOPE & PEACE



2020 has been a year of great challenges and changes. In the midst of this upheaval, one thing has remained constant: *Missio Dei*, God's mission. Our work continues as well for abundant health for all, disaster response and recovery, the work of missionaries around the world, and evangelism and church revitalization.

We need your help to give love, joy, hope and peace to those who need it the most... in your community, in this nation and in nations around the world.

Learn how you can give love, joy, hope and peace at
umcmmission.org/GiveLove



Global Ministries

The United Methodist Church

JOIN US IN GIVING TODAY:

BY PHONE:
800-862-4246

BY CREDIT CARD:
umcmmission.org/advance

BY MAIL:
Send check to:
Advance GCFA P.O. Box 9068
New York, NY 10087-9068
(Please note Advance number on the memo line)



Society of St. Andrew
GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS
FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY



**We know a few things
about food & farmers.
We're still working on the markets.
For assistance, we picked you!**



We are looking for a few good men who have an unmatched passion for helping with the very real issue of hunger in America. More than 40 million Americans sometimes don't know where their next meal will come from. With the help of our UMMen partnership, the Society of St. Andrew feeds millions of hungry Americans. This spring we have another way to grow our efforts together. A new program that will help us do even more will open up brand new opportunities for UMMen all over the country, even in areas where SoSA does not have an existing operation. The Farmers Market program has few requirements. All you need is a farmers market in a nearby location and the desire to coordinate picking up the leftovers after the market closes. Transporting the food to a nearby food pantry, shelter, or church the same day is the second part. You can do this and we need you to!

To learn more, and to make a group or individual commitment to feed the hungry, visit Endhunger.org/umm. Or contact Meals for Millions director **Wade Mays** at **800-333-4597** or **wade@endhunger.org**

