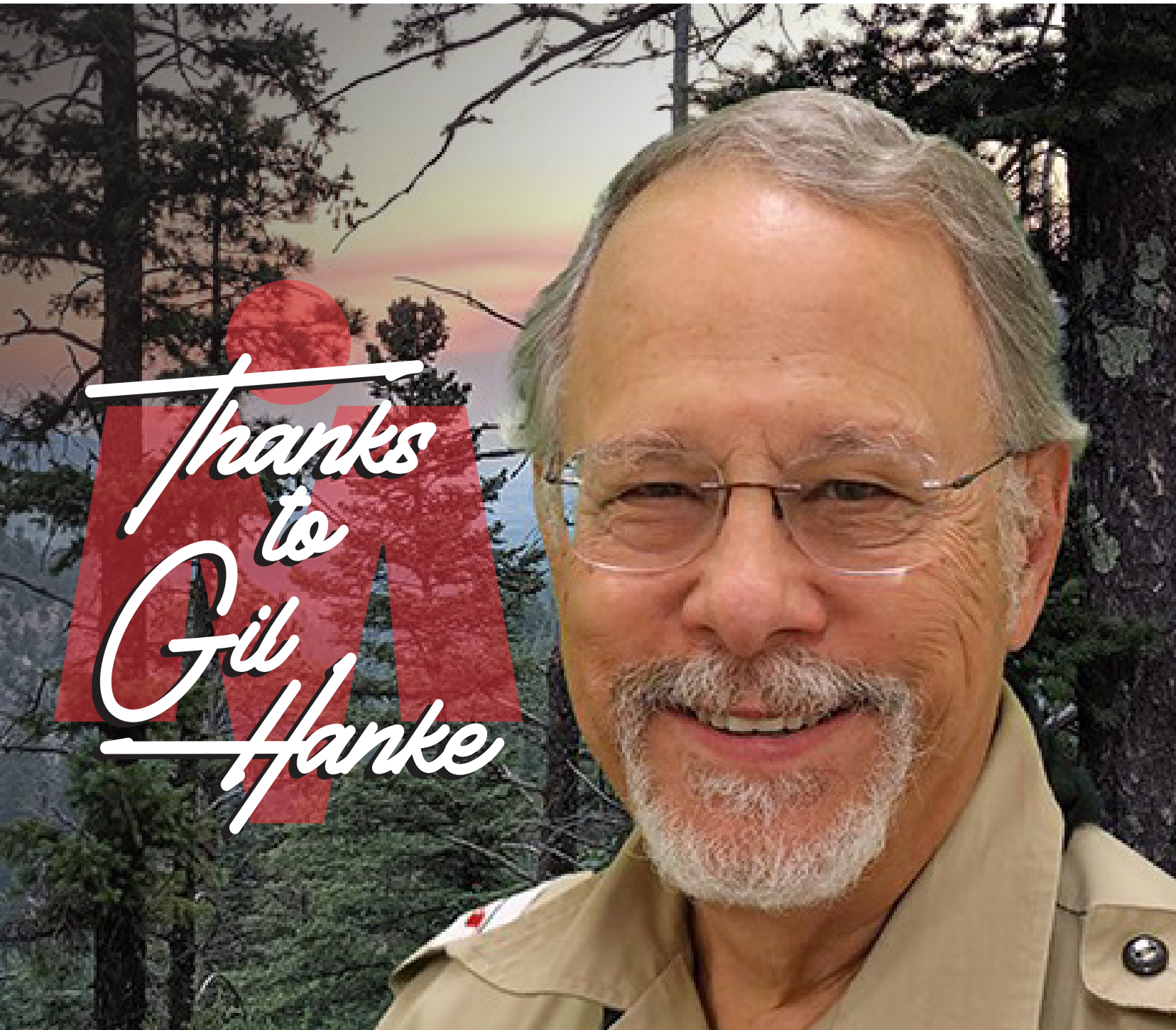


# UM MEN

The magazine of  
**UNITED METHODIST MEN**

FALL 2021 ● Volume 24 Number 4



*Thanks  
to  
Gil  
Hanke*

A C E L E B R A T I O N   O F   L E A D E R S H I P



**REV. RICH PECK**  
Editor

This issue honors Gilbert C. Hanke, general secretary of the General Commission on United Methodist Men.

No, Gil did not suggest this as a subject.

In fact, when I suggested he write a “thank-you” article, he responded with a brief one-page article in which he expressed appreciation to the staff and volunteer members of the commission, the National Association of Conference Presidents, and the United Methodist Men Foundation.

I called him up.

“Gil, you’ve had more than a 50-year history with Methodist Men, would you be willing to write an article in which you express appreciation to all of those men who helped you along your spiritual journey?” I also asked him to dig through his personal archives to retrieve some photos from his colorful past.

In early 2022, Gil will attain his 12-year limit as a top executive of a general agency of the UMC. He wants to leave before that time in order to give his successor some time to prepare for the postponed General Conference, now scheduled for August 29 to September 6, 2022.

It is more than appropriate for the commission to honor him, not only for his service as chief executive officer, but for his years as president of Texas Conference UM Men, president of the National Association of Conference Presidents, president of the commission, and as a strong advocate for the creation of the commission at the 1996 General Conference in Denver.

During his 12-years as general secretary, Gil

- Served as convenor of meetings of chief executives of UM general agencies
- Coordinated meetings of leaders of men’s ministries of several denominations
- Began Wesley Class Meetings with UM Men
- Served as founder and chief executive of efforts to provide hearing aids for children of Haiti
- Served on the executive board of the Society of St. Andrew
- Worked with the YWCA to combat domestic violence
- Recruited and trained three deployed staff members
- Advocated for the use of virtual meetings
- Coordinated, with staff assistance, international prayer sessions via Zoom
- Coordinated meetings with leaders of African-American Wesleyan denominations
- Expanded the number of Men’s Ministry Specialists and Scouting Ministry Specialists
- Created Give Day
- Devised a vetting system for affiliate organization
- Created a host of materials accessible on computers

Thanks, Gil.

Keep up with the news from  
**United Methodist Men**  
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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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# Hanke looks back at his tenure

By Jim Patterson

Every week, thousands of United Methodist men reflect online and out loud on how well they are living out their faith.

This ongoing communication with their peers will continue long after Gilbert C. Hanke retires as chief executive of the General Commission on UM Men.

An early adopter of Zoom, Hanke established the Wesley Class Meeting as a weekly online gathering for faithful men before the coronavirus pandemic resulted in use of the virtual meeting platform to skyrocket. The concept came from the book “The Class Meeting: Reclaiming a Forgotten (and Essential) Small Group Experience” by the Rev. Kevin M. Watson.

Thousands of United Methodist men now take part in these weekly sessions, which Hanke considers a key accomplishment.

“We were doing virtual meetings before we had to do virtual meetings,” said Hanke during an interview in his modest office on Nashville’s Music Row. “It’s one of the most transformational things that we’ve done since I’ve been here.”

The meetings are structured around questions John Wesley used to ask of early Methodists.

- Where did you see Christ this week?
- Where has the Holy Spirit spurred you to do something, and did you do it?
- How did that work out?
- If you said no, how did that work out?

“The intent is to help with the reclaiming of Wesley class meetings as a primary disciple-developing and growing tool,” said Steve Nailor, president of the UM Men Foundation. “These groups are transformational for our growth in Christ, challenging our lives and strengthening our own personal studies for each one of us.”

Dan Ramsey — former president of the National Association of Conference Presidents, was in the first Class Meeting group with Hanke and Nailor. The group continues to meet.

“It’s hard to get men to confide in one another,” Ramsey said. “I was a policeman (for) 30 years here in Houston. I’ve seen quite a bit, but it’s hard to talk about a lot of things. He crossed that bridge to where men can talk to each other and hold each other accountable.”

The meetings “bring men closer to God and closer to each other,” Ramsey said.

Hanke, whose sonorous voice indicates his past career as a certified and licensed speech-language pathologist, must vacate his position because he’s approaching the 12-year term limit. He is staying on to assist with the search for his successor. He will leave after that matter is settled.

Ramsey said Hanke “is a man of deep faith and integrity, very caring, a workaholic” and “a calm spirit.”

Hanke, who turns 71 in July, says he is ready to retire.

“I’d like to enjoy retirement with as little stress as possible,” he said. “This stress has taken a toll on me.”

He and wife Sher plan to stay in Nashville, where they are members of Antioch UMC.

They will continue visiting national parks, with Zion National Park in Utah high on their to-do list. He is also a dedicated reader, especially of books about faith. He particularly enjoyed *The Soul Reset* by the Rev. Junius B. Dotson, a friend and top executive of Discipleship Ministries before his death earlier this year.

His next read will be a history of Arlington Cemetery in Virginia, which is near where he grew up in Washington. His father was a mechanical engineer for the U.S. Navy.

He plans to revive his speech-language pathologist career as a fill-in or volunteer. He’ll also continue his missionary work, especially in Haiti.

“I believe Gil will adapt quite nicely (to retirement),” said his friend the Rev. Ross Pryor, pastor of First Umc of Aliquippa in western Pennsylvania. “I know he enjoys bike rides on his motorcycle and kayaking whenever he gets the chance. Plus, he will get plenty of opportunities to visit his granddaughter, ‘who is perfect in every way.’”

Nailor said he hopes Hanke takes a few months to rest before he inevitably finds new projects to occupy him.

“I do believe Gil will always be in ministry somehow,” he said. “He cares too much not to be.”

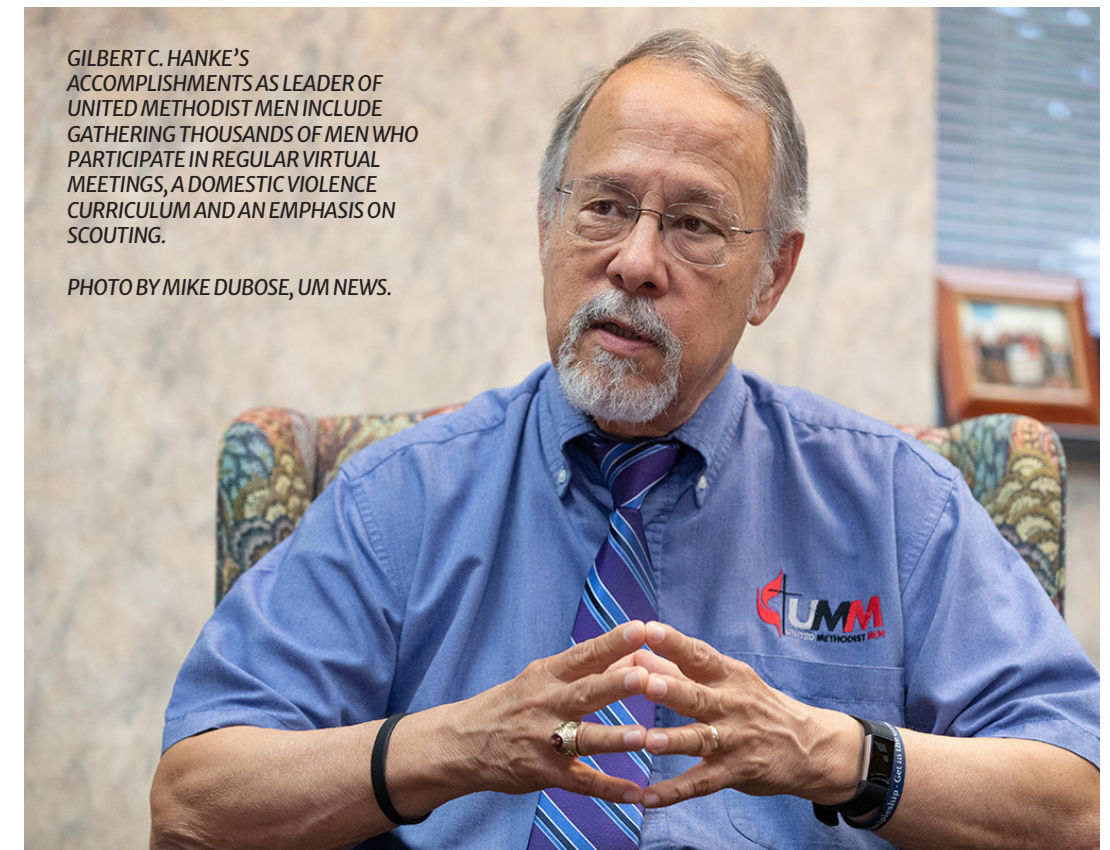
Other accomplishments during Hanke’s tenure include strengthening UM participation in Scouting during a critical era in Boy Scouts of America history, developing a curriculum to address domestic violence and working to shore up UM Men’s finances in light of the possible separation of the denomination next year.

His successor should be a good fundraiser because of the latter issue, Hanke said.

“We raise about 80 percent of our budget ourselves, which is unique,” Hanke said. “We need somebody who is really good at that, who does fundraising.”

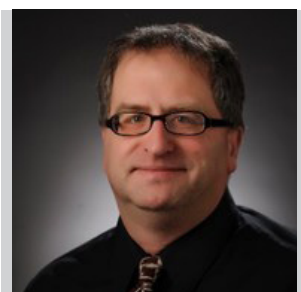
Hanke has been part of the effort to redefine “manliness,” which too often in popular culture is portrayed as violent avengers of those who have wronged them.

“A man is not someone who can bully someone, who can hurt someone, either physically or psychologically,” Hanke said. “A man is somebody who devotes his life to his spouse and takes care of her and protects her and is on an equal journey together.”



GILBERT C. HANKE’S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AS LEADER OF UNITED METHODIST MEN INCLUDE GATHERING THOUSANDS OF MEN WHO PARTICIPATE IN REGULAR VIRTUAL MEETINGS, A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CURRICULUM AND AN EMPHASIS ON SCOUTING.

PHOTO BY MIKE DUBOSE, UM NEWS.



Patterson is a UM News reporter in Nashville, Tennessee.



# The Journey

By Gil Hanke

I grew up in Falls Church, Va., a city just outside of Washington, D.C. Dad worked for the Department of the Navy as an engineer, Mom taught piano and voice in our home and also served as the director of music at Dulin Methodist Church.

I have two amazing older brothers. They both excelled in school and in musical talent; my grades were not like theirs, but I did sing in the choir at school and church. My attempts to play a musical instrument (other than my tenor guitar) did not end well.



From left: Brothers Jay and Myron with Father Martin Hanke, and Gil.

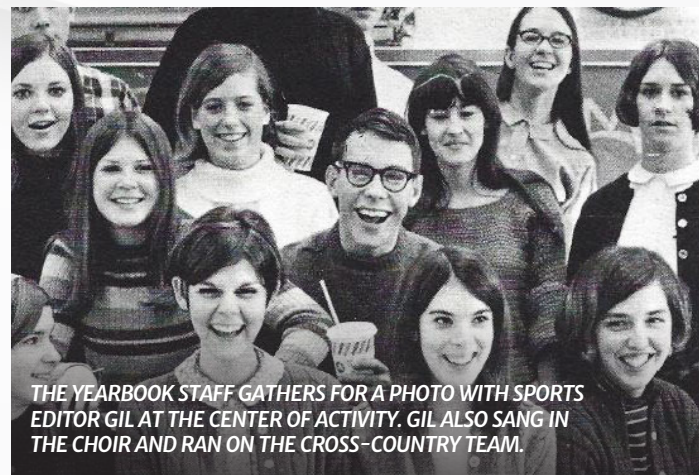
I think Dad served on every committee within the church. I learned that sometimes those meetings did not go well; one gentleman would call Dad after most meetings to re-hash how the meeting had gone. Some of those re-hash meetings took longer than the actual meeting.

My first introduction to Methodist Men, was washing dishes for their annual pancake supper as a fundraiser for MYF.

My first introduction to missions, were slide shows nearly every year from one of the three Dulin-supported missionaries. The church also introduced me to Boy Scouts, which introduced me to camping.

MYF became very important to me, particularly after

my brothers went to college. I enjoyed the retreats and the very close friends that came from several of the high schools in the area. I joined my MYF friends for workdays at Camp Highroad.



THE YEARBOOK STAFF GATHERS FOR A PHOTO WITH SPORTS EDITOR GIL AT THE CENTER OF ACTIVITY. GIL ALSO SANG IN THE CHOIR AND RAN ON THE CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM.

Our family had devotions each Sunday evening, reading from the *Upper Room*; that planted the seed for my devotions each morning from the *Upper Room Disciplines*.

## Lynchburg College

After high school I attended Lynchburg College (now the University of Lynchburg) in Virginia. I majored in speech, theater, and secondary education. When I returned home for Thanksgiving my freshman year, I learned that one of my MYF friends had been killed in Vietnam. All he ever wanted to be was a cook and had enlisted to get that training.

I sang in the Lynchburg touring choir for two years, and in my junior year, I met Sher, my wife, for the last 48 years. The choir tours were a real learning experience because the make-up of the choir was very diverse, and the destination churches that were part of the tour were all Disciples of Christ churches.

I had an assistantship in the Theater Department, but in my senior year the position was given to another student who had a more pressing need. I got another assistantship at a state facility for children with special needs, working for a speech/language pathologist (SLP). Since I had limited experience in the field, it seemed like an impossible job, but I loved it. On the way home from the center one day, I pulled off the road with the realization that this was the answer to my prayers for guidance to a career. It made no sense; in that I was about to graduate with a degree that had nothing to do with becoming an SLP. But I know this was a calling from God.

## In the Army now

While at Lynchburg, I, along with thousands of other males, was in the first lottery to determine who would be asked to serve during the expanding war in Vietnam. My two brothers were also included in that first drawing, but both were draft exempt. My oldest brother had limited rotation in one wrist due to one of several broken bones he acquired growing up, and our other brother was in seminary. My number was 67, and so depending on how the war was going upon graduation, I could be a participant. My senior year, President Nixon announced that no one with a number above 50 would be called. That good news did not last long, as the need was recalculated and changed to 90 or above. I graduated on a Saturday and the next Tuesday was an invitation in the mail for my pre-induction physical, which I passed even though I am legally blind in both eyes without my glasses.

After exhausting several appeals, I decided to enlist to be able to select the type of training and assignment. I also asked Sher to marry me, and she said yes.



DURING HIS SERVICE AT FORT SAM HOUSTON, COLONEL JUNE E. WILLIAMS, DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT, PRESENTS GIL WITH A "SOLDIER OF THE QUARTER AWARD." THE AWARD WAS GIVEN FOR HIS WORK AS AN INSTRUCTOR AND HIS COMMUNITY SERVICE WITH CHILDREN ON THE WEST SIDE OF SAN ANTONIO.

## Life in Texas

Sher went back to college, and I went in the US Army in the fall of 1972. I became a medic who was trained to work in psychiatric and drug and alcohol units in the Army. Due to my teaching credentials, I was offered the opportunity to stay where I was trained and become an instructor. I served the rest of my time in service at the Academy of Health Sciences at Ft. Sam Houston in San Antonio. Sher and I got married after her junior year of college.

We moved to San Marcos, Texas and I began taking the prerequisite courses for a M.Ed. in special education with a major in speech/language pathology. Sher and I transferred our membership from the church in San Antonio to a church in San Marcos, where one of the members had been a member of Dulin while I was growing up.

After graduation we moved to Brenham, Texas for several years, a short stay in Mexia, Texas, and finally to Nacogdoches, Texas, where we lived until moving to Nashville.

In Brenham we both got involved in community theater, and we were active in the UMC. It was there we met Rev. Sam and Beverly Duree. Sam was a strong advocate for short-term missions and re-planted that seed in me. The men's ministry at Brenham was strong in meetings at church and on the softball field.



## A leader in Texas Conference

When we got to Nacogdoches, we tried several churches and felt most at home at Perritte Memorial UMC. Sher and I quickly became very involved in that amazing church. At one point my friend Brooks and I were working in the fellowship hall, and the pastor came in and said, the district superintendent needs a district president of UM Men and we need a new president here. Which one do you want? Brooks said he would be the local president, and I agreed to be the district president, a post which also placed me on the Conference Board of UM Men. That position later resulted in being elected president of Texas Conference UM Men.

Sher and I were also asked to be lay members of the Texas Annual Conference, which met in Houston.

Guess who was the conference director of missions? The Rev. Sam Duree. That led to a 1989 mission trip to Haiti and other trips to Costa Rica, and Tomsk, Siberia.



## The creation of the commission

My service as conference president and member of the National Association of Conference Presidents (NACP) led to my election as a lay delegate to the South Central Jurisdictional Conference in 1992.

Four years later I was elected delegate to the 1996 General Conference, and I served on the Discipleship Legislative Committee, which received a proposal to create the General Commission on UM Men.



The committee asked me to present the proposal to the plenary session. The plan to create a new commission was approved by a surprisingly large majority.

I did not know I would later be elected NACP president (2001-2005), president of the commission (2005-2009), and then as general secretary (2010 to present).

I have been delegate from the Texas Conference to every General Conference since 1996, even after my 2010 move to Nashville.

## Life as general secretary

While serving as top staff executive of the commission, I continued my work in Haiti and I led other mission trips through Texas Conference connections.

I have been helped by a wonderful staff and countless volunteers to expand our ministries to men and help a variety of youth-serving organizations.

We increased the number of affiliate organizations who are willing and able to impact the local church in mission and ministry. We provided face-to-face and screen-to-screen training to thousands of men, even before the pandemic.

We used part-time “deployed staff” to broaden our reach and we increased the number of training materials available in both men’s ministries and in scouting. We published books in response to needs within the local church.

On behalf of the commission and the general church I have been invited to teach and learn in every U.S. jurisdiction along with Central America, Europe, Africa, and the Philippines.

The commission now has closer relationships with other UM agencies and with other denominations. Senior staff meet annually with a diverse group of leaders from several denominations, which provide us opportunities to learn from each other.

We have also excelled in working with “good” men to change the culture that permits and promotes violence against women.



What is clear, is that scouting forever changes boys and girls in positive ways and it gives local churches a proven way to reach into the community.

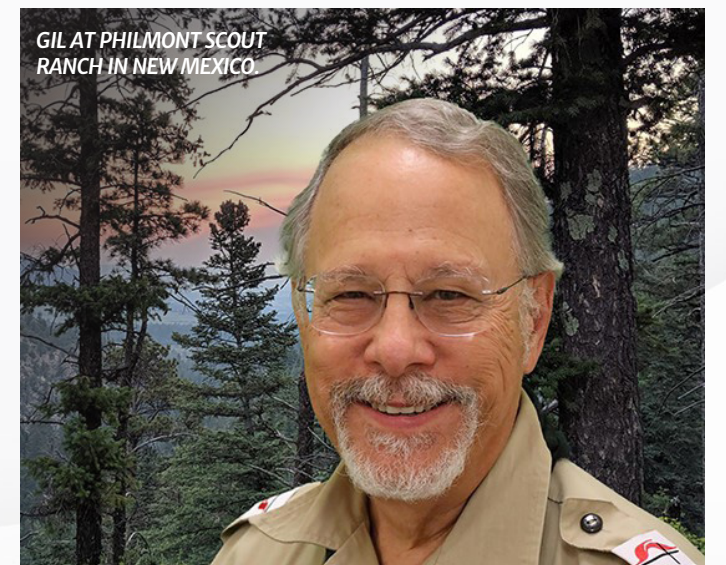
It is also clear that men who are engaged in small group experiences modeled after Wesley’s Class Meeting are experiencing an on-growing relationship with Jesus Christ.



Caption: Gil speaks about scouting to the 2012 General Conference in Tampa, Fla.

I am grateful for two wonderful careers -- 30 plus years as a medical SLP, and the last 12 years working for you at the commission. I am thankful and blessed.

Thank you for a wonderful journey.





# Our least favorite kind of sin

By the Rev. Jay M. Hanke

Jesus teaches us about sin.

Sin has always been a dominant part of the human landscape. We know a lot about sin, immorality, brokenness, and selfishness. We can make long lists of sins, point to the Ten Commandments, re-read Jesus Sermon on the Mount, remind ourselves of Paul's lists of dark behaviors in his letters, and remember the teachings of the church down through the centuries.

But, the Parable of the Father's Love teaches about behavior we seldom regard as sinful.

## The obvious sin of the younger brother

The sin of the younger son is our favorite kind of sin. His behavior was clearly repugnant, immoral, or as one of my favorite friends would say, "Just plain wrong." His sin was infectious, one mistake leading to another, one bad decision accelerating to another. His was an easy set of sins to see.

As we hear Jesus tell the first half of the parable, we take solace in the fact that we are not cheating our fellow citizens by unlawfully taxing them, nor are we sinners whose story has ended up on page one of the newspaper.

Those are not our sins.



The Rev. Jay M. Hanke is a retired pastor and district superintendent of the Virginia Conference. His interest in spiritual formation led him to conference level work in that ministry area. This article is adapted from *The Way Home*, a book that will be included in the 2022 mailing to presidents of chartered groups of UM Men in December. Copies of the book are also available for purchase [here](#).

## The less obvious sin of the older brother

The sin of the older son is not our favorite kind of sin.

By all the usual social and cultural standards, the older son had no sin. He worked hard, he was reliable, and by his own admission, he was obedient to his father – always. There must be something more here.

This is the second part of an intentionally two-part parable, and we know that Jesus always reserved the most important part of the parable for the second part.

The sin of the older son is not evident in what was known about him, that is, his outward behavior. It is when the older son reacts to his younger brother's return that his sin is revealed.

He has filled himself with hatred. He hates his father, especially his compassion and calm demeanor.

He hates his work on the family property, which feels like slavery.

He hates his brother, not just a little, but everything about him.

He hates the rules he lives by, because they are not working for him.

He hates the party, it will never be for him, and his envy is too bitter for words.

But the root of it all is that he hates his life, and hates himself for hating it.

At some level he knows he should be grateful for all he has and enjoys, but he hates it all. His rage and resentment have been carefully hidden under the cloak of responsibility and obedience. He knows how to set his jaw, freeze his expression, and look like everything is just fine.

## Our sin

Jesus is teaching that the sin of the older son, of the scribes, of the Pharisees, of us, of me, is the sin of rule-makers and rule-keepers everywhere.

We sin against God when we attach ourselves to a self-image of our own or the world's design rather than the precepts of scripture.

We sin when we attach ourselves to a moral code that primarily affirms our own behavior with only an occasional nod toward God.

We sin against God when our self-righteousness has become our altar of choice, rather than our humility.

The scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day had subsumed ownership of the law, erroneously thinking that it justified them, their privilege, their judgment, and their rituals. They had put aside the primary foundation: the law is God's, God only is the judge.

How quickly I assume that my rules are God's rules, and my ideas are surely the right ideas with which God would agree. My obedience to my rules becomes my permission to judge and be prejudiced towards others, insisting that they conform to my standards before I could love them. And when the joy in my life has been drained away by my rigidity, I begin to sense that my rules are not working. So my solution is to turn up the volume on my rules, re-state how very right I am, or persecute anyone, even the Son of God, if he crosses my self-appointed path toward righteousness.

Jesus teaches me about my sin.

## The message is forgiveness

Forgiveness is the strongest message of the parable, especially as it relates to the younger son, but the father loves and forgives each son.

What characterizes my experiences with forgiveness is the element of surprise.

Having run from the truth of my trespass, then beaten myself into an emotional clump of nothingness, and carefully composed a speech of contrition and self-loathing, surprise: God forgives me.

God breathes life into our relationship so that caring and grace predominate in a way I could never cause or create.

Surprise: I am loved beyond my deserving, my imagining.

The loving father of the parable shows us God will be forgiving us for as long as it takes for us to move from darkness to light.

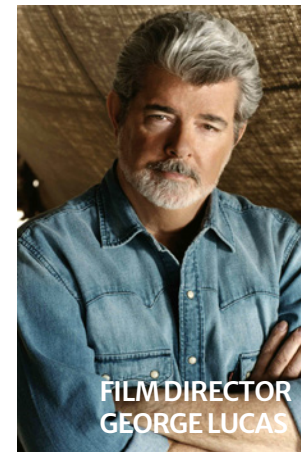
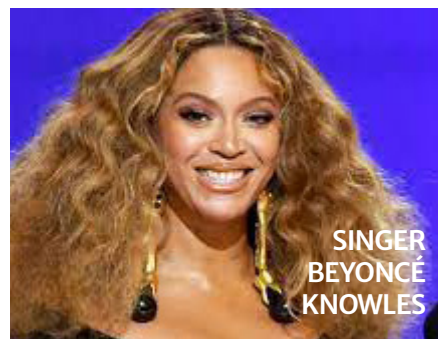
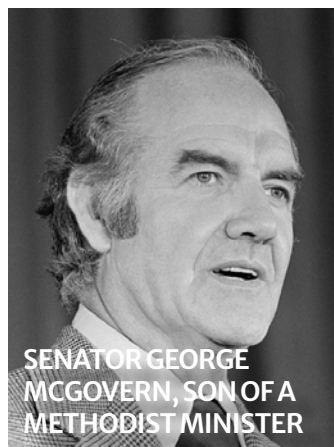
Just as the father waits for the return of the younger son, so God waits for our return.



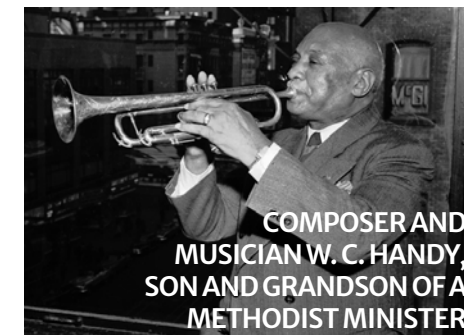
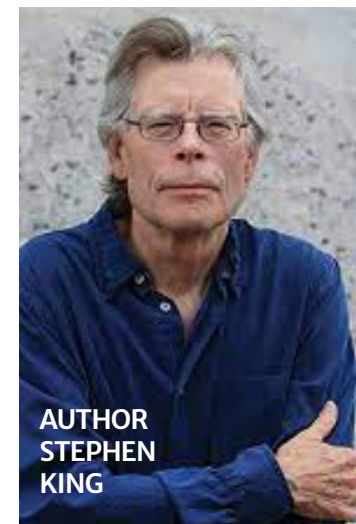


## Match the quotation with the Methodist who said it

1. "Even God is a Methodist."  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. "God is real and God lives inside of me and inside of all of us and it doesn't matter where I am, I know that and I feel it."  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. "God is very mysterious to me, but I know the power of belief. It's my source of strength."  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. "Has anybody told you that they love you?"  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. "My family and my faith taught me a simple credo — 'Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, for all the people you can.'"  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. "I consider myself a 'Methodist Buddhist'."  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. "I went to Methodist church for years as a kid, and Methodist youth fellowship on Thursday nights."  
\_\_\_\_\_



8. "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives."  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. "It's God's way. His will, not ours, be done."  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. "My middle name is Asbury."  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. "When the minister would read from the Bible, Dad would lean forward a little, as though this especially he had to hear."  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. "Life is something like a trumpet. If you don't put anything in, you won't get anything out."  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. "Empathy is born out of the old biblical injunction 'Love the neighbor as thyself.'"  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. "I believe that God has planted in every heart the desire to live in freedom."  
\_\_\_\_\_



SEE ANSWERS ON PAGE 42



## The General Commission on UM Men joins effort to reduce greenhouse

The General Commission on United Methodist Men joined 10 other UM general agencies in a joint commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

During a May 6 Zoom meeting 30 commission member and staff unanimously supported [Our Climate Commitment to Net-Zero Emissions](#), a pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the organizations' ministries, facilities, operations and investments by 2050. Net zero means we will not add new emissions to the atmosphere. Emissions will continue, but they will be balanced by absorbing an equivalent amount from the atmosphere.

Steven Scheid, director of the Center for Scouting Ministries, told the commission that Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of the USA are already engaged in planting of trees, recycling and environment clean-up actions.

Amberly Petty, a Girl Scout leader in Meeker, Colorado, said Girl Scouts in the state are engaged in an effort to plant 100,000 trees each year for the next five years. This is part of a [national effort to plant 5 million trees by 2026](#).

Participants in the Zoom meeting asked if the Nashville-based commission office has considered solar-power.

Martha Davis, chief operating officer said the agency already uses solar energy to power outside gates and cameras, but the construction of a seven-story building across the street from the Music Row office may make solar power difficult.

In an earlier statement, Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the commission, said it was a "natural choice" to join the effort to save God's creation. "We take recycling seriously," he said. "Several of our affiliate organizations provide instruction to youth on climate change

The commission devoted one of its quarterly magazines to creation care. That issue described scores of ways in which UM Men are reducing energy usage by switching to solar power and LED bulbs, establishing gardens, planting trees, cleaning highways and rivers, and serving Free Trade Coffee.

The 1996 *UM Book of Discipline* acknowledges "the global impact of humanity's disregard for God's creation." It calls "on individuals, congregations, businesses, industries and communities to reduce their emissions."

The 2021 statement by 11 general agencies acknowledges that the UMC "has long affirmed our individual and collective responsibility to address the unfolding climate crisis." In light of these values, the group said it was "called by our faith, informed by science, and led by our relationships with impacted communities" to respond.

The Net-Zero statement is endorsed by 11 general secretaries and agencies:

[The General Board of Church and Society](#)

[The General Board of Global Ministries](#)

[The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry](#)

[The General Commission on Archives and History](#)

[The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women](#)

[The General Council on Finance and Administration](#)

[Discipleship Ministries](#)

[United Methodist Communications](#)

[United Methodist Men](#)

[United Methodist Women](#)

[Wespath Benefits and Investments](#)

# UNITED METHODISTS STAND AGAINST RACISM

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



# Six things you should know about John Wesley

By Jeremy Steel

## 1. Wesley did not intend to split from the Church of England.

Initially, the Methodists simply sought reform within the Church of England. As Methodist congregations multiplied, and elements of a distinct theology were adopted, the rift between John Wesley and the Church of England steadily expanded.

In 1784, Wesley responded to the lack of priests in the colonies due to the American Revolutionary War by anointing preachers with authority to administer the sacraments. This was a significant reason for Methodism's eventual split from the Church of England after Wesley's death. This separation created a distinct group of church denominations. With regard to the occurrence of Methodism within Christianity, John Wesley once noted that "what God had achieved in the development of Methodism was no mere human endeavor but the work of God. As such it would be preserved by God so long as history remained."

## 2. John Wesley taught four key points fundamental to the Methodist Church.

A person is free not only to reject salvation but also to accept it by an act of free will.

All people who are obedient to the gospel according to the measure of knowledge given them will be saved.

The Holy Spirit assures a Christian of their salvation directly, through an inner "experience" (assurance of salvation).

Christians in this life are capable of Christian perfection and are commanded by God to pursue it.

## 3. The Methodist denomination grew from four members of the Holy Club at Oxford University grew to over a hundred thousand in Wesley's lifetime.

When Wesley passed away in 1791, the movement had grown to 72,000 members in the British Isles and 60,000 in America.

## 4. Wesley believed in the importance of "social holiness."

Wesley preached that we needed to be connected in "social holiness." He believed we could only grow as Christians in a community, surrounded by people of similar faith and conviction. In his preface to the 1739 hymnal, he was resolute that "the gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness."

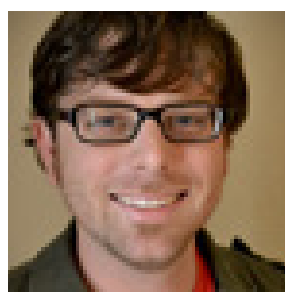
## 5. John Wesley coined the term "agree to disagree."

Numerous times, Wesley engaged in heated theological disputes with another renowned preacher named George Whitefield. Though they both debated intensely, Wesley reflected on their contrast in beliefs in a memorial sermon for Whitefield by saying: "There are many doctrines of a less essential nature. ... In these, we may think and let think; we may 'agree to disagree.' But, meantime, let us hold fast the essentials. ..." This appears to be the first documented use of the phrase. It was an indication of Wesley's manner of sticking to his convictions while remaining in connection with those with whom he disagreed.

## 6. John Wesley wrote one of the best-selling medical texts of all-time.

John Wesley was deeply convicted that God is concerned about our earthly life as well as our heavenly one. To that end, he wrote a medical text for the everyday person titled Primitive Physic. The book discussed the contemporary knowledge about home health remedies and went through 32 editions, making it one of the most widely read books in England.

Many of Wesley's suggestions for a healthy life remain commonly confirmed. While some of his recommendations were hopeful thinking, the most significant portion of his philosophy was his conviction on continual observation to support hypotheses. Wesley bravely questioned modern doctors about how they sometimes treated humans like machines and that much of their "medicine" lacked merit and evidence to support its effectiveness.



Jeremy Steel is associate pastor at Los Altos UMC in Mobile, Ala. This article is adapted from a posting by in Resource UMC.



## John Wesley's 22 questions of daily self-examination

1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?
4. Can I be trusted?
5. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
6. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
7. Did the Bible live in me today?
8. Do I give it time to speak to me everyday?
9. Am I enjoying prayer?
10. When did I last speak to someone else about my faith?
11. Do I pray about the money I spend?
12. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
13. Do I disobey God in anything?
14. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
15. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
16. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?
17. How do I spend my spare time?
18. Am I proud?
19. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
20. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
21. Do I grumble or complain constantly?
22. Is Christ real to me?



## A quiz about the United Methodist Church

1. In what city was John Wesley born?
  - Epworth
  - London
  - Liverpool
  - Oxford
2. What is the birthday of John Wesley?
  - May 24
  - June 17
  - June 28
  - July 5
3. What do we call the day John Wesley's heart was "strangely warmed"?
  - Burning Heart Sunday
  - Warm Wesley Day
  - Strange Sunday
  - Aldersgate Day
4. How many hymns and poems did Charles Wesley write?
  - 400
  - 900
  - 4,000
  - 9,000
5. What new holiday was recognized at General Conference in 1912?
  - Mother's Day
  - Father's Day
  - Memorial Day
  - Labor Day
6. Which is NOT a tip for good health from John Wesley?
  - Take cold baths
  - Go to bed at 9 p.m. and rise at 4 or 5 a.m.
  - Stand while reading and writing
  - Exercise to the point of weariness
7. Where does "united" come from in the denomination's name?
  - It refers to the church's roots in the United Kingdom
  - It is meant to encourage church members to stay together
  - It references the Evangelical United Brethren Church
8. The Christmas Conference took place in which city?
  - New York
  - Baltimore
  - Philadelphia
  - Boston
9. At what public university did the first Wesley Foundation appear in 1913?
  - University of Virginia
  - Michigan State University
  - University of Illinois
  - University of North Carolina
10. Name two of Francis Asbury's horses.
  - Peter and John
  - Charger and Hard Tack
  - Little Jane and Little Fox
  - Coke and Lucy

SEE ANSWERS  
ON PAGE 42



# Keep it simple

By Dr. Rick Vance

*“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*

-- Philippians 4:8

Speaking to the church in Philippi, Paul says the process of discipleship is as simple as focusing on that which is lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy.

The most common questions I am asked is, “Will you give me a plan that will make men’s ministry work in my church?”

I tell them to:

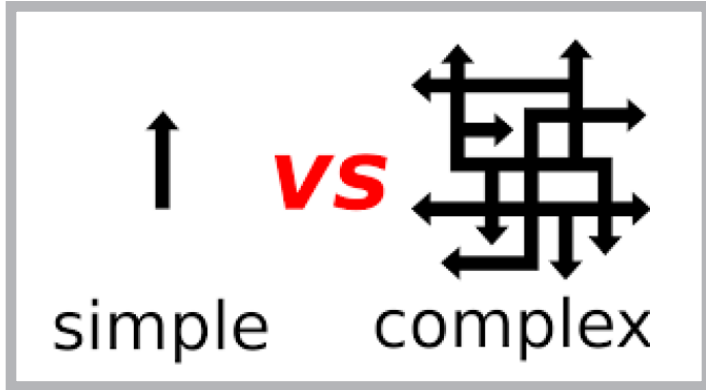
Develop relationships with the men in your church.

Get men involved in small accountable groups.

Listen to the men to determine their needs, interests, and hopes.

Encourage these men to invite other men to join them.

Most men go out and develop a complex multi-step process that requires more time than they have, to implement.



In an article, The Complexity Bias, Becky Kane sarcastically asks, “Why choose a simple explanation when a complex one will do?”

She describes complexity bias as “our tendency to prefer complicated explanations and solutions over simple ones.”

It seems to me that we men always want to make a better mouse trap. When faced with a simple solution, we work hard to add more steps to make the solution seem better.

As men called to “coach men to THRIVE through Christ . . .” we need to get back to the basics. The solution to engaging men is to develop relationships, form small accountable groups, listen, and encourage me to invite their friends.

Kane suggests the following steps to cure our complexity bias.

Develop a bias for action over research.

Choose a system you can stick with.

Apply Occam’s Razor—“When faced with two possible explanations for the same evidence, the one that requires the fewest assumptions is most likely to be true.”

The Center for Man’s Ministries has a variety of resources that can help you in your endeavor to coach men.



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

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## Questions asked by commission staff members

1. What does LLJ stand for?
2. What ministry organization has MIM as first letters of its name?
3. What does EMS stand for?
4. What is the Circuit Rider Society?
5. What do the letters NACP stand for?
6. When did the General Commission on UM Men become a general agency?
7. What is a John Wesley Fellow?
8. What is the Connectional Table?
9. What is UMCOR?
10. Which annual conference covers the largest area?
11. Which annual conference has the most members?
12. Why should I be involved and support the UMM?
13. Why was the United Methodist Men Foundation started?
14. How can I best support the UMMF?
15. How do I obtain job descriptions for local, district, and conference presidents of UMM?
16. How do I receive or provide the Life Achievement Award?
17. How does a local church benefit by chartering annually?
18. What is the mission and vision of the UMMF?
19. What was the source of the word "Methodist"?

SEE ANSWERS  
ON PAGE 40-41

**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](http://Endhunger.org/umm). Or contact Meals for Millions director **Wade Mays** at **800-333-4597** or **wade@endhunger.org**





# On screen characters you didn't know were Methodists



**Superman** – also known as Clark Kent was raised Jonathan and Martha Kent. The Kents are Methodists, although Jonathan is not as regular a churchgoer as his wife.

**Supergirl** – real name is Linda Danvers. Her minister, the Rev. Larry Varvel, was based on a real-life Methodist minister of the same name.



**Fred Gwynne**, the actor who portrayed Herman Munster, was a member of Sandy Mount UMC, and he is buried in a cemetery adjacent to the church.

**James Arness** portrayed Marshal Matt Dillon on *Gunslinger* for 20 years. He and his brother, Peter Graves, were raised as Methodists in Minneapolis.



**Jake Carne and Harry Richardson**

In the British TV series "Poldark," Methodist brothers Drake and Sam Carne run afoul of the local vicar when they start singing in church before the parish's wealthy patron arrives. It's fiction that echoes some of the same conflicts Wesley and his followers encountered.



**Samuel and Rose Sayer**, Methodist missionaries played by Robert Morley and Katharine Hepburn in John Huston's film adaptation of C. S. Forester's novel, *The African Queen*.

**Hank, Peggy, and Bobby Hill**, along with majority of *King of the Hill* characters, attend Arlen First Methodist Church.



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.



GIVE TO UMCOR TODAY AT:  
[umcmmission.org/umcor](http://umcmmission.org/umcor)



# The lonely road of sorrow

By Walter Albritton

When you are traveling the lonely road of sorrow, you don't need to have someone tell you, "I know how you feel." Ironically, what you need most is someone who listens compassionately while you share how you feel.

That's one of the lessons I have learned in the weeks since my wife died. If you tell me you know how I feel, I may smile and not respond but inwardly I am thinking, "No, you have no idea how I am feeling." Truth is, no one knows how another person is feeling, so it is presumptuous to think you do. You only know how I feel if you stop talking long enough for me to tell you how I feel.

I became aware of this important lesson as I reflected on the way several friends reached out to me in my sorrow. Martha got me thinking about this in a note with a card she sent. She reminded me of a Harvard study which concluded that close relationships contribute to our health and happiness. Our friends and fellow companions in Christ are the catalysts of true joy. "Friends make the journey of grief so much easier to travel," Martha said. "I could not have made it through my grief without the help of my friends."

We can learn the same lesson from reading Saint Paul's Letter to the Philippians. Paul tells his friends, his partners in the gospel, that he thanks God for them every time he remembers them. He prays for them with joy and longs for them with the affection of Christ. Yes, friends matter, especially those who are our brothers and sisters in Christ.



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

So, how do friends help assuage our grief. They do so by patiently listening as we share how we feel. Bonny and Tommy came by. They sat on the porch with me. No sermon. No advice. No reprimand. When they drove away two hours later, it dawned on me that I had done most of the talking. They brought no fruit or flowers but simply offered me the greater gift of listening. They never said, "We care about you." Their caring was manifested by the way they listened to me.

Eddie brings breakfast on Thursday mornings. One morning Ron came with him; on another morning Dick came. They did not tell me they knew how I was feeling; they just let the pancakes and bacon tell me they loved me. And once again, when they left I realized I had done most of the talking. They had listened patiently without one time trying to "straighten out" my thinking.

My friends are teaching me how to effectively comfort friends who are grieving. The secret in bearing one another's burdens is simply to "be there." You can fake love but you can't fake being there. And being there, patiently listening, with a friend whose pain seems unbearable, can make all the difference.

When Jill's son died one morning, I rushed to her home. When I asked how she was doing, her reply underlined what I am saying: "I am ok," she said; "Jane came." I looked at Jane and silently prayed, "Lord, don't let me ever forget those two words – 'Jane came.'" Her friend Jane was there, offering the loving gift of listening.

The death of someone you love is a stunning reminder of our mortality. Suddenly the world is turned upside down. Someone is missing. A chair at the table is empty. Tools once used are now idle. You feel numb and helpless. Yet life goes on. And you must find a way to go on.

Caring friends can help us find the strength to deal with the reality of death. Little help comes from reading a poem that says, "I did not die; I am still with you." No, the person who died in my arms and was buried in the family cemetery plot is actually dead and gone. I don't need a sentimental poem; I need a friend who will listen to me explain how it feels to know that my wife will never again sit at the table with me, or listen to my stories, or straighten my tie or hug our great grandchildren.

So, look around you. You probably know someone who is struggling with the emotions that grief produces – anger, guilt, bitterness, emptiness, loneliness, fear and self-pity, to mention a few. You could possibly help that person, not with the advice to "get over it and move on," but by simply being there until the pain diminishes.

When you lovingly listen to a grieving friend, as though you are hurting with them, that friend may begin to think that God is also listening, and that He also hurts when His children suffer. Your being there may give someone hope that God is there also, and that He has sent you to make the lonely road of sorrow easier to navigate. The privilege of providing loving support to a fellow struggler by listening, may be the secret of a life well lived. And sooner or later, each of us will need that support.



## Give Day -- October 18, 2021

Leaders in men's and scouting ministries are doing the remarkable. We continue to expand our ministries.

We invite you to join us in our effort to "coach men and youth to thrive through Christ, so others may know Christ" on October 18, our third annual Give Day.

The "why" is simple, there is a continued financial need to dramatically expand the discipleship opportunities for men and young people.

Former funding sources continue to struggle. Your generosity, last year, allowed us to continue to provide faith-building opportunities.

Consider this, hundreds of men and women, clergy and lay people across this country joined in a grass-roots prayer ministry. These men and women are hungry for more training and more resources.

Also, within the last six months, hundreds of scouting volunteers have been trained by professionals reflecting our work with youth in BSA, Girl Scouts, and Campfire. In 2021, we trained more leaders in these areas than any previous year.

While face-to-face events were cancelled, our work continued and expanded through technological

processes. We continued to provide training resources for men and youth around the world.

A "World Day of Prayer" with leaders of The African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African American Episcopal Church Zion, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church was held this past year.

We are called to reach and disciple more men and more youth, and the demand for more materials in men's and scouting ministries dramatically increased during this year.

Despite the increased costs, we continue to produce much needed original print and electronic resources.

We were fortunate to hold the National Association of Conference Presidents of United Methodist Men and the United Methodist Men Foundation meetings virtually this year. The leadership of the United Methodist Men were able to receive valuable training in a virtual environment.

We are beginning to see an increase in travel now that the pandemic is has allowed for face-to-face meetings. Yes, Zoom is serving us well, but face-to-face meetings with new users are important as we move forward.

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# United Methodists urge churches to delay renewing charters with Boy Scout units

Steven Scheid, director of the Office of Scouting Ministry of the General Commission on United Methodist Men, told an August 26 meeting of the Scouting Committee of the Commission, that bishops and conference chancellors are advising local churches not to renew their charters with BSA units beyond December 31, 2021. This delay gives denominational leaders time to work out an agreement with Boy Scouts of America (BSA) regarding settlements of charges of sexual misconduct.

BSA filed for bankruptcy protection in February. For years they have assured churches and civic organizations that they held enough insurance to cover their chartered organizations in case of injured scouts.

There are now some questions about the amount, availability, and access to past insurance policies.

Local churches may have a risk of paying significant sums to victims to compensate them for the damages they suffered at the hands of Scout leaders.

## Most claims are historical

Thousands of claims were filed following a nationwide effort to get people to file.

Most claims relate to incidents that occurred 40 or more years ago. Many recent claims are youth-

on-youth claims, and most are outside the statute of limitation. The length of time allowed under a statute varies depending upon the severity of the offense and the jurisdiction of dispute.

Scheid noted, "There has been real harm. The Commission recognizes the need for healing." If you have been harmed, he recommends working with 1in6.org. There is support for healing.

Scheid works with Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the commission, and a committee of 12 conference chancellors to provide advice to bishops and other conference leaders.

Time and space are needed to get through the bankruptcy. The committee is advising churches to tell their local scout council that they will not renew their chartering agreement beyond Dec. 31, 2021. There is an option to use a facility use agreement up to Dec. 31, 2021, as well. Making moves while in the uncertainty of negotiations is not advised.

## Scheid does background work

Scheid has done much of the background work for the 14-member committee. "Steven has saved churches thousands of dollars," said Hanke.

"There is a need for healing, but there is also fraud," said Hanke. "I have no idea how this will turn out, but steps have come faster now than they were two months ago."



## Small percentage

"BSA has served 160 million youth in the last 100 plus years," said Scheid. "If one were to accept all initial 96,000 claims as valid, that is a rate of abuse of only 0.006 percent. That percentage compares well to the fact that one in six young men across America experienced sexual abuse: a rate of 17 percent."

"The safest place for your child is in Scouts in the United Methodist Church," said Hanke. "That is good news." The leaders are checked and trained. The youth are trained and safety paramount.

Required Youth Protection training was begun by BSA in 1984 and Safe Sanctuary training by Methodist churches followed in 1998.

## The future

"The number of Scouts today is the same as the number of Scouts in 1933," Scheid lamented. There were 700,000 Scouts 88 years ago and today we have the same number.

Some of the declines are due to COVID-19, some are a result of changes in the culture, and some are due to the BSA bankruptcy.

To address the future, the Scouting Committee of the Commission agreed to form a Growth Committee. That five-member group will suggest steps a local church can take to reinstitute their charters with Scout troops and Cub packs after bankruptcy issues have been settled. A focus is on matching the relationship between the church and BSA to the current time.

The committee also formed a twelve-member Girl Scout Committee to continue strengthening ties between the denomination and Girl Scouts of the USA. Girl Scouts have never used the charter system that BSA uses. With the different relationship, churches are able to safely serve in the community.



FROM LEFT: SCOTT PICKERING, CHAIR OF THE SCOUTING MINISTRIES COMMITTEE, STEVEN SCHEID, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF SCOUTING MINISTRIES, AND GIL HANKE, TOP STAFF EXECUTIVE OF THE COMMISSION, SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BSA BANKRUPTCY WITH AN AUGUST 28 MEETING OF THE COMMISSION.



## Why I continue in Scouting

By Rebecca Harley

After I received the Silver Beaver Award, the editor asked me to write an article explaining why (after 46 years) I am still engaged in Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of the USA.

I spend my retirement time and energy providing opportunities for young people to become better citizens, to develop good morals, to become physically fit, and to become leaders.

At the same time, I am able to increase the number of these opportunities by training adults to become Scout leaders.

I was never a Girl Scout. As many others, I started out in Scouting because our daughter joined a Girl Scout troop. Fourteen years later our son joined Tiger Scouts as a second grader, and I became a den mother. He eventually became an Eagle Scout, and I was hooked.

I'm not sure how I moved from being a den mother to being a district and conference leader of scouting.

I thought it was the great honor to be a coordinator of a small group of leaders. From there, it just seemed like everyone had special ideas for me. When my health would keep me from continuing down one path, someone would ask me to take on something else, and God would open another pathway.

I have served as a leader at every level of Scouting. I have held several district positions and served as a master trainer for both Boy and Girl Scouts.



Rebecca Harley received The Silver Beaver Award, an honor presented by the National Court of Honor to Scouters of exceptional character who have provided distinguished service within a council.



My biggest recognized contribution to Girl Scouts was a project with Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. On the forefront of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) program, five Girl Scout volunteers worked with Franklin Institute staff to design six science kits for 1-3-grade girls and 4-6-grade girls. This and other projects resulted in my receiving the Thanks II Badge, Girl Scouts' highest national honor.

When my husband and I left Maryland to join our grandsons in Georgia, what else was there to do but to help with Scouting? Grandson Alex led a Red Cross blood drive that more than doubled his goal; his brother, Christopher, left Scouting for a time but earned the rank of Eagle in a Venture Crew that I began 18 months earlier after being talked into a new job.

In Boy Scouts, I chaired the district training team with a two-plus-year record of nearly 80 percent of Scouters fully trained for their positions, the highest percentage in the nation. My current position is district commissioner serving 22 units with the assistance of unit commissioners.

## Commission eliminates staff position

While other United Methodist general agencies have been forced to reduce staff during the pandemic, the General Commission on U.M. Men had avoided that necessity until May 27; that's when Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the Nashville-based agency, was forced to eliminate a post serving the Center for Scouting Ministries, the U.M. Men Foundation and Strength for Service.



MARC STOWE

Marc Stowe, a 23-year veteran in that post, provided Scout leaders with the materials they needed and assisted the U.M. Men Foundation with awards and fund-raising efforts. He also spent hours packing and mailing out copies of *Strength for Service* books.

"Marc worked with all of us," said Hanke, and all of us miss him greatly. Marc loved to laugh and loved music, and clearly loved each of us and each of our constituents across the connection. We were blessed to have Marc and he shared his many talents with us every day.

The commission receives funds from many different sources, but all were dramatically reduced, which required this unwanted step."

"I have made some wonderful life-long friends during my 23 years at the commission," said Stowe. "I have especially enjoyed working with local churches and their scouting coordinators with their awards and other issues. Working with Larry Coppock and the Strength for Service organization has been an incredible experience. I wish the commission the best of luck as the entire denomination, which I grew up in, maneuvers through these challenging times."



## WHERE I USED TO ATTEND

**A MAN WAS STRANDED ON A DESERTED ISLAND. YEARS PASSED BEFORE HE WAS FINALLY DISCOVERED. WHEN THE RESCUE PARTY CAME ASHORE THE MAN EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE AND SAID HE HAD SURVIVED ALONE FOR 35 YEARS.**

**THE RESCUE PARTY WAS SUSPICIOUS.**

**"NO ONE COULD LIVE ON THE ISLAND ALONE FOR THAT LONG," SAID A RESCUER.**

**"BUT IT'S TRUE," THE MAN SAID, "COME SEE WHERE I LIVED."**

**WHEN THE RESCUE PARTY ARRIVED, THEY SAW THREE STRAW HUTS.**

**"AH HAH," THEY SAID. "HERE IS EVIDENCE THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE."**

**"LET ME EXPLAIN," SAID THE MAN. "THE FIRST HUT IS WHERE I LIVED FOR 35 YEARS. THE THIRD HUT IS WHERE I ATTEND CHURCH."**

**"WHAT THEN IS THE SECOND HUT?" THEY ASKED.**

**"OH," SAID THE MAN,**

**"THAT'S WHERE I USED TO GO TO CHURCH."**



# In Memoriam



## The beginning

Born in Wichita Falls in 1930, Wyatt was the son of a roofer who first painted on his bedroom basement ceiling before getting permission to draw on the walls.

He attended Tarleton University in Stephenville, Texas, where he helped cheerleaders with their signs and made money selling cartoons to *Collier's* magazine.

After graduating from Tarleton and McMurry University in Abilene, he spent 30 years in country churches around the region, and he engaged in graduate study at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

## Change of vocation

"It was in the middle of a sermon in Morton [Texas] in the 1960s when I sense that wasn't enough," Wyatt recalled in 2013.

"Now I'm not a nut but it was like in my mind, I was hearing that this wasn't what God wanted me to do anymore."

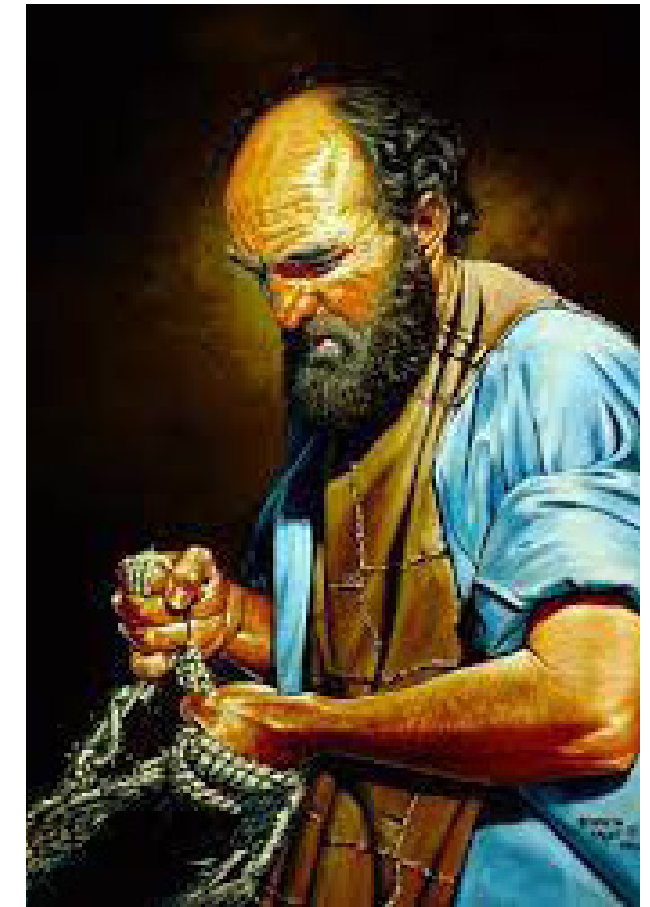
He took a sabbatical while wife, Veda, took a teaching job in Tulia. He did some professional speaking, but he devoted more time to painting. With his sabbatical over, he decided to give full-time painting a stab.

As a result of that decision, 9,000 paintings are now in the homes of former U.S. presidents, U.S. congressmen, state senators, Queen Elizabeth, and the Oklahoma State Capitol.

The Wyatt family released a brief statement after his passing, quoting Matthew 25:23—"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

*The painting below hung in The Upper Room Chapel in Nashville for many years before being sent to the foundation's headquarters at Lake Junaluska, N.C.*

*He painted each of the 12 disciples. "My models came from many locations and from many walks of life," said Wyatt. "Jesus selected His followers in much the same way: He called one from the tax tables, another from the carpenter's trade, a few from the sea, and still others from tents, houses, and deserts."*



*"He may not have ministered in the pulpit anymore, but he ministered in his art," said Carl McDaniel with the Kenneth Wyatt Galleries in Amarillo. He described many of Wyatt's pieces as being "infused" with Christian imagery and depictions of God's glory seen in nature and the human spirit.*

*"If he didn't paint," said son Mark Wyatt, "I don't know what he would do. He loves the creation of something new. Sometimes when he starts a painting, it seems like he wants to finish so badly just so he can start another one."*





# Why America's health-care system is bad

By Bryant Stamford

Anyone who is paying attention knows our health-care system is in trouble, and things keep getting worse. We struggle with trying to provide adequate health care to Americans at an affordable cost, but year by year we are losing the battle as costs continue to escalate while the overall health profile of Americans declines.

Unfortunately, the pharmaceutical industry has been unable to save us with a magic pill that reverses the ravages of the American lifestyle that cause us to get fat and live sicker and die quicker than folks in other industrialized countries around the world.

Obesity alone accounts for 21 percent of all health-care costs. That's with a current incidence of obesity in the U.S. of about 34 percent of adults.

Pretty bleak, isn't it? Experts tell us it will get worse, and in a hurry. It is projected that by 2030 half of all adults in the U.S. will be obese.



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

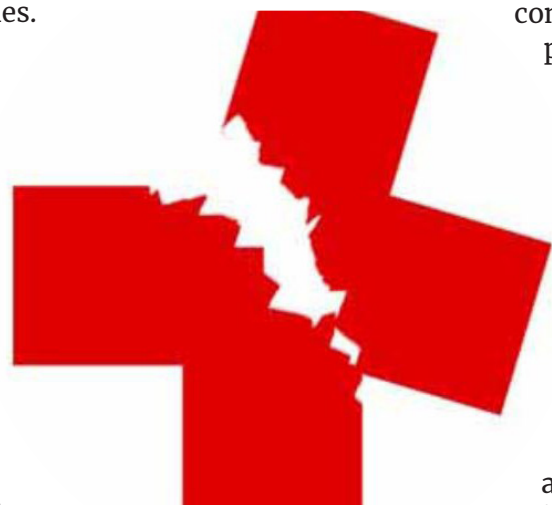
## Astronomical costs

The American lifestyle is particularly effective in promoting obesity-related diseases like heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. The cost associated with treating these diseases continues to escalate year by year, plus the incidence continues to rise as well.

Can our health-care system withstand the strain? In 2016 cardiovascular disease cost the U.S. about \$555 billion. The cost by 2035 will be \$1.1 trillion.

A really scary trend in the U.S. is the increasing incidence of Type 2 diabetes, particularly among children. In the past, Type 2 diabetes was referred to as age-onset, usually showing up in middle age and associated with the accumulation of too much body fat. Nowadays, obese youngsters are being diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes as early as age 10, and it's becoming more common.

Currently, we have 30 million diabetics in the U.S., plus another 84 million adults with pre-diabetes, which, if not treated, will advance to full blown Type 2 diabetes in the years ahead. The life-time health-care cost of treating someone with diabetes is about two-and-a-half times the cost of treating someone without diabetes. Imagine the overwhelming cost in the future if the army of pre-diabetics does not change course, plus the increased cost of treating diabetics starting at age 10 instead of age 45.



## Sage advice

What's the answer? It's obvious we must do something and reducing the incidence of obesity is a good place to start. Maybe it's time we listen to what smart folks have been trying to tell us for hundreds of years. For example, in 400 B.C., Hippocrates urged walking and push-ups to prevent disease. Sound advice, especially for the 80 percent of American adults, and more than 80 percent of adolescents who fail to meet even minimal daily exercise guidelines.

Others have contributed similar advice.

*1553: The first exercise book is published by a Spanish physician, with walking being the most healthful kind of exercise.*

*1769: Scottish physician William Buchan tells us, "Of all the causes which conspire to render life of man short and miserable, none have greater influence than the want of proper exercise."*

*1786: Thomas Jefferson tells us, "Not less than two hours a day should be devoted to exercise, and the weather should be little regarded."*

*1915: The U.S. surgeon general's office finds exercise "necessary for all (except those actually and acutely ill), at all ages, for both sexes, daily, in amount just short of fatigue."*

*1955: After President Dwight D. Eisenhower has a heart attack, the president's personal physician, Dr. Paul Dudley White, schools Americans on principles he practices to prevent illness: "Walk more, eat less, and sleep more."*

*1960: President John F. Kennedy tells us we are soft, a nation of under-exercised spectators, and that we need to get in shape.*

## The bottom line

As Pogo, the comic strip character, famously said, "We have met the enemy, and he is us."

It's time we heed the warning signs and quit pretending that our health-care system can stay on this path and survive. Thankfully, three simple steps can help us turn the tide.

Take a 30-minute walk every day at a pace that suggests you are in a hurry.

Eat less.

Make better food choices.

Do this and your body will thank you and reward you with better health. You also will be doing your part to preserve the greatest health-care system in the world.





# Who will lead to middle ground?

By Tom Tozer and Bill Black

Our society has become fragmented. Angry. Fearful. Suspicious. Lost. Too many of us have given ourselves permission to be mean to others, to ignore rules of civility, to replace respect with revenge and to redefine “equality” as getting even.

## Middle ground is vanishing territory.

How do we recognize and appreciate our shared humanity when extremes seem to rule the day? And what are we teaching our children through our words and actions?

## The value of values

The Oxford Dictionary defines values as principles or standards of behavior; one’s judgment of what is important in life. It can be helpful to reflect on our values, how we live them, and what we want to teach our children. Values guide us. They help us establish our identity. They are like a roadmap for our lives. They keep us on course.

## A new word to grow on

Certain values are key to being a good person—Do the right thing. Be kind. Tell the truth. Make life better for someone else. Do your best.

One of the most important (but elusive) values is empathy.

For thousands of years, civilization has promoted it. In ancient Greece, it was: “Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing.” In Rome, it was: “Treat your inferior as you would wish your superior to treat you.” This sentiment appeared even earlier in Egyptian texts.

Many of the world’s religions extol the concept: the Jewish Talmud, the Hindu Mahabharata, the Islamic Sunnah, in Buddhism, and certainly Christianity. Empathy requires making a genuine effort to understand another person’s situation or perspective—treating that person’s concerns the way you would your own. As adults, as role models, we struggle with that. Our children see that struggle. And they feel hypocrisy, even if they don’t know the word.

## Teaching empathy

It’s easy to join the group and fall in line with bad behavior. It takes no courage to blend in and go along with the crowd. Hey, dad, encourage your kids to rise above the harshness and meanness that is all around. Step up to a higher level and be a role model of kindness. Be a parent who stands up when the need arises, who speaks up for the right thing and says what everyone else may be thinking but is reluctant to express. The impression this will make on your children will be indelible.



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](mailto:tomandbill@Dads2Dadsllc.com).



**Listen.** Let your son or daughter express how he or she is feeling. Be ready to insert empathy into the conversation.

**Inquire.** Ask why your child has a negative feeling about someone. Challenge your children to stand in someone else’s shoes. Ask: “How do you feel? Are your feelings hurt? Do you feel humiliated? Embarrassed? Do you feel inferior to others?” Ask them to think back to a time when they felt one or more of those things. Empathy means to feel someone else’s pain.

**Be positive.** Make sure you take a positive approach to dealing with other people or situations. Think twice before you accuse, criticize, or make assumptions about others.

**Reflect.** Help your child see that when someone does something that hurts another person’s feelings, we should ask ourselves: “Why is that person being mean? Why is he or she calling another person names or making fun of their appearance? What makes a bully ... a bully?” Talk to yourself, your parents and your friends about it. Write about it. Or just think about it long and hard.

## Practice what we teach and preach

We know that engaging in challenging conversations, speaking out for what you believe, and confronting bias and incorrect assumptions is sometimes painful. You risk being laughed at, abused—verbally or even physically—or just ignored. But if people—especially those who profess a strong faith—don’t stand up for their values, who will?

Take a look at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for some [good resources to help](#).



## Answers to questions asked by commission staff members (page 24)

### 1. What does LLJ stand for?

Lead like Jesus. The commission has three certified instructors for this course.

### 2. What does MIM stand for?

Man in the Mirror is a ministry that has worked with some 35,000 churches,

### 3. What does EMS stand for?

Every Man Shares in Evangelism Mission and Spiritual Life was introduced at the 1981 National Congress of UM Men at Purdue University. EMS members contribute \$45 per year

### 4. What is the Circuit Riders Society?

The Circuit Riders Society provides individuals and families the opportunity to serve as major gift donors to the commission. The entry level of giving is \$1,500 annually.

### 5. What do the letters NACP stand for?

The National Association of Conference Presidents of United Methodist Men is an affiliate of the General Commission on United Methodist Men with a direct link to the men in the local church through the jurisdictions, conferences, and districts. Herman Lightsey serves as president.

### 6. When did the General Commission on United Methodist Men become a general agency?

The 1996 General Conference, meeting in Denver, Colo., approved the creation of the agency and it was officially formed in 1997 with the Rev. Joe Harris, a superintendent in the Oklahoma Annual Conference as the first general secretary.

### 7. What is a John Wesley Fellow?

A John Wesley Fellow is a member of the Society of John Wesley, a fellowship of men and women committed to the support and expansion of United Methodist Men's ministries. Established in 1982 by the United Methodist Men Foundation, the Society of John Wesley is a means of recognizing those who exemplify the characteristics of John Wesley. A gift of \$1,000 to the foundation enables one to become a fellow.

### 8. What is the Connectional Table?

Created at the 2004 General Conference, the 49-member Connectional Table is the visioning body of the church and the steward of resources. The agency includes representatives of jurisdictional and central conferences, United Methodist bishops, presidents and top staff executives of the general agencies, the Commission on General Conference, ethnic caucuses and the Division on Ministries with Young People.

### 9. What is UMCOR?

The United Methodist Committee on Relief is the arm of the General Board of Global Ministries that provide help to those who suffer from famine, hurricane, war, flood, fire or other events.

### 10. Which annual conference covers the largest area?

The Alaska Missionary Conference with 28 churches tops the list with 665,384 square miles. The Mountain Sky Conference with 367 churches in Montana, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado churches is second with 433,932 square miles.

### 11. Which annual conference has the most members?

North Georgia is first with 353,000 members; Virginia is second with 317,000 members.

### 12. Why should I be involved and support the UMM??

The commission is one of the most organized group of men who declare the centrality of Christ in every man's life, to promote the spiritual growth of men through effective discipleship, and to model the servant leadership of Christ in our daily lives. It changes lives of men, women, and youth across the denomination and around the world.

### 13. Why was the United Methodist Men Foundation started?

In 1981 the United Methodist Men Foundation was established by the National Association of Conference Presidents of United Methodist Men as a way to support scouting ministries when it appeared the denomination was no longer willing to do so.

### 14. How can I best support the UM Men Foundation?

Through a direct gift, your will, planned giving, a life insurance policy, charitable gift annuities, or charitable gift endowments

### 15. How do I obtain job descriptions for local, district, and conference presidents of UMM?

Go to GCUMM.org and click on "Resources." Go to the bottom of the website and type in "Job Descriptions."

### 16. How do I receive or provide the Life Achievement award?

Go to the UMMF.org and click on Life Achievement Award. Go to Application Process and print the application. Fill it out and return it to the United Methodist Men Foundation, 1000 17th Ave. S. Nashville, TN 37212

### 17. How does a local church benefit by chartering annually?

In addition to the disciplinary requirement, chartering enables the national organization of the United Methodist Men to resource the local church by providing training for the UMM leaders, coordinating men's materials and events, supporting UMM mission projects, as well as providing leadership in scouting ministries (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Big Brothers/Big Sisters). Chartering connects each local UMM unit with other units in a shared ministry around the world. Chartering provides the national office with income to reach men in every setting (urban, rural, international) of the church. Charter income helps to provide a national staff of specialist in men's and scouting ministries.

### 18. What is the Mission and Vision of the UM Men Foundation?

The mission is to provide financial support for the General Commission on UM Men and its ministries. The vision is to promote stewardship and philanthropy while also gathering and dispersing funds for the endowed ministries of the commission.

### 19. What was the source of the word "Methodist"?

John and Charles Wesley brothers formed the "Holy Club" at the University of Oxford, where John was an associate and later an instructor at Lincoln College. The group met weekly and methodically set about living a holy life. They preferred to receive Communion every week, abstain from most forms of amusement and luxury and commonly visit the sick and the poor. The fellowship was stigmatized as "Methodist" by their fellow classmates because of the way they used "rule" and "method" to determine their religious convictions. John, who was the leader of the club, took the attempted mockery and turned it into a title of honor.



## Answers to quiz about the United Methodist Church (pg 21)

1. In what city was John Wesley born?  
Epworth.
2. What is the birthday of John Wesley?  
June 28.
3. What do we call the day Wesley's heart was "strangely warmed"?  
Aldersgate Day.
4. How many hymns and poems did Charles Wesley write?  
9,000.
5. What new holiday was recognized at General Conference in 1912?  
Mother's Day.
6. Which is NOT a tip for good health from John Wesley?  
"Exercise to the point of weariness."
7. Where does "united" come from in the denomination's name?  
It references the Evangelical United Brethren Church.
8. The Christmas Conference took place in what city?  
Baltimore.
9. At what public university did the first Wesley Foundation appear in 1913?  
University of Illinois.
10. Name two of Francis Asbury's horses.  
Little Jane and Little Fox.

### GRADE YOURSELF

- 10 correct = A  
 9 correct = B  
 8 correct = C  
 7 correct = D  
 6 or fewer = you learned something, but who is ever going to ask you about the names of Asbury's horses?

## Answers to "Who said it" (pg 12)

1. Baseball manager Branch Rickey
2. Singer Beyoncé Knowles
3. Actor Christopher Walken
4. United Methodist Men leader Joe Kelley
5. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton
6. Film director George Lucas
7. Author Stephen King
8. Brooklyn Dodger Jackie Robinson
9. U.S. President William McKinley
10. Minnesota Viking Fran Tarkenton, son of a Methodist minister
11. Actress Donna Reed
12. Composer and musician W. C. Handy, son and grandson of a Methodist minister
13. Senator George McGovern, son of a Methodist minister
14. U.S. President George W. Bush

### GRADE YOURSELF

*If you got 14 correct, give yourself an A+. More likely you confused George Lucas, Steven King and Donna Reed. That's something you normally wouldn't do. Those who know Joe Kelley knew the quotation before they read it.*

**UNITED  
METHODISTS  
STAND AGAINST  
RACISM**

**UMC.org/EndRacism**





# ACROSS THE NATION

## PRATTVILLE, ALABAMA

### Seven Cub Scouts achieve goal of becoming Eagles

Twelve years ago, five Cub Scouts in Pack 25, sponsored by First UMC, were told that only 4-6 percent of Scouts achieve the rank of Eagle.

The seven agreed they would beat the odds and become Eagle Scouts.

In 2021, they achieved that goal.

the stupendous seven were asked about their favorite memories, three of them recalled sleeping on the USS Alabama and imagining they were World War II sailors.



Five members of Pack 25 and the same high school graduating class from left: Cleveland Stockman, Alex Pearce, Robert Humphrey, Sam Cooper, and Carter Stockman.



Please support the global ministry to men and young people.

**GIVE NOW**

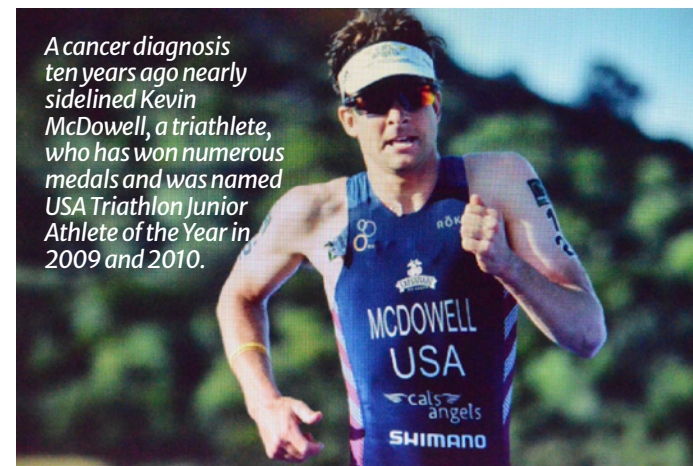
## COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

### UM finishes sixth in Olympic Games triathlon

U.S. Olympian Kevin McDowell, a former member of Flowing Forth UMC in Aurora, Ill., made history at the Olympic Games men's triathlon event on July 26. His sixth-place finish in the triathlon was the highest-ever finish by a U.S. man in that grueling event.

The Rev. Jeffry Bross, former pastor and now a district superintendent, said, "He came on his own to church as a high school kid and at the time was the number one rated triathlete in the world. His family followed him and started coming to Flowing Forth, so he evangelized."

The McDowell family later moved to Colorado where Kevin attended college and currently trains, but Bross says Kevin often visits when he's back home.



A cancer diagnosis ten years ago nearly sidelined Kevin McDowell, a triathlete, who has won numerous medals and was named USA Triathlon Junior Athlete of the Year in 2009 and 2010.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

### UM veteran receives the Medal of Honor

Retired Colonel Ralph Puckett Jr., 94, a former member of St. Luke UMC in Columbus, Ga., received the Medal of Honor from President Biden.

While serving as commander for the Eighth Army Ranger Company in 1950, then First Lieutenant Puckett led 51 U.S. and nine South Korean soldiers against Chinese troops on what was called Hill 205. While his troops were pinned down by enemy fire, Puckett ran across an open field three times to draw enemy fire, thereby enabling his Rangers to locate and destroy the enemy's machine gun and seize the hill. Though outnumbered ten to one, the twice wounded Puckett and his Rangers defeated five successive Chinese human wave counterattacks over four hours. Finally, on the sixth assault, with supporting artillery fires unavailable, the Ranger company was overrun in

close-quarters, hand-to-hand combat. Having suffered additional debilitating wounds, Puckett ordered his troops to leave him behind and escape. In spite of the order, fellow Rangers evacuated him to safety. Puckett then spent a year in the hospital before returning to service. He then spent a total of 22 years in the Army, including service in Vietnam.

The Rev. Hal Brady, former pastor of St. Luke UMC in Columbus, recalls how Colonel Puckett assisted the church in a ministry to the troops at Fort Benning. "Colonel Puckett blessed us all with his leadership, commitment, humility, selflessness and authenticity," said Brady, now executive director of Hal Brady Ministries in Atlanta.



President Joe Biden presents the Medal of Honor to retired U.S. Army Col. Ralph Puckett, May 21, 2021. AP Photo by Alex Brandon.

## AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

### Men honor Army veteran

Men of Burns Memorial UMC presented Bill Williams the Milford Scott Burns Memorial Man of The Year for 2021. They also gave him a Life Achievement Award.

A certified lay speaker, Bill has served the church in a variety of capacities, including a Sunday school teacher and lay leader.

Bill served in the U.S. Army for 30 years, achieving the rank of Sargent Major. For this service he was presented a quilt by Sandy Yarbrough of the organization Quilts of Valor.



UM Men President Burles Johnson presents the award and Mavis, his wife of 56 years, places the pin on his lapel.



## MIDLAND, GEORGIA

### Men present kilts for attendance and community action

The kilt may be the traditional garment of Scotsmen, but to a group of young men in Pierce Chapel UMC, receiving a kilt is a distinction earned for years of commitment, service, and leadership.

Seven years ago, Stephen Childers formed the Knights in Leadership Training (KILT) program for high school males to develop deep friendships with a strong foundation of faith in Christ.

“I was looking for something to help these guys be godly men,” Childers said.

KILT members earn awards for meeting attendance and volunteer service. After earning 1,200 points, they’re awarded a kilt. More points can earn them a harp pin, a thistle pin, a rampant lion pin, and a Celtic cross belt and buckle. A sporran is awarded to high school graduates who earn at least 1,200 points.



## AURORA, ILLINOIS

### Church sponsors station at pride drive

Wesley UMC was among 40 Aurora organizations hosting drive-by stations in a second annual Pride Drive.

Activities in the church parking lot included a concert by Saint Astro band of Aurora, an art display and a pierogi food truck. Nonperishable food items were collected to benefit the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry.



## GENEVA, ILLINOIS

### Seven services in forest preserve

The Rev. Richard Darr, senior pastor of the UMC of Geneva, preaches on “Doing Church like Jesus” to open seven outdoor worship services at Fabyan Forest Preserves in Geneva. The Rev. Lisa Telomen, associate pastor read the Scripture.



## GLENCOE, ILLINOIS

### UM Man becomes oldest to conquer Everest



Art Muir, 75, reached the top of Mt. Everest on May 23, making him the oldest American to reach the world’s highest peak.

Art, a longtime member of North Shore UMC in Glencoe and former board member of the UMC Foundation of the Northern Illinois Conference, climbed Mt. Denali with his son,

Charles, in 2015. He then began training for the 29,031-foot peak. Unfortunately, an ankle injury delayed Art’s attempt at Mt. Everest in 2019. He had to wait until 2021 to make his second attempt since Mt. Everest was closed to climbers last year because of the pandemic.

The grandfather of six, said, “It was cold and windy on the top and I was just surprised when I actually got there. I was too tired to stand up, and in my summit pictures I am sitting down.”

## NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

### UM pastor launches regional Habitat



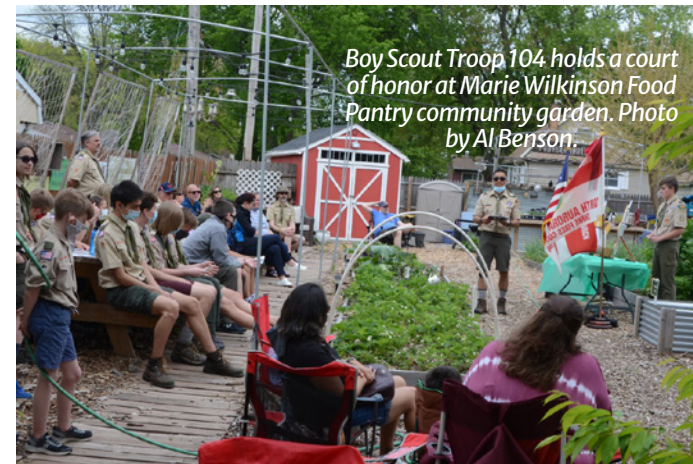
The Rev. Duane Meavis, a retired UM clergyman, is the founder of Fox Valley Habitat for Humanity, a volunteer-driven building collaborative that has constructed more than 60 homes.

He attended a June dedication of a Habitat duplex in Aurora.

## NORTH AURORA, ILLINOIS

### Scouts meet at food pantry

A Boy Scout chartered by Living Hope Church held a court of honor in the garden of Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry. Troop 104 Scoutmaster Dr. Thomas Brooks said the pantry was the beneficiary of food drive lead by Connor Harms for his Eagle service project. Troop 104 holds three courts annually said Dave Weakman, event emcee and troop advancement chair.



## COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA

### Walkers and bikers raise funds

Thirteen bikers and walkers raised \$3,000 for Camp Fontanelle, a campsite of the Great Plains Annual Conference, and \$500 for Conference UM Men.



## ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

### Men honor former officer of the UM Men organization

Men of Paradise Hills UMC surprised Richard Groff, a former officer of Paradise Hills UM Men, with two national awards.

Dave Price, interim president of New Mexico Conference UM Men, inducted Richard into the John Wesley Society, and John White, president of Paradise Hills UM Men, presented Richard with the Cross and Flame Award.

The Society of John Wesley is awarded to people who exemplify the spirit of John Wesley and his service to God and His people. Richard received an engraved plaque and a lapel pin affixed to his collar by his wife, Stefani.

The Cross and Flame Award is given to Scout leaders. Richard is an Eagle Scout and former charter organization for Scouting at the church. He also received a plaque and a neck medal for that award.

Jim Mogford, past president of New Mexico Conference UM Men and a fellow in the John Wesley Society, was present for the ceremony at a worship service along with Richard’s family and friends. They gave him a standing ovation.





## GREIG, NEW YORK

### Conference president inducted into the Society of John Wesley

Mark Jones, president of UM Men of the Upper New York Conference, became the 825th fellow of the Society of John Wesley during a surprise induction ceremony at the 13th Annual Spring UM Men Retreat at Camp Aldersgate.

Buddy Heit, former conference UMM president, inducted Mark, and Ted Johndrow, also a former conference president, read a letter of congratulations from Bishop Mark Webb who was unable to attend the retreat.

Mark joins Johndrow from North Syracuse, N.Y.; Ken Summers from Endicott, N.Y.; and John Burlew from Manlius, N.Y. as members of the society.

Mark's wife, Susan, and daughter, Whitney, were given advance notice so they could witness this special event along with 30 participants in the April 30 retreat.

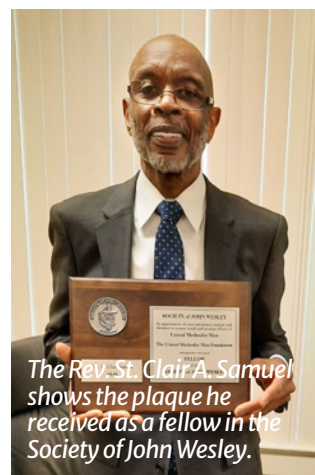
Mark was elected president of the Mohawk District UM Men in 2004, and he was elected conference president in 2014. The conference also presented him the prestigious Harry Denman Evangelism Award in 2017. Mark, Susan, and son Ryan live in Frankfort, N.Y.



Mark Jones proudly holds the plaque indicating his membership in the Society of John Wesley.

## HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK

### Pastor named fellow in Society of John Wesley



The Rev. St. Clair A. Samuel shows the plaque he received as a fellow in the Society of John Wesley.

Royston Bailey, president of UM Men of Hempstead UMC, inducted The Rev. St. Clair A. Samuel, pastor of the church and former superintendent of the Metropolitan District (2011-2013), into the Society of John Wesley.

Ordained elder in 1993 by the New York Annual Conference, Pastor Samuel began

his ministry to English and Spanish-speaking people in Hempstead in 2016, following service as pastor of New Rochelle UMC (2013-2016). He retired at the June 2021 session of New York Annual Conference.

He is a graduate of Morristown (Tenn.) College; York College, Jamaica, N.Y.; and the New Brunswick (N.J.) Theological Seminary. He has served on the New York Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and Worship Committee.

Pastor Samuel grew up in St. Vincent and the Grenadines where he taught religious education, Spanish, and West Indian history while coaching athletes at the Mesopotamia Emmanuel High School. Also, he was a local preacher in the Georgetown Circuit of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas.

He is married to Brenda King Samuel, a social worker with Catholic Guardian Services in the Bronx. Son Brandon is a technical recruiter for a Washington, D.C. company while studying for a graduate degree at Georgetown University.

## HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK

### Church honors four women

Men of Hempstead UMC presented four women with Susanna Wesley Awards of Excellence on Mother's Day.

Mary Johnson, 90 was honored for 52 years of service to UM Women, the Finance Committee, Chancel Choir, and Staff-Parish Relationship Committee. She also served as librarian, greeter, worship leader and chair of the rummage sale.

Jean Bearak was honored for 48 years of service to the Hempstead church. She served as a Sunday school teacher, usher, and a member of the Nominations, Stewardship, Counting and Parsonage Committees. She chaired the Finance and the Missions Committees, and she served as president of UM Women. She served on the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, the Board of Trustees, and the Church Council.

The church also presented the Susanna Wesley Award to Brenda Samuel, wife of the Rev. St. Clair Samuel, pastor of the Hempstead church. She is employed as a social worker by Catholic Guardian Services in the Bronx and is an active leader of UM Women.

The Rev. Elizabeth L. Williams joined Hempstead UMC in 1982, and after serving in several positions she was called into the ministry. Following college, she graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary in 2006, and became a certified lay pastor with a dual charge in upstate New York in 2007. In 2014, she became a full clergy member of New York Conference and was appointed pastor of Faith UMC in Staten Island. In 2019, she retired due health concerns and returned to Hempstead where she sang in the choir, president of UM Women, and a spiritual adviser. She moved to Georgia last April.



FROM LEFT: JEAN BEARAK, BRENDA SAMUEL, AND MARY JOHNSON.

THE REV. ELIZABETH WILLIAMS, RECIPIENT OF THE SUSANNA WESLEY AWARD.

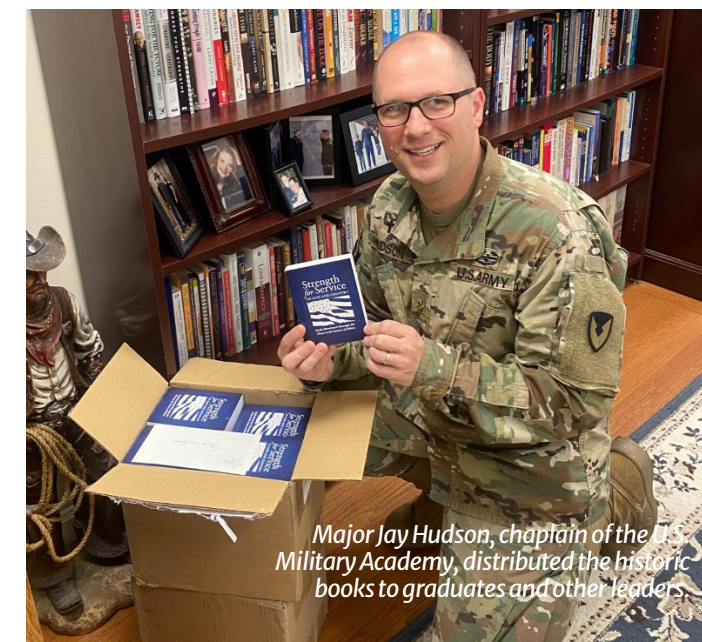


## WEST POINT, NEW YORK

### Cadets receive devotional books

The Strength for Service Team sent copies of Strength for Service God and Country to cadets and leaders of the United States Military Academy.

While the SFS team has distributed more than 580,000 copies of the book since 9/11, this is the first known distribution to West Point.



Major Jay Hudson, chaplain of the U.S. Military Academy, distributed the historic books to graduates and other leaders.

## CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

### Churches serve as vaccination sites

St. Mark's UMC is one of 15 Charlotte-area UM churches that served as vaccination sites.

The effort, organized by the Metro District of the Western North Carolina Conference, led to approximately 3,800 vaccinations.

"This is contributing to the well-being of our neighbors, and we count it a great privilege to be a small part of the solution," said the Rev. Otto Harris, pastor of St. Mark's.



Patients form a line in the church sanctuary as they wait to receive a COVID-19 vaccination at St. Mark's UMC in Charlotte, N.C. Those who have already received their dose wait in the

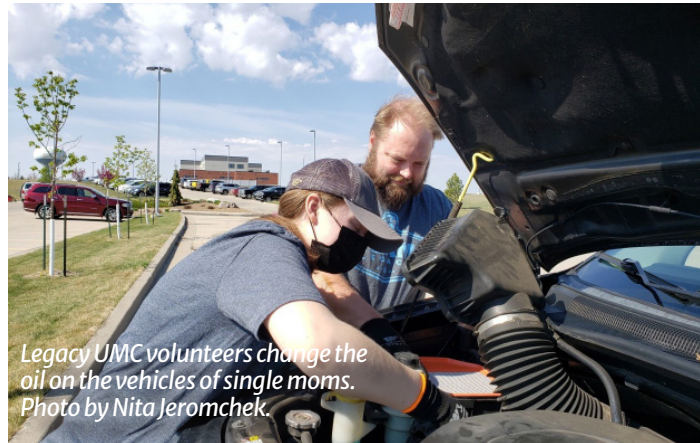


**BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA.**

**Men provide oil changes**

During "Blessing Single Mom's Day," men of Legacy UMC change the oil of vehicles. Children enjoy lunch, games, and crafts inside the church while their mothers have some time away.

"I can't believe that people would do this for me," said one grateful mother.



Legacy UMC volunteers change the oil on the vehicles of single moms. Photo by Nita Jeromchek.

**LIMA, OHIO**

**Pastor blesses bikes**

Each year, the Rev. Pastor Bryan Bucher, pastor of Shawnee UMC, conducts a Blessing of the Bikes service.

"I think it's really cool because a lot of people come together who wouldn't normally be going to a church service," said 18-year-old Ashley Cover.

"May every bike here and every person who rides on those bikes, may they be blessed by the living God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ — and the people said . . ." The "amen" was the sound of hundreds of motorcycles starting up together.

The 2021 service was the last for Bucher; he was appointed to Westwood UMC in Cincinnati after 17 years in Shawnee. "I'm going to miss this very much," he said.



Pastor Bryan Bucher blesses the bikes.

**CAMDEN, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Cubs learn skills at Cuboree**

Cub Pack 303 sponsored by Lytteton Street UMC of Camden learned a variety of skills at the Wateree District Cuboree. They learned about caring for knives, shooting arrows and disabilities awareness.



**COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Cub Scouts hold Pinewood Derby**

A highlight of the year of every Cub Scout pack is the Pinewood Derby.

Cubs of Pack 303 sponsored Lyttleton Street UMC raced their hand-made cars while wearing masks and social distancing.



**COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Men portray Last Supper**

Pandemic-induced lockdowns didn't stop Windsor and Rehoboth UMCs, Columbia, from joining forces to re-enact the disciples' Passover meal with Jesus. The churches held a Zoom Maundy Thursday reader's theatre presentation of The Last Supper by Ruth Elaine.



Windsor's men—Mark Brown, Mark Cato, Frank Hill, Ivey Hart, Calvin Edwards, Dan Lackore, John Mullikin, Isaac Byrd, John Russell and Doug Meade—and Rehoboth's men—Forrest Horn and Bill Rose—portray the 12 disciples in a series of monologues. Photo by Kathy Hart.

**LUGOFF, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**A week of camping**



Members of Troop 316, sponsored by St John's UMC of Lugoff, S.C. heading to Camp Barstow for week-long summer adventure.

**SUMMERVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Busy weekend**

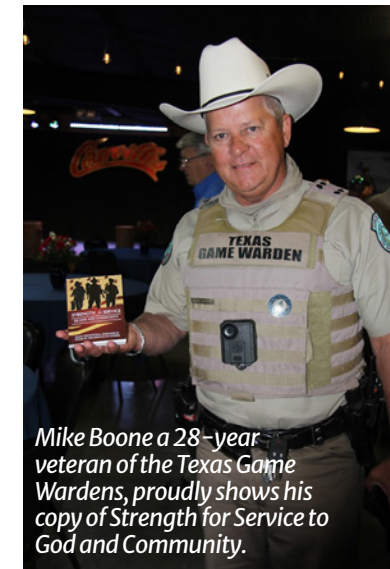
Scouts of Troop 750 chartered by Stallville UMM camped out on church grounds on a Friday, painted newly replaced/repainted doors to the church's fellowship hall on a Saturday, and joined the congregation for worship on a Sunday.



Scouts paint door to fellowship hall.

**BEAUMONT, TEXAS**

**Devotional books given to outdoor heroes**



Mike Boone a 28-year veteran of the Texas Game Wardens, proudly shows his copy of Strength for Service to God and Community.

The Strength for Service team hosted a barbecue luncheon and recognition event for 45 members of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Federal Magistrate Keith Giblin was the keynote speaker.

Officers and wardens received copies of Strength for Service to God and Community devotional books. Chaplains will present copies to those who could not attend.



## HENDERSON, TEXAS

### Texas Conference tops in South Central Jurisdiction



In 2020, the Texas Annual Conference had more chartered units of UM Men than any other conference in the South Central Jurisdiction.

## LAURINBURG, VIRGINIA

### Fifty-four years of barbecue plates

Since 1966, Saint Luke UMC has hosted an annual barbecue plate sale.

In 2021, the church cooked 335 pounds of barbecue pork and 500 chicken halves.

Each plate included a leaflet that stated, “Your contribution allows us to continue supporting our local community in many different ways. Over the years your help has allowed us to distribute thousands of dollars in direct and in-kind efforts.”

The money has helped various organizations including the UM Men’s ramp team, the UM Men’s scholarship programs, and the Saint Luke UMC Food Pantry.



Men of St. Luke UMC provide barbecue pork plates to people in waiting cars.

## MENOMONIE, WISCONSIN

### UM Man named Outstanding Eagle Scout

Bob Spinti, former president of Minnesota Conference UM Men, added one more title to a long list of awards. The National Association of Eagle Scouts named him Outstanding Eagle Scout for 2021.

Currently serving on the Advisory Committee of the Chippewa Valley Council, Bob received the Cubmaster Key in 1968, the Scoutmaster Key in 1972, the District Award of Merit in 1973, the Silver Beaver in 1974, and the Daniel Cart Beard Award in 2008.

An active member of Menomonie UMC, Bob served in many lay positions. He also served as chair of the Wisconsin Conference Board of Global Ministries for four years and chair of the Conference Board of Discipleship for four years.

Bob and wife Beverly are also active in their community. They were awarded Philanthropists of the Year by Chippewa Valley in 1970, the Good Neighbor Award by the Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce in 2007, and the Distinguished Menomonie Citizens Award by the Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce in 2014.



Bob Spinti receives the 2021 Outstanding Eagle Scout Award.

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# United Methodist Men Foundation



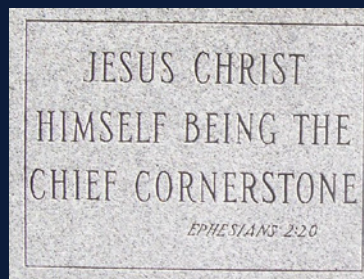
United Methodist Men have traditionally been men of vision and purpose. The vision has led the leaders of United Methodist Men to develop new methods to accomplish their goals and make their dreams become reality!

The United Methodist Men Foundation exists to serve God by funding the ministries of the General Commission on United Methodist Men to promote stewardship and philanthropy with current and prospective donors; to partner in a spirit of servant leadership in building financial assets for future men's and scouting ministries.



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**Information**

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