

# UM MEN

*The magazine of*  
**UNITED METHODIST MEN**

SUMMER 2020 ● Volume 23 Number 3





# letter from the **GENERAL SECRETARY**



## **GIL HANKE**

*General Secretary/  
Chief Executive Officer*

When we scripted the focus of this issue, we thought that we would be reviewing actions taken by delegates to the 2020 General Conference, an event which did not happen due to Covid-19.

However, responding to questions related to future ministries is an important discipline despite a delayed conference session.

I hope articles in this issue will provide you with assurance and hope.

This issue gives guidance on important health issues for men, and multiple examples of serving others, including our families.

Prior to the arrival of the pandemic, churches and UM Men organizations presented honors to leaders of men's and scouting ministries. A few of the scores of presentations are reviewed here.

This was an election year for leaders of jurisdictions, the UM Men Foundation, and the National Association of Conference Presidents. Those elections were completed without difficulty or delay. I am appreciative of the committed and talented leaders who served these positions for the previous four years and excited by the dedicated and gifted leaders who will serve in these posts until 2024.

A large part of this issue tells what is happening in local churches in scouting and men's ministries. Brief reports give credit to their good works and provide suggestions for your local church, large or small. These are great examples of "doing" ministries that impact the church and, more importantly, communities in need.


As I write this, we are in the middle of stay-at-home part of the pandemic.

I pray that when you read this, we will be on a normal schedule.

Today, your commission staff and their families are safe and well, and all of us appreciate your prayers.

We each strive to serve.

Gil Hanke



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1000 17<sup>TH</sup> AVE. SOUTH  
NASHVILLE, TN 37212  
615.340.7145

**PUBLISHER** Gil Hanke  
**EDITOR** Rich Peck  
**CREATIVE DIRECTOR** Troy Dossett, UMCCom  
**ASSOCIATE EDITORS** Rick Vance  
Steven Scheid  
**PROOF READER** Martha Davis

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This magazine includes articles from individuals who hold diverse opinions. We hope all articles are thought provoking; they are not necessarily the opinions of the General Commission on United Methodist Men. Articles without bylines are written by commission staff.

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**REV. RICH PECK**

Editor

## WHAT'S NEXT?

I proposed that subject in January.

At that time, I assumed we would be asking questions about the future of ministries to men and youth following the 2020 General Conference.

Coronavirus Covid 19 revised those plans.

However, the question “What’s next?” may be even more critical in the light of social distancing, rising unemployment, the BSA bankruptcy, declining World Service financial support, on-line worship services, and the cancelation of meetings of UM Men and Scout troops.

The most significant factor is the loss of loved ones and limitations on ways we can express our love and support for the bereaved.

We asked four leaders of UM Men to address the question of “What’s next?”

Mississippi Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr., president of the General Commission on UM Men, has led the commission for eight years. He is the only person to hold that office for that length of time and is the best qualified to write about where we go from here.

Gil Hanke has served as chief executive of the commission for 10 years and he has introduced us to Wesley Class Meetings. The use of video conferencing for these small group meetings seems especially useful during this difficult time.

The Rev. Dr. Rick Vance, director of the Center for Men’s Ministries, joined Gil in working with the YWCA to provide us with a tool to raise our awareness of domestic violence and to provide ways we can address a culture that objectifies women.

Steven Scheid, director of the Center for Scouting Ministries, seems born for the position. He has expanded Scout leader training opportunities and challenged us to invite Scouts from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to join troops chartered by UM congregations.

Of course, the question, “What’s next?” is best answered by you, the reader. How will you address the critical issues facing men and youth in your congregation and your neighborhoods?

When you discover effective ways to reach men and youth, I hope you will share those with us.

Others need your insights and techniques.

Rich Peck

Now, more than ever, we need the  
**POWER OF  
COMMUNICATION**



## Where are we headed?

By Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr.

The road ahead for men's ministry is filled with questions, the least of which are organizational.

The major question with which we need to wrestle is, "Will we open ourselves to the reality that men are just as hungry for a 'real' relationship with God as are women?"

Are we willing to move away from pancake breakfasts, or simply sending a check to some ministry and other hands-on missions as proofs of our relationship with Christ?

Instead, are we willing to offer men opportunities to experience Christ for the first time or to be strengthened in their daily walk with Him?

It is out of this loving relationship that all the things we want men to do will spring forth.

### Be a fish

I was reading *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants* by Bishop Rueben Job. He quotes from *Prayer: Living with God* by Simon Tugwell:

"So often we are too full of what we think should be happening to us in our spiritual formation to notice what God is actually teaching us. We must be still enough, simple enough, humble enough, to let him plan the course, and use whatever opportunities there may be for our instruction. St Ambrose gave his congregation some very good advice. Using the old Christian symbol, he compared them in this stormy world to fish swimming in the sea. And to them he

said, 'Be a fish.' We must learn how not to be swamped by the situations that we find ourselves in."

What lies ahead for men's ministry and the General Commission on UM Men is to discover how to be a "fish."

### Being not doing

I'm asking questions about "being" and not about "doing."

The commission has been on a 3-year journey that questioned every aspect of our ministry. We have engaged in thoughtful reflection and prayer as we sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is out of this deep reflection that we are developing a compelling vision that gives new meaning to our lives, our mission, and our ministry.

We are learning about new ways to organize ourselves and we now have new expectations. Do we truly believe men are called to be fish? Can we swim through these turbulent waters without being affected by the nearby devastation?

### A call to discipleship

Do we truly believe that men are called to first and foremost be disciples of Jesus Christ?

If this is the core of why we exist, then we need to make sure we're moving in that direction. All that we are should speak to that. All that we do should be about producing that. Every dollar that we raise or spend must be purposed for this. How we are organized must be to fulfill that mission. Our staff must have this priority in mind.

So what is next for us is the unfolding of this story and where it will lead us. I invite you to become a fish and join us on this swim. Let's see where God leads us.



Mississippi Area Bishop James E. Swanson is president of the General Commission on UM Men, a post he has held for eight years.

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## What is next?

By Gil Hanke

You probably know the General Commission on UM Men is unlike other general church agencies.

I am not saying that we are better than any other, as I am always amazed by the wonderful life-giving work done by each of the agencies and entities of the general church. But, for good reasons, we are intentionally designed to be different from other entities at the general church level.

### Focus on the local church

One of the notable differences is our focus on multiple target audiences at the local church level.

We target men in a variety of local church groupings and all youth who are engaged in the broad category of scouting ministries.

That focus will not change, but our reach and impact must expand to more local churches if this denomination is to fulfill its calling.

Our overarching goal is to provide multiple opportunities for men and youth to have on-growing relationships with Jesus.

We raise 75 percent of our budget from churches and individuals. I expect that percentage will increase, because we must expand our reach to more men and more local churches.

Many agencies target leaders of annual conferences,

and we are designing opportunities to build stronger leadership at that level; however, our work goes deeper into the connection, directly impacting men and youth of local churches and their communities.

### A transformational ministry

The most significant answer to the question of “What is next?” is that we must accept nothing less than transformation from our work.

All our events, newsletters, online and face-to-face trainings should be more than excellent, more than well done, and do more than teach new skills.

They must have a clear focus on changing lives.

We should insist that six months after any event, after any training, after every board meeting, every regional Zoom call, participants can relate how they are closer to Christ, and have expanded their outreach, because of the experience we sponsored.

Knowing more is not the goal; doing more to impact men and youth is our goal.

This commission must provide life-changing experiences for all men and for youth in various scouting programs in order for all of them to thrive in their walks with Christ so others will know Christ.



*Gil Hanke is the top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men, a position he has held for 10 years.*



Contact Project Coordinator  
**Rev. Dr. Rick Vance**  
Director of the Center for Men's Ministries  
General Commission on United Methodist Men  
rvance@gcumm.org • 615-620-7277

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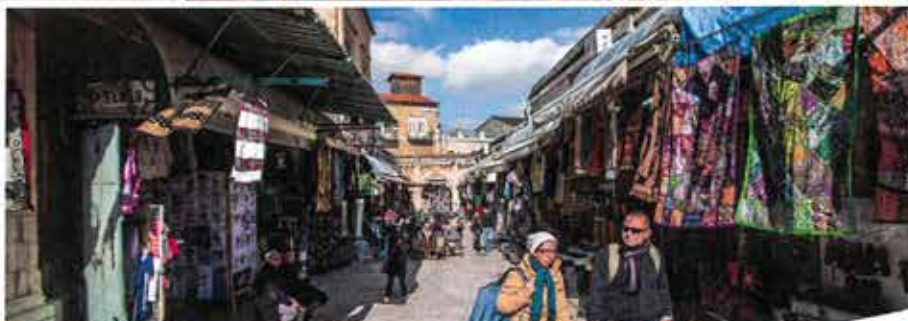
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## What's next in men's ministry?

By the Rev. Dr. Rick Vance

I am writing this article during holy week near the height of the Covid-19 crisis.

As I reflect on the question; "What's next for men's ministry?" I know that most of what has been normal has changed.

What keeps me grounded is the promise of God in Jeremiah 29. God knows the plans He has for men's ministries. How do we shape ministry to meet the emerging needs of men?

The coronavirus challenged churches that have (for the most part) known only one way to communicate with their constituencies.

For many years secular businesses have used a variety of technologies to communicate with their stake holders.

While the General Commission on UM Men, during the last six years, has challenged men to include video conferencing as a way to connect to men in small groups, local churches

are finally sprinting to catch up with younger men who have used technology to communicate for most of their lives.

Churches now face the challenge of making this technological communication a two-way conversation rather than a one-way monologue.

We need to develop holistic men's ministries that will help men become not only doers of good, but also followers of Christ.

### Relationships

We were created to be in relationships. While many men spend much of their time projecting a sense of self-sufficiency, most men seek a place where they can find camaraderie and friendships.

Men's ministry must offer opportunities for men to socialize and talk with each other. The once-a-month breakfast meeting works for some men, but we need to offer other opportunities to gather.

Facilitating opportunities for men for gather for face-to-face or virtual games, workouts, meal times, Bible studies, and accountability will allow space for men to not only participate in activities, but also to engage in faith development.

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future".*

—Jeremiah 29:11



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

## Coaching

Our mission is to “coach men to thrive through Christ”

To be a coach we must be followers of Christ who read Scripture, pray and engage in accountable relationships with another men.

Once we have made sure we are followers, we then need to listen to the men in our faith communities. What are their needs and struggles? Where do they feel they have failed? Addressing these concerns will increase the relevance of our discipleship conversations,

Coaching requires not only celebration in the joys of life, but also hope and assurance when things aren't going so well.

## Leadership Development

God has given each man unique gifts and talents which may be used for mission and ministry. These gifts may be different than the skills men employed during their careers.

Leaders of local units of UM Men need to coach men to understand how they have been gifted and help them use those gifts as expressions of their discipleship.

Leaders may use gift-assessment and interest-survey tools to help them discern ways to minister to men in their churches and neighboring communities.

## Speak out

Recent studies indicate that during the coronavirus pandemic cases of domestic violence have increased around the world.

Four years ago the commission introduced Amending through Faith, a 8-week program to empower men to assume a role in changing the culture that objectifies women and allows violence to occur.

Now, more than ever, we need to train men to speak out against the objectification of women. We need to offer opportunities in every annual conference and local church to utilize the training in order to stop the violence against women and girls in churches and communities.

## Our mission for the future

Sitting in my makeshift office at home, in the middle of this pandemic, it is hard to imagine what new challenges the future may bring.

I am however, convinced that men's ministry needs to move more in the directions of coaching.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, men need to draw closer to each other and to God.

Our ministry must focus on making followers of Christ who are engaged in the work God is calling them to do.

Yes, God has for plans for us to prosper.

Whatever is next in men's ministry must reflect God's desire that we be in relationship with Him so we can “coach men to THRIVE through Christ.”



## What's next in scouting ministries?

By Steven Scheid

“Even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.” (Psalm 139:12).

In Girl Scouts of the USA, a girl can earn a Finding-Your-Way Badge.

In the Boy Scouts of America, the badge is called the Orienteering Merit Badge.

Both badges focus on skills that allow one to get from one place to another. In order to obtain the badges, Scouts must learn how to read maps, determine the cardinal directions, and identify markers.

### Orienteering difficulties

Finding your way gets tougher in the dark. Visual markers fade from sight.

Without a compass, we look to the stars and the moon for direction. They have been used effectively to orient for centuries.

On the darkest nights where the clouds are thick, the best thing to do is stay put for the night.

We are in that cloudy night phase now; stay at home, social-distance, and quarantine. We know a light will come. From there, we can orient again and move in a new direction.

The path has not changed; just our ability to see it.

The goals of helping youth find faith, develop courage, and attain life skills have not changed.

### Connecting digitally

The coronavirus has changed how we move.

We have found ways to connect digitally. The unexpected blessing is an older generation is learning about digital tools which are native to youth.

We will connect digitally with the support of in-person groups. This shift gives us the best of both worlds for a stronger future.

What is next? We hold tight. We prepare where we can, connect, and learn in new ways. When the light comes, we orient again and move forward. Each church will connect to families and communities.

The ministry with youth will find a home even more welcoming than ever before. The morning after the storm is always the brightest.



Steven Scheid is director of the Center for Scouting Ministries at the General Commission on UM Men.



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# The future of The United Methodist Church

by Gwendolynn Purushotham

What if God is in the midst of The United Methodist Church's decline, reshaping it to be the church of tomorrow instead of the church of yesterday?

There is one thing that is indisputable among United Methodists, namely, that our denomination (along with other mainline Protestant denominations in the West) is experiencing a decades-long decline. By that I mean, the UMC as we have known it, has shrunk in membership, worship attendance, numbers of baptisms, confirmations, and the number of young people enrolled in seminary. This decline in membership has been accompanied by shrinking financial resources.

In May 2015, Don House, chair of the economic advisory committee for our denomination, told members of the Connectional Table and the General Council on Finance and Administration that unless the UMC in the United States finds a way to turn around by 2030, it will not be possible to reverse the decline, and the connection will collapse by 2050.

What United Methodists do not agree on is why this decline is occurring and what is a faithful response. The predominant response to this reality has been marked by lamentation that the church "isn't what it used to be"; frantic attempts on the part of leadership to reverse the decline through strategies of revitalization; efforts at restructuring; and the development of systems of accountability aimed at those blamed for what's wrong while accountability systems for those "at the top" remain unclear and weak.



*The Rev. Dr. Gwendolynn Purushotham is an ordained elder in the New England Annual Conference. She has served 20 years as pastor, 8 years as district superintendent, and 7 years as staff at the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.*

## What Do I See?

- I see a denomination divided by regionalism that is embedded in the way the denomination distributes resources, makes decisions, defines its mission, and measures vitality.
- I see a denomination preoccupied with matters pertaining to clergy (i.e. credentialing and rights and privileges) at the expense of the ministry of the laity. (For example, Ministry Studies for successive quadrennia have focused on the roles, rights, and privileges of the ordained and those credentialed to serve in pastoral roles). I see a denomination weakened by its disproportionate focus and investment on educating persons for ordained ministry with meager focus on baptism. Equipping and encouraging laity who are gifted as teachers, lawyers, nurses, police officers, homemakers, construction workers, artists, etc. for the exercise of their gifts as persons called in baptism remains marginal in our ordering of ministry and expenditure of resources. This is not to suggest that ordaining clergy be abolished, but rather that the ordained take their proper place in the church; that attention and resources be directed to developing, nurturing, equipping the laity for ministries in the workplace, community, and home.
- I see our denomination increasingly creating policies, practices, and legislation that is more restrictive and competitive than expansive and inclusive.



- I see an anxious denomination pre-occupied with survival and self-preservation grasping at short-term solutions. Called by different names (Seven Vision Pathways, Vital Congregations, and Four Foci) but with essentially the same assumptions and measures of success, the effect of these programs and strategies is akin to rearranging the chairs on the deck of the Titanic.
- I see a reactive system employing strategies based on tacit, unexamined, and “un-discussable” assumptions. The Young Clergy Initiative is one example—7 million dollars designated to develop more young clergy without serious reflection given to the kind of leaders needed for the church in our rapidly changing context in the U.S. and globally. What seems to be missing is an articulation of our theology of Church (ecclesiology) and how that informs the way we form, recruit, educate, and deploy leaders, lay and clergy, who are equipped to lead the church which, in the words of Walter Rauschenbusch, “is set amidst the perplexities of a changing order, and face to face with a new task.”

## The Good News

On the face of it, this all sounds like bad news! That may be, but I think it may very well be the Good News that often sounds bad before we can hear it as good.

The question that doesn't seem to let me go and about which I long for conversation with other thoughtful people, is: “Where is God in the decline? Could it be that the church has been struggling for decades to “turn back” rather than to “turn around?” Could it be that God is present in the very decline that we desperately keep trying to reverse? Could it be that God is in the dismantling of the church as we have known it? Is it possible that this place that we experience as exile and wilderness is actually the place of empowerment by the Holy Spirit, is the place not only where God has led us, but instead to where God dwells? What if this decline, this death, is in fact the way to new life? What if relinquishment of what has been will enable the church to see the new thing God is doing among us? What if we stopped asking, “how will we reverse the decline” and began asking “how are going to “uproot and tear down” before we “build and plant.” (Jeremiah 1:10) What would happen if we were to embrace this disequilibrium as the place of refinement and hope?

Walter Brueggemann's book, *The Prophetic Imagination* (Fortress Press, 2001), has much to contribute to the work of discerning what God is up to in our time. Brueggemann speaks of relinquishing a preferred world, treasured power, and present arrangements and receiving the new life that God is raising up. He suggests that like the world in which Jeremiah lived and prophesied, our known world is under judgment and is ending . . . all of the energy to keep that old world intact is not helpful. God disclosed to Jeremiah one compelling reality— that God has destined the brutal end of the known world.

As God was in the destruction of the City of Jerusalem (“I am giving you into the hand of Babylon”) so God may now be discerned as moving against the present reality until it is dismantled. Jeremiah knows that the yearning for equilibrium is an idolatrous escape from reality. “That. . . put Jeremiah deeply at odds with all the children of equilibrium who did not notice where God was going and who were well defended against noticing.” Jeremiah believes that God is able to do an utterly new thing that violates our reason, our control, and our despair. So what would happen if the church were the place where there is talk about the newness of God in the midst of the shambles of the church? (Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*)

Brueggemann goes on to say that Jeremiah's language was free, porous, and impressionable. Poets have no advice to give people. They only want people to see differently, to re-vision life. They want to entertain a world not yet visible. They do not need to see the end of their words or all the implications before they speak. I take some comfort and “shelter” from Brueggemann's affirmation of poets. I consider myself a “poet” who wants the church to see differently but who has no precise prescription for how to do that except that we do it collectively, one step at a time, while we remain engaged with people in the margins where God is at work, and that we be ready to let go of what has been in order to receive God's new gifts.



*You who live in the*

# SHELTER OF THE MOST HIGH,

*who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,  
will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my  
fortress; my God, in whom I trust.”*

— *Psalm 91:1-2 (NRSV)*

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# A paper-mache church

By Bishop Gary Mueller

Art classes were still an important part of the elementary school curriculum when I was in the first grade. While I don't remember much about my art career because it was not at all memorable, I do remember venturing into the world of paper mache and discovering what fun it was to put treated wet newspaper strips on a wire frame to bring to life an animal or globe or cowboy. When dried and painted, it was a masterpiece I could take home to my mother, who would 'ooh and ahh' over my talent.

When you paper mache, you need to add enough strips to cover the wire form and give the piece its shape but be careful not to add so many that you end up with an unrecognizable blob. Which, of course, I accomplished more than once because I was so busy adding strips that I never noticed what I was creating.

I wonder if this is exactly what we are doing to Jesus' Church. We have been so busy adding strips that it has become a blob that fails to resemble the Gospel frame we have been given in the life, death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. No wonder we are fracturing, treating brothers and sisters in Christ like enemies, and failing to reach people with the Gospel that brings abundant and eternal life.

So what strips are we adding to the Gospel frame that have turned Jesus' Church into a blob? They are many and varied:

Our own political perspectives.

Our desire to make the church in our image.

Our excitement about embracing the latest cultural fad.

Our haste in making God small enough to fit in our pockets.

Our racism, our desire to be comfortable and our tendency to think that making people happy is the ultimate good.

I know my words are painful, even convicting. But they are not written about one group of people. They are for all of us, especially me; which is why we have to wrestle with the painful reality that we are turning the church into a blob that does not resemble the Church Jesus calls us to be.

What if we were to peel off some of the strips we have added to the Gospel, one at a time? Peel off the demonization of others. Peel off the desire to have the Gospel reflect our particular ideological perspective. Peel off the insistence that our congregation looks just like us. And peel off the assumption that Jesus' top priority is to meet every one of our wishes and desires the way we think he should. Sure, it will be hard work. But we can succeed because Jesus will be working alongside us the entire time.

I'm not sure what the Church will be when we finish this work. But I'm incredibly hopeful that we will be a Church that is truly the Body of Christ filled with Jesus-followers who are filled with passion to make disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped and sent to transform lives, communities and the world with joy, passion, and gratitude.

Come Holy Spirit, come!



Arkansas Area Bishop Gary Mueller is vice president of the General Commission on U.M. Men.

# Jesus and the United Methodist system

By Rich Peck

If this were a normal year, we would be looking forward to the election of bishops in July.

Since we won't be electing bishops at that time, it might be fun to compare the United Methodist election system with the selection system employed by Jesus.

The alarming thing about Jesus is that he had no management training.

His sloppy administrative style is most evident in this recruitment practices.

He apparently had no guidelines for selecting disciples. In fact, he seems to have chosen them at random.

Had Jesus employed United Methodist strategies he would not have made that mistake.

All the synagogues would have been invited to send one pharisee and one layperson to participate in the election process. There would be some complaints that scribes and sadducees should not be considered as laypersons.

The presiding officer would have read selections from the Torah and the minutes from the last meeting of the Sanhedrin to ensure that elections would be held in keeping with Mosaic principles.

An occasionally working electronic system would have been used.

Simon Peter would have run well in early ballots, but he would have been rejected for being too impulsive and quick-tempered. Other candidates would also fail to receive the necessary votes: James and John--too argumentative; Thomas--too cynical; Zacchaeus--too short to be seen by the chairperson; Simon--too revolutionary; and Philip--too impatient.

Mary Magdalene would lose votes because of an undeserved reputation. Caiaphas would have done

well, but a rural caucus would have put their votes together to try to elect a lesser known pharisee.

Matthew would have come close, but some would accuse him of receiving votes in exchange for lower tax bills.

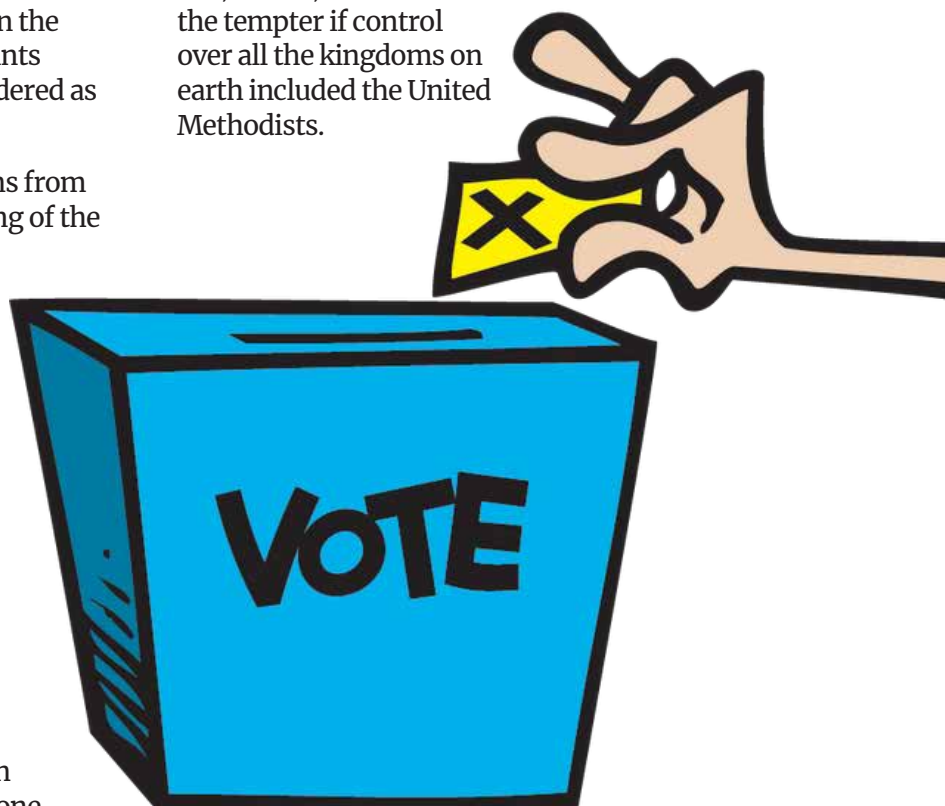
Martha would have done well until she left to fix dinner.

Judas, the only disciple trusted to carry the money bag, would have been near the top of most ballots.

After 20 ballots and no elections, the group would have stopped to consider the use of Rule 27 (final adjournment). That's when some noticed Jesus was missing.

A few thought he'd gone on another recruiting trip. Others decided he'd gone for a walk on the water.

But, in fact, he had returned to the wilderness to ask the tempter if control over all the kingdoms on earth included the United Methodists.



# You can make people feel good about themselves

By Walter Albritton

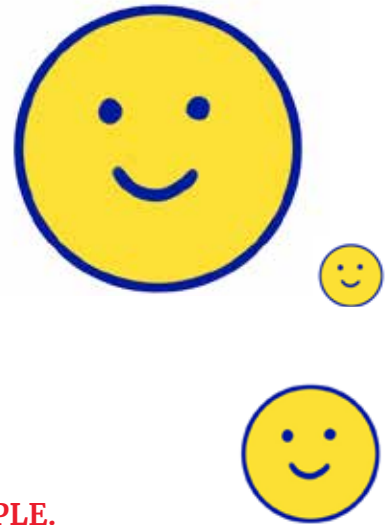
I miss Ben. He died at 84 in 2016. We were friends for 60 years. We were preachers. We never lived in the same town so when we got together we talked for hours—about heartaches and blessings, the sweetness and sorrows of our families, faith discoveries, the keys to church renewal, books we were reading and books we were writing, and the current issues facing the world.

Looking back since Ben's passing, it dawned on me that there was never a meeting with Ben that left me with negative feelings about myself or him. Every encounter was stimulating, positive and encouraging. In the last decade of his life we met often and never with an agenda. It was, I think, what Solomon called iron sharpening iron—“As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend” (Proverbs 27:17). Ben had a way of making me feel good about myself, my potential, and my future. Conversations with him generated hope in my soul. I like to believe he felt the same way about me.

Not every encounter with other people is like that. Now and then you walk away from someone feeling disgusted, disturbed or even angry. You can only pray that you never have that same effect on someone else. The truth is, the way we relate to the people we encounter can make a huge difference in their lives. So, if you want that difference to be helpful and not hurtful, these suggestions may be helpful:



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



## 1. ENCOURAGE PEOPLE.

The value of encouragement is enormous. Everybody needs it. Everybody can give it. Nobody lives well without it. Look every day for someone you can encourage. If the clerk who takes my money for a purchase smiles, I usually say, “Thank you for your smile.” It is a small way to encourage someone who is probably struggling to make ends meet.

## 2. BE KIND TO PEOPLE.

Yes, our culture has become impersonal. But be friendly anyway. Refuse to be return indifference with indifference. A friendly comment spoken with kindness can sometimes change a person's attitude. Rudeness is the behavior of callous people. Choose to be polite, gracious and courteous to everyone you meet. It will make you feel better about yourself and your kindness could inspire others to follow your example.

## 3. SAY, “THANK YOU.”

Thank the people who serve you. I asked my waitress in a restaurant if there was anything, I could ask God to do for her. She looked at me for a few seconds, then burst into tears. “Yes,” she said, “please ask God to help me; I am going through a bitter divorce.” I took her hand and prayed for her quietly. As I started to leave, she thanked me for my prayer.

## 4. SMILE AT PEOPLE.

A frown requires more energy than a smile. So, save your energy and smile even when you are hurting. Usually you will get a smile in return. I smile a lot because I don't want a stranger passing me to say, “There goes an old sourpuss; he must have heartburn.” We have a choice when we meet people. We can frown, stare indifferently or smile. A friendly smile is always the best choice.

## 5. AFFIRM PEOPLE.

Commend them. Before most people can do their best, they need to hear someone say, “You’ve got what it takes.” Never be demeaning or “talk down” to someone. Find gracious ways to offer others the gift of affirmation. Your support could tip the scales in favor of their success.

## 6. FORGIVE PEOPLE.

You hurt people. People hurt you. That’s life. An unforgiving spirit leads to misery. Harsh words unwisely spoken had wounded my friendship with a relative. I tried to ignore it for months. Finally, I swallowed my pride and asked him to forgive me. He did and we have been good friends ever since. Harsh words separate people. But the separation need not be permanent. Pride is an infection of the soul for which forgiveness is the only medicine. Ask the person you have hurt for forgiveness. Forgive the person who has hurt you. There is no other way to peace. So, forgive – and live!

## 7. PRAY FOR PEOPLE.

Pray for your family and your friends. Pray for your colleagues. Pray for Congress. Pray for the president. Pray for our nation. Pray for the persecuted. Pray for the people in prisons. Pray for understanding. Pray that your kindness will allow people to see Jesus in you. Pray that everyone you meet will find joy and peace by trusting Jesus as Savior and Lord. Pray for the poor, especially the homeless. Pray for God to show you ways to be a blessing. Thank God even for your aches and pains; they remind you that you are alive, and life is a precious gift.

There are people in your life who need you. They need your encouragement, your kindness, your prayers, perhaps your forgiveness. You have what it takes to make a huge difference in their lives. I didn’t know this when I was young. A lot of years passed before I made this discovery. But I know it now and that’s why I am trying to be the kind of person who makes other people feel good about themselves. I invite you to join me in this endeavor to be a Christian worthy of the name.



# Conference presidents of UM Men mull future

Two days after a devastating tornado killed 24 people in the Nashville area, 81 participants in the March 5–8 National Association of Conference Presidents met nearby to discuss the future of their ministries after following what they thought would be a life-changing General Conference scheduled for May.

## Unknown future

“If anyone tells you they know what is going to happen in Minneapolis they are wrong,” said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on United Methodist Men.

When Covid 19 postponed the conference to 2021, Hanke says the amount of uncertainty is only going to increase.

The seven-time delegate to the quadrennial assembly recalled several plans that had gone array, including a 2012 plan that was scrubbed entirely as being unconstitutional. “The last plan that this church passed successfully was a 1968 merger between the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church and even that plan was flawed as it included a separate organization for African Americans. “We don’t do well when it comes to passing plans.”

Hanke is hopeful the assembly, now scheduled for 2021, will pass legislation creating a U.S. Regional Conference, that will enable U.S. delegates to deal with legislative matters which only concern churches in this nation.

He said, his primary concern is “what happens to the men and youth after that legislative gathering. They will still need to know Jesus.”

“If there is a split, our materials will still be good and we will serve the whole church including an offer to any new expressions.”

## Finances

Addressing the possible financial impact upon the ministries to men and young people, Hanke said the commission and other general agencies likely will face a reduced amount from the World Service Fund.

Apportionments make up 25% of the agency’s operating budget. UM Men make up the remaining 75% through local church charters, EMS (Every Member Shares in Evangelism, Missions and Spiritual life) membership, Legacy Builders (monthly donors), and support from the UM Men Foundation. The agency also sponsors an annual Give Day, scheduled for Oct. 19. Last year, 225 people contributed a total of \$20,400 to support the Office of Men’s Ministries and the Office of Scouting Ministries. Hanke hopes for increased support in 2020.

Hanke also noted outside forces have offered proposals to the 2020 General Conference which would cripple the ministry. He said the commission would lose its effectiveness if it were to be merged with another agency.” At the same time, Hanke assured conference presidents. that the commission has no plans to sell its building.

“If there is a split in the United Methodist Church, it will be a split on paper but not a split in heart, said Bishop James E. Swanson, president of the commission. “If people leave the UMC, they will



Conference presidents of UM Men pour 200 pounds of rice and 500 pounds of beans into plastic bags for students at *Tusculum Elementary School in South Nashville.*

*Conference presidents of UM Men and conference prayer advocates gather in front of the Upper Room building in Nashville.*



## Prayers

The Rev. Tom Albin, director of spiritual formation and congregational life for the Upper Room, invited the men to be in prayer, as individuals and as a church community, for General Conference delegates, and for discernment. He suggests they use The Upper Room prayer guide: *Be Still and Know: 40 Days of Prayer for General Conference*.

In other business, the NACP:

- Learned that 13,000 copies of *Strength for Service* books were distributed in 2019.
- Received a report from Steven Scheid, director of the Center for Scouting Ministries, that Scouting ministries in local churches will not be affected by the bankruptcy of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). The number of Scout units in the UMC increased by 377 in 2019. The center is expanding its connection with all youth-serving partners including Girl Scouts of the USA, Camp Fire, Big Brothers Big Sisters and BSA.
- Learned the commission has joined American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children as it continues to find ways to ensure the safety of all youth.
- Honored Northern Illinois for contributing \$20,365 to the *Society of St. Andrew*, a national program committed to feeding hungry people, the highest in the nation. Baltimore-Washington Conference contributed \$10,785 and received the “Bud-the-Spud” Award for the higher percentage (67%) increase in giving.
- Heard Bishop Swanson encourage them to focus on the “why” of their activities prior to “what” they will decide to do.
- Learned that in 2019, 197,732 people made 598,371 visits to the *Upper Room Prayer Wall* website and the Great Plains Annual Conference was honored as the top giving unit to the ministry (\$2,000).
- Heard Rick Vance, director of the Center for Men’s Ministry, review activities and materials provided by the center, and he underscored the importance of developing relationships with all men to accomplish the mission of UM Men to “coach men to thrive through Christ so others may know him.”

From left: Migdiel Perez, manager of the Upper Room Prayer Center, presents an award to Gary Spivey and George Houle of the Great Plains Annual Conference for providing \$2,000 to the prayer ministry, the highest amount from any conference. “Prior to our merger we would have brought \$1,000 from each of our two conferences,” said George. “We only thought it was fair to bring \$2,000.”







Wade Mays (left) presents George Groves, president of Northern Illinois Conference UM Men, with an award for raising \$20,365 for the Society of St Andrew, the highest amount of all conferences.

A March 3 tornado in middle Tennessee killed 24 people and destroyed 400 homes and 200 businesses. Meeting two days after the storm, the NACP provided \$1,500 for relief efforts.



The Rev. Tom Albin invites conference presidents to engage in prayer for delegates to the 2020 General Conference.

The Rev. Rick Vance, director of the Center for Men's Ministries, challenges men serving as men's ministry specialists to rededicate themselves to the ministry.



# Herman Lightsey named president of NACP

Herman Lightsey, a men's ministry specialist and former president of the South Carolina Conference UM Men, was elected president of the National Association of Conference Presidents of UM Men during the March 5-8 session of that leadership team.

Meeting two days after a devastating tornado tore apart the eastern side of the city, some 85 conference presidents elected Lightsey by unanimous consent. Herman succeeds Steven Nailor who served as president from 2016 to 2020. Herman assumes the post on July 19, the first Sunday, following the five 2020 Jurisdictional Conferences.

## 58 years in the UMC

Herman and Mary Lightsey have been United Methodists since 1972 when the couple accepted an invitation from their neighbors to attend a UM church service,

"Mary was a Lutheran and I was Baptist when we married," says Herman. "I knew our faith was a topic that had to be addressed, but before it even came up for discussion, God placed us next door to this Methodist family." The Lightseys became United Methodists and raised their two daughters in Ashland UMC in Columbia, S.C.

"In 1973, a group of UM Men started mentoring me, and I became a part of the UM Men group at Ashland UMC," says Herman. "At the same time, I became the youngest person to chair the Administrative Board."

## First men's ministry specialist in conference

In 2007, Herman's pastor, the Rev. Joel Jones, approached him about becoming a men's ministry specialist. He was already teaching an adult Sunday school class and serving as lay leader and a lay speaker. Herman completed the course and became the first men's ministry specialist in the conference.



Herman Lightsey

A retired colonel in the South Carolina Army National Guard and a member of the Guard's Hall of Fame, Herman is also now retired from his post as deputy director of South Carolina Accident Workers' Compensation Fund

## Local church activities

He has served the local church as a member of the Finance Committee, the Board of Trustees, the Stewardship Committee, the Administrative Board, and the Pastor/Staff Relations Committee.

## District

Herman serves the Columbia District as a certified lay servant, a member of the Connectional Ministries Committee, past president of Columbia District UM Men, a member of Midlands Emmaus Community, and the Forward Focus facilitator.



Caption: Bishop Mueller (right) installs (from left) Ken Hudgins (secretary), Don Davis (treasurer), Ben Nelson (second vice president), and Herman Lightsey (president). Mark Lubbock (first vice president) was unable to attend the May 5-8 meeting in Nashville.

## Conference

He has served South Carolina Conference as president of Conference UM Men, past chair of the Conference Pension and Health Benefits Board, a member of the Bishop's Advisory Team, a member of the Connectional Ministries Committee, and a member Board of Ordained Ministry. He serves on the South Carolina Committee on the Episcopacy.

## General church

He has served the general church as a 3-time delegate to General Conference (2012, 2016, and 2019), first vice president of the National Association of Conference Presidents, and a member of the 2016-2020 Wespeth Benefits and Investments Board.

"I've never had a Damascus Road experience, but I can tell you that because of Jesus Christ my life has changed drastically over the past 25 years," says Herman. "I feel God has placed me in men's ministry for a reason."

## NACP OFFICERS

Herman Lightsey, president  
 Mark Lubbock, first vice president  
 Ben Nelson, second vice president  
 Ken Hudgins, secretary  
 Don Davis, treasurer

## JURISDICTIONAL PRESIDENTS OF UM MEN

Andrew Kissell, Southeastern Jurisdiction  
 David James, Western Jurisdiction  
 Ben Nelson, Northeastern Jurisdiction  
 Joe Kelley, South Central Jurisdiction  
 Mark Dehority, North Central Jurisdiction



## A word of warning

"After a worship service a mother of a fidgety seven-year-old boy got her son to sit still and be quiet. About halfway through the sermon, she leaned over and whispered, "If you don't be quiet, the preacher is going to lose his place and will have to start his sermon all over again!"



## Good question

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her Mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?" "Because white is the color of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life."

The child thought about this for a moment, then said, "So why is the groom wearing black?"



## Monastery of silence

Sister Mary Katherine entered the Monastery of Silence. The monk said, "Sister, this is a silent monastery. You are welcome here as long as you like, but you may not speak until I direct you to do so."

Sister Mary Katherine lived in the monastery for 5 years before the monk said to her, "Sister Mary Katherine, you have been here for 5 years.

You can speak two words."

Sister Mary Katherine said, "Hard bed."

"I'm sorry to hear that," the monk said, "We will get you a better bed."


After another 5 years, Sister Mary Katherine was called by the monk. "You may say another two words, Sister Mary Katherine." "Cold food," said Sister Mary Katherine, and the monk assured her that the food would be better in the future.

On her 15th anniversary at the monastery, the monk again called Sister Mary Katherine into his office. "You may say two words today."

"I quit," said Sister Mary Katherine.

"It's probably best," said the monk, "You've done nothing but complain since you got here."

# DEEPLY ROOTED PEOPLE OF GOD

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

POWERED BY United Methodist Communications

# Steve Nailor elected president of UM Men Foundation

Steve Nailor, president of the National Association of Conference Presidents of UM Men, was elected president of the UM Men Foundation at the March 5 annual meeting of that fund-raising organization.

Steve retired from Commonwealth Edison in 2001 after 35 years as director of public affairs in that Rockford, Ill.-based company. Following his retirement, he established Nailor and Associates, a consulting business working with city, county and state legislators for the [Rockford-Winnebago County Better Roads Association](#).

## Skillful fund raiser

Steve is skilled in fund development having chaired a 2009 successful effort to raise \$5.2 million for [Wesley Willows Town Center](#), a Rockford retirement center offering various levels of care. He also chaired the fund-development committee of the Belvidere Economic Development Board.

Under his leadership, UM men of the Rockford District raised \$150,000 for the Society of St. Andrew and other hunger-relief efforts during the last 11 years. He also served as interim president of



Steve Nailor presides at the March 5-8 meeting of the NACP in Nashville

Rockford Chamber of Commerce. He has also served on the governing boards of 10 Illinois Chamber-of-Commerce organizations across Illinois, He previously served as a director of First Star (now U.S.) Bank in Stephenson County.

Steve served as president of the Rockford Symphony Orchestra Board from 2014 to 2017, and he was president and chairman of the Illinois Electric Council from 1995 to 1997.

## Service to the church

Steve served the UMC as a four-time delegate to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, and as a chair of the Northern Illinois Conference Committee on the Episcopacy; as chair of the conference committee, he also served on the North Central Jurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy, the group which assigns bishops to their episcopal areas. During the North Central Jurisdictional Conference, Steve served as treasurer of a 1992 committee working to elect the Rev. Charles Jordan as a bishop, and the 1996 committee to elect the Rev. Jonathon Keaton. Both efforts were successful.

Steve also served a 7-year term on the Board of Directors of the National Council of Churches.

## Honors

Freeport Mayor James Gitz declared January 19, 2002 as "Steve Nailor Day" to recognize his contributions to the city. In 2010, he received a Rotary "Service-Above-Self" Award for outstanding community service. In the same year, he was named citizen of the year by the Freeport Chamber of Commerce.

## Succeeds Glenn Wintemberg

Steve succeeds Glenn Wintemberg, who served as leader of the 21-member board of directors from March 2016 to March 2020. During his four years of service, the foundation provided financial support for the Scouting Ministries Center and the Men's Ministries Center while increasing the total managed by the foundation by \$313,443 to a Jan. 31 total of \$2,518,460.

Glenn also established the Glenn and Benda Wintemberg Endowment, the UM Foundation Heritage Society, the paver project, and he led efforts to rebrand the Life Membership Award as the Life Achievement Award.

# United Methodist Men Foundation

The foundation was created in 1981 by the National Association of Conference Presidents to provide funds for scouting ministries when it appeared the denomination was going to eliminate that important ministry.

The foundation now provides 25% of the operating cost of the Center for Men's Ministries and 45% of the cost of the Center for Scouting Ministries. During the last two years the center has formed 377 new scouting units. The UMC is now the largest religious sponsoring organization of scouting in the U.S.

The foundation has 18 different funds provided by generous donors. The 2020-21 budget calls for an income of \$218,750 with expenses totaling \$203,400.

## Foundation officers

*President*

**Steven Nailor, Rockford, Ill.**

*Vice president*

**Dan Ramsey, Houston Texas**

*Secretary*

**George Hohmann, Charleston, W.Va.**

*Treasurer*

**Steve Ranous, Syracuse, N.Y.**

*Assistant treasurer*

**Gard Wayt, Shreveport, La.**

*Chancellor and emeritus member*

**Carl Young, Edmond, Okla.**

*Emeritus member*

**John Burlew, Manlius, N.Y.**

## NACP president inducted into Society of John Wesley

Herman Lightsey, former president of the South Carolina Conference UM Men and president elect of the National Association of Conference Presidents, was inducted into the Society of John Wesley for his long and outstanding service to men's ministry.



*Herman Lightsey expresses his appreciation to Bishop Holston.*

South Carolina Bishop Jonathan Holston, and Marvin Horton, current conference president of UM Men, presented the award at the Feb. 29 men's retreat.

"Of whom much is given, much is required, and you have been faithful to that task," said Holston.

## New York church honors two leaders

HEMPSTED, NEW YORK

Hempsted UMC presented Lifetime Achievement Awards to Leon Williams and Winston Robinson.

Leon is a retired officer of the New York City Police Department. He joined the church in 1985 and served as president of UM Men and continues to serve as cook at church events.

Leon is the husband of Elizabeth, a semi-retired UM pastor. The couple have three adult daughters and 12 grandchildren.

Winston was born in Jamaica and relocated to the Bronx as a teenager. His father was a civil rights advocate and Winston had several life-changing experiences with Dr. Martin Luther King, West Indies. He joined the Hempsted Church in 1996 and served as lay leader, head usher, a member of several church committees and a breakfast chef for UM Men meetings.

*From left: Pastor St. Clair Samuel, Leon Williams, and Royston*



## Former conference president inducted into John Wesley Society

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Wayne Custer, president of the Northeastern Jurisdiction UM Men, inducted Don Davis into the John Wesley Society during the March meeting of the National Association of Conference Presidents.

Wayne re-presented the award at Spruce Street UMC in Morgantown in front of Don's friends and family.



*Wayne Custer presents the John Wesley Award to Don Davis who is joined by his wife, Becky.*

Don is the immediate past president of the UM Men of the West Virginia Annual Conference and current treasurer. He also serves as treasurer of the National Association of Conference Presidents.

## Men honor tireless volunteer

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Men of Northwest Hills UMC presented Tom Bader with a Life Achievement Award for his service with a fund-raising barbecue, Haven for Hope, Habitat for Humanity, Emmaus Ministries, and other activities.



*The Rev. David Drawick, pastor of Northwest Hills UMC (right), presents a Life Achievement Award to Tom Bader.*



## Scouts honor mayor and wife

ABERDEEN, NORTH CAROLINA

Moore County Boy Scouts presented Robbie and Laura Farrell with a Distinguished Citizen Award. The award was presented to the couple for their community service, support of education, and for the ways they exemplify the Boy Scout Oath.

Robbie is the mayor of Aberdeen and former president of UM Men of Page Memorial UMC.

A former Cub Scout and Boy Scout, Robbie has bachelor's and master's degrees from East Carolina University. He taught for more than 30 years.



Robbie and Laura Farrell.

Laura is a graduate of N.C. State University and her master's degree is from Campbell University. She taught math for more than 30 years. She teaches a Sunday school class and sings in the choir at Page Memorial UMC.

Married for 35 years, the couple have two Eagle Scout sons, Robert and Stephen.

## Scout leader honored

WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

Epworth UMC presented Keith MacNeal with a Cross and Flame Award for his service as chartered organization representative and scouting ministry coordinator.

The church serves as home base for Cub Scout Pack 54, and Scouts BSA Troops 54 and 7054.



The Rev. Kenneth Mantler present Keith MacNeal with a Cross and Flame Award during Scout Sunday service at Epworth UMC.

## Scout rebuilds picnic table

PLEASANT VIEW, TENNESSEE

Pleasant View UMC presented Michael Harris Jr. with a Good Samaritan Award after he spent some 100 hours rebuilding picnic tables for a church pavilion.

Larry Coppock, top staff executive of Strength for Service Inc., presented the award. He was joined by the Rev. Paul Edwards, pastor; Michael Harris, Sr.; and Daniel Herrin, scoutmaster of Troop 76.

Michael is the first Good Samaritan Award recipient from Troop 76 and the to be nominated by Pleasant View UMC.



Larry Coppock congratulates Michel Harris on a successful Eagle Scout project and his Good Samaritan Award.

## Church presents Torch Award

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Holy Trinity UMC presented Karren Hattaway with a Torch Award for more than 30 years of service as a leader of a Girl Scout troop, a Cub pack and two Scouts BSA troops.



Karren Hattaway

# Do puzzles, games, and supplements keep older brains sharp?

Even with the Coronavirus, there are still ways to keep the body and mind active.

Lots of television advertisements tout pills and strategies for sustaining memory and brain power as you age. It's a hot topic because baby boomers are swelling the ranks of the elderly, and with each advancing year there is increasing fear of memory decline, impaired cognitive function (the ability to think and reason clearly), dementia (loss of mental faculties severe enough to interfere with everyday life) and Alzheimer's disease.

The ads are smart and make the case to older folks that all you need to keep your brain sharp is taking a pill, working at puzzles, playing games, and gulping exotic supplements and vitamin concoctions.

So does science support these interventions?

No.

## Add exercise

However, science does support exercise, and I feel the need to keep making this case because the majority of Americans don't exercise and would rather work a puzzle, play a game or take a pill.

According to a 2017 report from the National Academy of Sciences, exercise tops the list as the best thing you can do for your brain. And better yet, increased brain function from exercise can occur in as little as six months.

In a nutshell, exercise challenges the brain in unique ways, and regularly coping with that challenge improves the efficiency of communication among brain nerve cells.

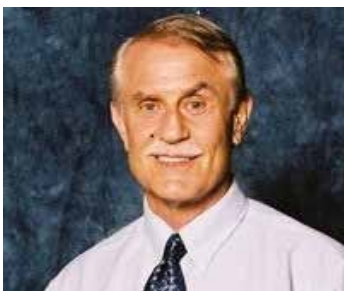
Why do other heavily advertised interventions fall short?

## Task specificity

The Federal Trade Commission is cracking down on false claims by those selling puzzles and games that are supposedly uniquely designed to sharpen your brain for two main reasons. One, contrary to TV ads, your brain needs more than puzzles and games to stay sharp. And, two, research has determined that benefits derived from doing puzzles and games are limited because they adhere to the principle of "task specificity."

Let me explain.

Regularly solving puzzles helps you become better at solving puzzles. For example, if you practice on puzzle X you will get better at solving puzzles similar to X. However, benefits are narrow, highly restricted and task specific and you may not get better at solving puzzle Y. Benefits do not transfer broadly, and therefore they are limited in how much they can help the brain function successfully in daily life. It's misleading to tell folks that all they need to do is sit in their easy chair and work puzzles and play games and all will be well.



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

Task specificity applies not only to brain function but to the working muscles as well. When you train muscles with certain exercises they become more fit, but this improved fitness is specific to the activities imposed. This means, even though I exercise daily and push my muscles with resistance and cardio exercise, my muscles are not prepared to cope with everything that comes along. No, indeed. When I go out and work in the yard for a few hours, using muscles I haven't been regularly exercising, plus using my muscles in new and different ways (bending, reaching, pulling, lifting, carrying, etc.), I get fatigued quickly, and afterward, I'm very sore. Why?

My muscles have not been specifically conditioned for yard work. Similarly, someone who regularly does lots of yard work won't be able to jump on a treadmill or lift weights and perform well, because their muscles have not been specifically trained for those activities.

If your goal is improving your memory and cognitive function, experts recommend physical exercise and seeking out a variety of new and unfamiliar activities that stimulate your brain by requiring you to learn as you pursue them. Puzzles and games could fit in here and play a part, but you don't need specialized high-tech puzzles and games that are no better for you than working a newspaper crossword puzzle.

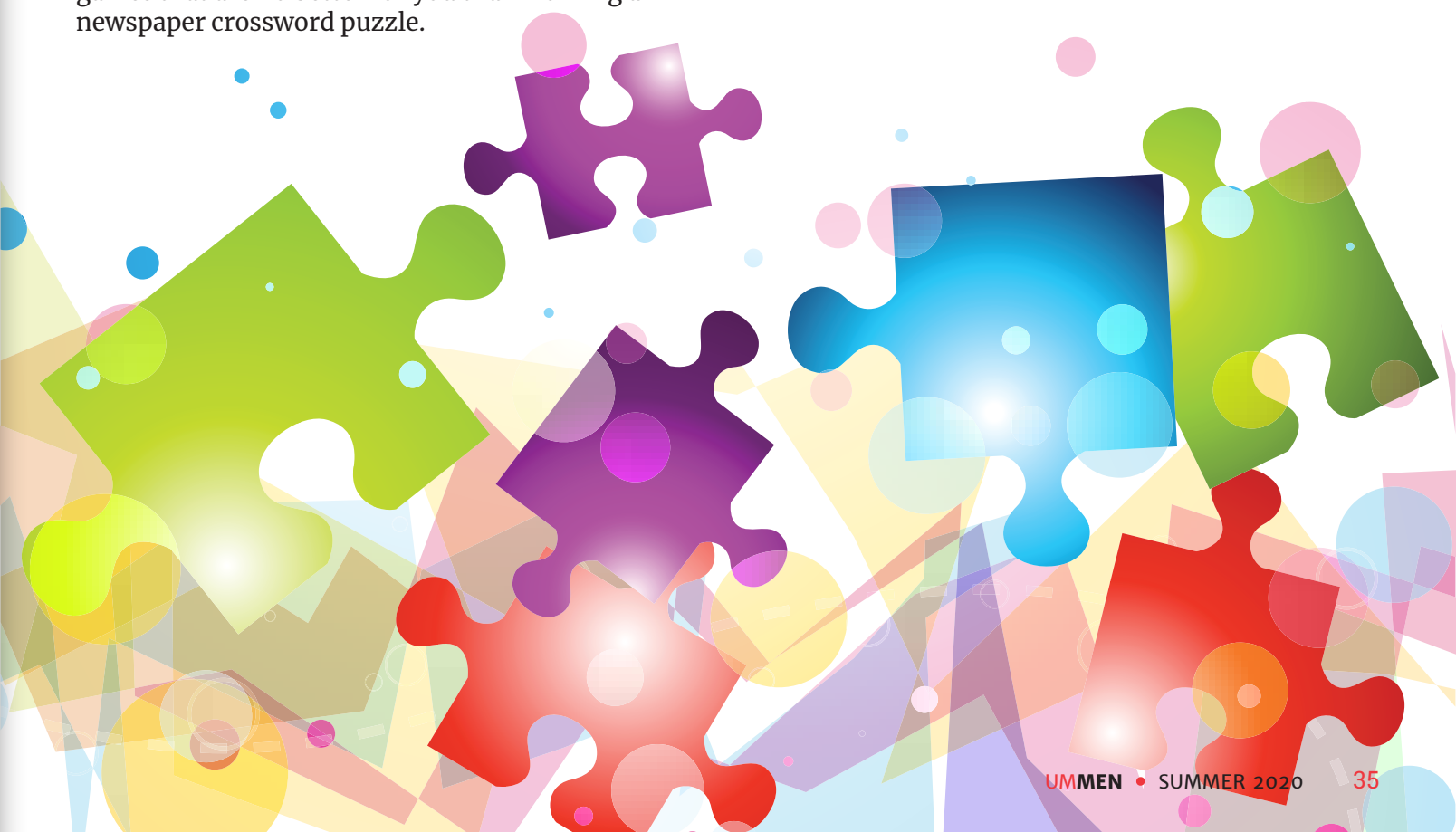
## Supplements

Supplements, in general, are tricky. If you are deficient in something, a supplement that covers the deficiency can help and seems to work wonders. Conversely, if you are not deficient and you take the same supplement, nothing happens.

To date, there is scant evidence that supplements and vitamin concoctions advertised on TV do much of anything to improve memory and cognitive function, or reduce the risk of dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Some ads claim there is research support for their product. The problem is, often this support arises from research conducted by the company that sells the product. It may not be objective and well-controlled research, and therefore the findings are suspect.

The bottom line is, don't get sucked into spending your hard earned money on bogus products advertised on TV that are supposedly uniquely designed to keep your brain sharp. Instead, seek out a variety of new and unfamiliar things that challenge you mentally.

And, of course, exercise regularly.



# In Memoriam



## Richard (Dick) Kondo

*ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO*

Dick Kondo, 94, former president of New Mexico UM Men and a scout leader, died April 18. Dick also served as president of UM Men at Grace UMC in Alamogordo and a scoutmaster of Troop 147.

During the ten years he served as scoutmaster, he received Wood Badge training at Philmont Scout Ranch, and he saw many young men achieve the rank of Eagle. He received the Silver Beaver Award from the Boy Scouts of America and the Cross & Flame Award from the New Mexico Conference.

“Dick was a great friend to me, and was the guy who invited me to New Mexico, which is the basis for the work that is continuing there now.” Said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men. “He was a gentle soul, and a great supporter of our work.”

### Hawaii beginning

Dick was born on July 20, 1925 in Puukoolii, Maui, Hawaii to Tomezo and Yoki Kondo. In 1943 he graduated from Lahainaluna High School and soon thereafter joined the Army. He served primarily in Tokyo for three years. When he returned to Hawaii, he worked at various jobs before deciding to attend college. He met and married Teru Tokunaga and they left for Chicago where he studied electronic engineering under the G.I. Bill. Upon completion of his degree, he was hired as an electronic engineer at the White Sands Proving Ground in New Mexico.

### Work at the missile range

He was assigned to Oscura Range Camp, then to North Oscura, later to Stallion site before being sent to Holloman and then to White Sands Missile Range. He became chief of the Radar Department and it was during those years that he was involved in the Apollo moon program and saw Neil Armstrong land on the moon. After 25 years, he retired from White Sands Missile Range. After leaving the range, he worked for RCA on Kauai in Hawaii.

### Volunteer service with UMC

After his final retirement he joined the Volunteers in Mission of the UMC. He worked in the Four Corners area before going to Chile and Bolivia to help build schools and churches. Later his VIM work took him to Texas, Missouri and Florida.

All his life he was an avid outdoorsman and loved to hunt, fish and camp. New Mexico proved to be the ideal “playground” for him.

Dick is survived by his wife Terry, son Steve (Betty), daughter Patricia, grandchildren Danielle (Michael), Zana, Nidal, Lexie and Jordan.



## Dale Hampton Sherrin

*HEATH SPRINGS, SOUTH CAROLINA*

Dale Hampton Sherrin, Sr., 63, former president of South Carolina Conference UM Men, passed away peacefully on May 7 at his home.

Dale was a member of Hopewell UMC for more than 30 years where he served in many capacities. He was lay leader, youth leader, and a member of the UM Men. He was a former president of the UM Men of Hopewell, the Rock Hill District, and the annual conference.

Dale also served as a certified lay speaker and a certified lay speaker instructor for conference.

Herman Lightsey, president-elect of the National Association of Conference Presidents, succeeded Dale as president of South Carolina Annual Conference.

“I met Dale in the 90s,” says Herman. “We did a one day training called ‘Reaching Every Man,’ which was a mini version of ‘No Man Left Behind’ by Patrick Morley, president of ‘Man in the Mirror’. This is where we bonded and became life-long Christian brothers and friends. He always had a smile and a line of ‘Christian bull’ going. Dale we love you. God bless and love to Sally and family.”

Dale is survived by his wife of 41 years, Sally Putman Sherrin; his daughter, Sally Renee Sherrin Rainey (Willis) of Macon, GA; his son, Dale Hampton Sherrin, Jr. (Sherilyn) of Camden, SC; his grandson, Dale Hampton Sherrin, III “Tripp”; a brother, Kent Sherrin (Kathy) of Lincolnton, NC; and many other extended family members. Dale was preceded in death by his parents; a brother, Harold William Sherrin; and two sisters, Karen Sherrin Medlin, and Rita Sherrin Sumner.

# Family life in the days of separation

By Tom Tozer and Bill Black

We have been through some turbulent days and our post-Covid-19 society is going to require changes. The virus has uprooted our lives and made us more aware of our effect on each other. Physical distancing, wearing of masks, and restricting movements out in the public have impacted our interactions with others.

Most of us have followed the advice laid out for us in Isaiah 26:20, “Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by.”

## Separation and loss

But these actions have also disrupted our relationships. Some have lost loved ones. Bill lost a member of his extended family who had been on a business trip to Florida, visited Disney World, and ended up getting sick after returning to his home in California. After a few days and a high fever, he was taken to the hospital where he developed breathing problems and was placed on a ventilator. The last report provided was that he was improving. That was a day before he died. He was 34.

## Be watchful

The virus has caused significant changes in how we relate to each other. Much of our ordinary, active parts of our lives has been deleted. Our young children may be confused and fearful. Our teen’s environment is already a minefield of uncertainty, anxiety and worry. Add to that the volatility of a rampant viral infection, and we have the potential for increased anxiety and depression. We parents need to closely monitor the interactions of our kids and listen intently to them.

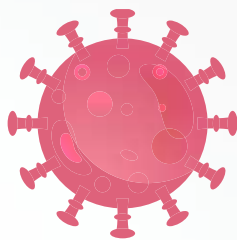
## Listen, learn and teach

It is important to follow regulations of the Centers for Disease Control.

- Talk with your teen about the virus and its impact on his or her world.
- Ask open-ended questions about how your teen is feeling. Refrain from judgment.
- Watch for changes in your teen’s behavior, such as withdrawal or unusual silence.
- Seek help from a teacher, counselor, minister or mental-health professional.



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).



## Developing resilience

Teens who are resilient adapt to bad things in their lives and possess the capacity to recover. Resilience doesn't eliminate anxiety, but it prepares you to handle it more successfully. The American Psychological Association provides some tips for building resilience:

**COMMUNICATE.** Encourage your child to express his or her feelings—to you, a sibling, counselor, pastor, or teacher.

**COOL DOWN.** Help your child take a few moments each day to let his or her mind find some peace through meditation, prayer, or reflection.

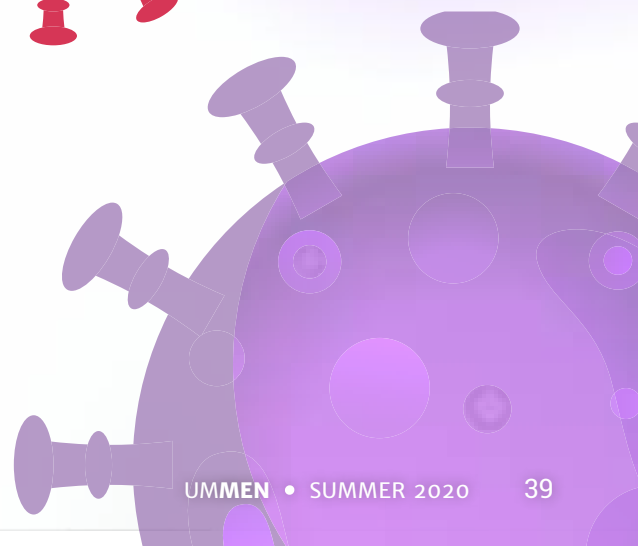
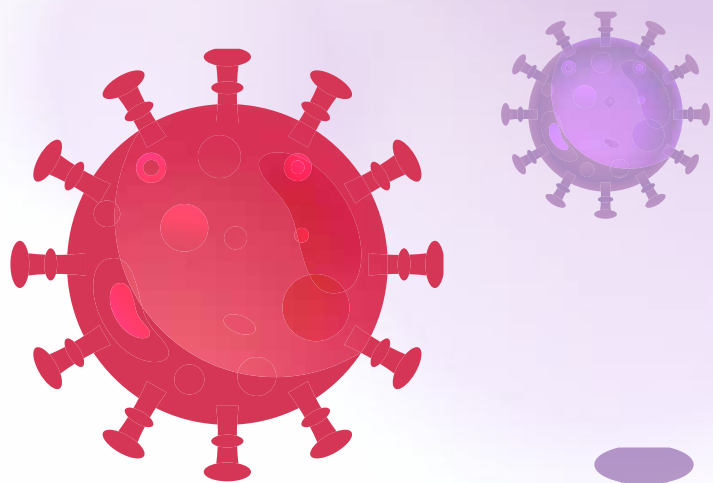
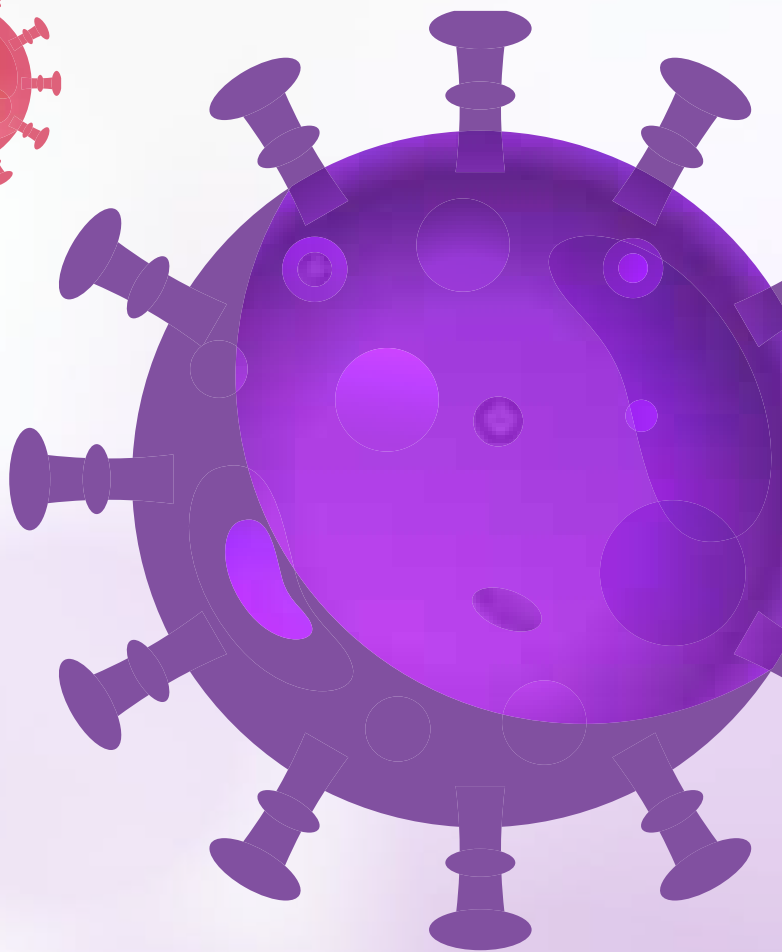
**CONSISTENCY.** Find a routine for the day. The comfort of even a limited schedule provides a sense of security.

**CARE.** For yourself so you can care for others. Get enough sleep, don't be too hard on yourself, and look for ways to help others.

**CONTROL.** Set a few modest goals for yourself and your child. Help your son or daughter think about a time when s/he overcame a challenge and the confidence this provided.

## Blessed assurance

Believers call upon the Holy Spirit in times of worry, discouragement, fear and loss. Isaiah 43:1-2 comes to mind, "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you."





**LILLIAN, ALABAMA**

**Men sponsor annual car show**

Men of Lillian UMC sponsor the Annual Lillian Car Show. The show is open to all antique, custom, street rods, imports and production vehicles. Trophies are presented to the top 30 in Open Class, as well as 10 Best of Show trophies.

Entry fees are \$25 for the first car and \$20 for additional cars.

The event includes free breakfast per entry, a Trash-and-Treasure rummage sale, refreshments, music, and a prize drawing.



*Visitors inspect one of the entries at the Lillian Car Show.*

**MESQUITE, ARIZONA**

**Men honor couples married for more than 50 years**

Men of Mesquite UMC honored 17 couples who have been married for 50 years or more.

During their seventh annual Sweethearts Celebration, the couples shared stories about first pets, apartments, cars, and the early days of marriage.



*Mesquite Mayor Allan Litman and Phyllis have been married for 54 years. They met at a youth convention in Minneapolis. Two days after their wedding, Al departed for service in Vietnam.*

PHOTO BY TERI NEHRENZ.



## APPLING, GEORGIA

### Scout leader provides 300 books for first responders

Bob Lowrie, Scout religious commissioner for the Augusta District of the North Georgia Conference, invited five UM congregations to help him provide 300 copies of *Strength for Service to God* and Community to local fire fighters and police officers.



Bob Lowrie (left) presents a *Strength for Service* book to Sheriff Clay Whittle.

Columbia County Sheriff Clay Whittle wrote a thank-you letter to Bob following the presentation. “These devotional books, which have been tailored for the particular emotional needs of first responders, are currently being distributed throughout the agency,” wrote Whittle. “I feel certain that having a copy of this book handy in their patrol car or on their nightstand will be a tool to help their mind, soul and spirit find hope, comfort and peace.”

## CORONA, CALIFORNIA

### Scouts make masks



Park brothers from Troop 34 in Corona, Calif., help make masks to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

## ENGLEWOOD, FLORIDA

### Welcome snowbirds

Englewood's Ministry through Men welcomed 500 northern snowbirds to a February picnic to raise awareness of Emmaus and the Kairos Prison Ministry. The men provided a free barbecue lunch with music by a bluegrass gospel band.



More than 500 people attend a February barbecue under the oaks of Englewood (Fla.) UMC.

## BONNER SPRINGS, KANSAS

### On the path to discipleship

George Houle, president of UM Men of Great Plains Conference, and Johnnie Draughon, a men's ministry specialist from Virginia, led an Advanced Lay Servant class on intentional discipleship at Bonner Springs UMC.

Leaders from two Nebraska and four Kansas churches learned about disciple-making strategies.



George Houle and Johnnie Draughon lead a class on disciple making.

## GREENWELL SPRINGS, LOUISIANA

### A visit to unchartered churches

Todd Shupe, president of Baton Rouge District UM Men, visited all unchartered churches in the district.

He called the pastor of each church and asked if there is anyone who is tasked with men's ministry. He then said a team of UM Men would love to come honor them and their church.

Every pastor has loved this idea and welcomed the visiting team.



The Rev. Debra Keller, pastor of St. Luke's UMC in Greenwell Springs, welcomes a UM Men team.

## NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

### UM Men provide scholarships, aid flooded families

Men of Cornerstone UMC assisted neighboring churches and families following floods and tornadoes. They also provided UM Committee on Relief funds for Haiti and the Bahamas.

The men also provide scholarship funds and sponsor an oratorical contest designed to improve speaking skills.



Men of Cornerstone UMC celebrate Men's Day.

## BREWSTER, MASSACHUSETTS

### Helping Hands assist 70 families

While serving as a local church pastor, Dr. Fred Yarger would regularly visit the members of his Northside UMC. During his visits, he saw the little things that needed doing, such as a loose handrail or missing step. On his day off, he would come back and make the repairs.

In 2000, Fred retired from Northside UMC and helped create Helping Hands, a team of volunteers who assist those who cannot do household repairs or projects themselves.

Over the last 18 years, requests from some 70 families have included everything from rebuilding an entire second-story deck for a family to burying a cat.

Fred says he has lost count of how many handicap ramps the team has built. While most projects are done for free, the team raises money by accepting job requests from people who have funds to pay. "We've probably raised \$150,000 over the last 18 years, and we always give it all away every year," says Fred.



Ramp built by the Helping Hands ministry of Northside UMC. Dr. Fred Yarger is on the right.

## JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

### Two UMCOR centers provide protective gear

Months ago, during Jackson are flooding, Christ UMC became a temporary disaster response hub and collected various types of donations and needed materials.

During the coronavirus outbreak Dr. Michael Ard, a physician at Winston Medical Center, reached out to Mississippi Conference disaster response coordinator, Mellie Thomas, looking for help with the shortage of



Volunteers unpack UMCOR cleaning buckets at Camp Faith in Biloxi.

personal protective equipment in Winston County. Thomas and East Jackson District disaster response coordinator, Hugh Langley, unpacked 80 cleaning buckets and handed over 400 N95 masks, gloves, and 300 hazardous-material suits.

At Camp Faith, a Hurricane Katrina era-created disaster response hub in Biloxi, registered nurse Sonny Soileau rounded up nine volunteers and unpacked 500 UMCOR cleaning buckets. They retrieved around 2,500 masks, including 60 N95 masks. The masks were delivered to Memorial Hospital, Gulfport; Merit Health, Biloxi; and the Singing River Health System.

## MONTICELLO, MISSISSIPPI

### Scouts mark Scout Sunday

Cub Scouts from Pack 126 and Boy Scouts from Troop 126 participated in a Scout Sunday service at Monticello UMC.

UM Men provided a soup-and-salad meal following the service.



## PATASKALA, NEW JERSEY

### Men meet with mayor

Pataskala Mayor Mike Compton was the featured speaker at a Sunday morning gathering of UM Men of Pataskala UMC.

Pastor Terry Sager hosted the once-a-month breakfast where the men received an informal “State of the City” address along with eggs, bacon, toast and coffee.



*Pataskala Mayor Compton (in brown jacket) discusses police needs at a monthly meeting of UM Men.*

The mayor said he was expecting news about a half-percent tax increase to fund the Pataskala Police Department.”

## CORAM, NEW YORK

### Trinity UMC marks Scout Sunday

Trinity UMC was one of thousands of UMC congregations celebrating Scout Sunday on Feb. 9.



## APEX, NORTH CAROLINA

### Men and Scouts support one another

In 2000, Apex UMC recruited five boys to form a Boy Scout troop.

The church now serves 80 boys in Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Varsity Scouts. The church also has 20 girls in a BSA troop.

Scouts assist UM Men with fundraisers and a quarterly Adopt-a-Highway project while UM Men provide financial support and service opportunities for the Scouts.

The troop has produced 43 Eagle Scouts, including five this year. Benjamin Harmon, William (Web) Bass Jr, Alex Lowell, Tyler Baran, and Mathew Young completed service projects to achieve the rank of Eagle. Alex led the construction of high school benches; Web built four bird houses for a nature park; Tyler constructed a bench for a school in Raleigh; Ben organized an education day for type 1 diabetes; and Matt built two benches for a disk golf course.



*From left: Brian Fahs, Apex UMC chartered organization representative; Tyler Baran; Mathew Young; Web Bass; Ben Harmon; Alex Lowell; and Allen Coleman, former scoutmaster.*

## OCRACOKE ISLAND, NORTH CAROLINA

### Sixty men rebuild homes

Cape Hatteras UM Men spent three weeks rebuilding homes following Hurricane Dorian.

“What started as a modest effort to help our neighbors, exceeded our expectations,”

said Dennis Carroll, director of the Cape Hatteras UM Men, “The number of volunteers grew as did the results, despite the weather and logistical challenges.”

Dennis thanked the Ocracoke homeowners who let volunteers and displaced residents stay in their homes.



Two members of Cape Hatteras UMC help repair a flooded home in Ocracoke Island.

## CAMDEN, SOUTH CAROLINA

### Mayor celebrates 100th anniversary of Methodist Scouting

Camden Mayor Alfred Mae Drakeford celebrated the 100th anniversary of Scouting in the Methodist Church at a February meeting of the City Council

Drakeford presented the proclamation to Jim Bradshaw, David Weaver, Walter Smith and Art Graham all members of Lyttleton Street UMC.



Mayor Drakeford (red dress) presents a proclamation honoring the UMC for 100 years of Scouting.

## COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

### Governor recognizes 100th anniversary of Methodist Scouting

Governor Henry McMaster marked the 100th anniversary of Methodist Scouting at a February service at the state capitol. He was joined by South Carolina Bishop L. Jonathan Holston and Columbia Boy Scouts.



Steven Scheid, director of the UM Center on Scouting Ministries, is on the second row between Governor McMaster and Bishop Holston.

## DILLON, SOUTH CAROLINA

### Men exchange claw hammers for nail guns

Fifteen years ago, men of Main Street UMC would clean the yards of elderly church members.

In November 2016, Dr. Phil Wallace, founder of Main Street UM Men, learned his nurse had ALS. He asked men of Clio UMC to help build a wheelchair ramp for her.

Men of Main Street showed up with up with claw hammers, and men from Clio commented, ‘If you want, you can pound nails into 2x4s, but we use nail guns.’ Clio men taught the Main Street group about ramp building.

That first ramp was 35 feet long and cost \$1,300.

Main Street UM Men then began fundraising to buy tools, a trailer and ramp-building materials.

They completed their 100th ramp last year.

## LEXINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

### Men gather for spiritual retreat

In February, some 500 men gathered for the annual Men N Ministry spiritual retreat at Mount Horeb UMC.

Speakers included Dr. Eric Mason, founder of Epiphany Fellowship Church in Philadelphia; South Carolina Bishop Jonathan Holston; the Rev. Jeff Kerseym, pastor of Mount Horeb UMC; Marty Simpson, a comedian; and James “Slice” Penny, who spoke on his restoration in Christ after a devastating spiral into drug trafficking.

“I couldn’t shave looking in the mirror. I had to shave in shower because I couldn’t stand the sight of myself,” Penny said. He was later sentenced to prison where he spent hours reading the Bible and drawing closer to Jesus. Lifting up the analogy of the men’s retreat restored car show, he said each man there is like a restored car.

“Restoration isn’t a one and done thing,” Penny said. “We’re all different makes, models and years, and it’s a process.”

The retreat also featured workshops, a golf tournament, an oyster roast, music, and personal testimonies.



## RIDGELAND, SOUTH CAROLINA

### Money is no good

The Men’s Club at St. Paul’s UMC has a long history of service and care for others. They wanted to honor their wives with a special Valentine’s Day meal.

Club President Shorty Morgan ordered the food from the Leon Smith, owner of Eats and Sweets. When he tried to pay, Leon informed Shorty that the Men’s Club money was “no good”—there was no bill to be paid. Leon said he was aware of the work the Men’s Club did in the community, and it was his pleasure to help.



Members of the Men’s Club of St. Paul’s UMC.

## ATHENS, TEXAS

### Men sponsor chili cookoff

Cooks of the best pots of chili received ribbons and trophies at an annual UM Men Chili Cook-Off.

The “people’s choice champion” was selected by the greatest amount of money put into the pot of the winning cook.

Other winners were selected by four judges.

The competitive event included a live- and a silent auction. All funds were given to local charities.



Men and women prepare for Chili cookoff.

Past chili entries had names like Hawaiian Hula Dancer, Vegan Chili, Heartburn Heaven, Joseph's Coat of Many Colors, Lake Athens Swamp Chili, Dante's Inferno and Hellfire and Damnation. Yep, the tastes ran from mild to sizzling.

## KERRVILLE, TEXAS

### Men honor veterans and community servants

UM Men of the Texas Hill Country sponsored a Veteran’s Day event to honor veterans and current members of the military, police, fire department, EMTs, Border Patrol, CIA, FBI, and NASA. Each veteran was given a copy of Strength for Service to God and Country.

The two-hour event at Light on the Hill at

Mount Wesley included a meal, an address by NASA Astronaut Jack Lousma, and an offering that provided \$2,175 for Wreaths Across America.



Members of Scout Troop 60 lead the Pledge of Allegiance. They later served some 90 meals, and cleaned up the area after the service.



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



**We know a few things  
about food & farmers. But we  
need you and your volunteer cap to  
help us connect the dots.**



**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 and now that we are dealing with Covid-19, there are so many without jobs who have also found themselves and their families without food. With the help of our UMMen partnership, the Society of St. Andrew feeds millions of hungry Americans.

The Produce Pick-up Program will help us do more and will open up new opportunities for UMMen all over the USA, even in areas where SoSA does not have an existing operation. The Produce Pick-up Program has a few requirements. All you need a vehicle that can hold produce, a nearby farm location, and the ability to coordinate picking up what's left in the field after the farmers' harvest. 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! Contact Wade Mays to sign up today at 800-333-4597.

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](mailto:wade@endhunger.org)**

