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Serving with a smile

Dental project calls hundreds to risk-taking mission and service

By Eleanor L. Colvin
Texas Annual Conference
Director of Communications

Starbuck's will provide the coffee. Chick-fil-A is donating sandwiches. St. Paul's UMC is coordinating Spanish translations, and The Woodlands UMC will capture everything on video.

Although these jobs are

together packets.

To date, Chapelwood UMC, John Wesley UMC, Memorial Drive UMC, St. Luke's UMC and St. Peter's UMC have volunteered to sponsor meals and snacks during the two-day event.

Ultimately, what we're going to do here, is give our time and talent to help someone smile again. That the true miracle in all of this.

Rev. Mark Woodward
pastor of West University UMC and
Texas Mission of Mercy co-chair

taken, there is still something for you to do at the upcoming Texas Mission of Mercy dental project in Houston. Scheduled for Friday and Saturday, November 1-2, more than 400 volunteers are needed to staff the event, which will be held at the Spring Branch Community Center.

"Last week we had 80 volunteers sign up," said Andrew Robertson, title of the Texas Dental Association Smiles Foundation. "That brought our total to 280, which is a good showing, but we definitely need more volunteers."

Volunteers can register online at www.tdasf.org/houston, or, those without access to the internet may call Jacquie Banman, associate director of the Center for Missional Excellence, at 713-521-9383. Volunteers are needed to set up and tear down the event; greet patients; serve food; take vital signs; complete data entry; escort patients throughout the treatment process and more.

Rev. Mark Woodward, pastor of West University UMC and TMOM co-chair says there's a job for everyone. The children of his church will participate, in advance of the event, by putting

Opportunities are available for Sunday school classes, youth groups, mission groups, as well as men's and women's groups to underwrite activities or to participate in a hands-on mission project together.

"Ultimately, what we're going to do here, is give our time and talent to help someone smile again," said Rev. Woodward. "That's the true miracle in all of this."

The Texas Mission of Mercy (TMOM) dental project in Houston is being co-sponsored by The Methodist Hospital, the Texas Annual Conference, the Texas Dental Association Smiles Foundation and the Houston Dental Society.

More than 14 TMOMs have been held throughout the state of Texas – in Austin, Hereford, and Dallas. TMOM have treated 11,048 patients, providing \$3,802,445 in charitable dental services.

For more information or to register, visit

www.tdasf.org/houston. For information on sponsorship opportunities contact

Rev. Woodward at 713-666-8111.



'Nothing But Nets is nothing but good'

Bishop Janice Riggle Huie discusses the involvement of the Texas Annual Conference in Nothing But Nets at a press conference declaring September 17-23, Nothing But Nets week. Other participants included government, sports and business partners. From left: City Councilwoman, Ada Edwards, Houston Comets player, Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Mayor Bill White, Dr. Ken Lindemann of Exxon-Mobil and Oliver Luck of the Houston Dynamos.

See page 4 for full story.

See inside Core Value stories

Risk-taking Mission

St. John's UMC Houston breaks ground on new living facility for the homeless on page 6

Faith-forming Relationships

First UMC Henderson Sunday School class models service and outreach on page 7

How is your church living the conference core values? Send stories, photos or ideas to thelmaj@methodists.net.



The mission of the Texas Annual Conference is to equip congregations to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world to the glory of God.

The Cross Connection is the official publication of the Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

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Imagine the possibilities

Charge conference season is time to discern our role in transformation

By Leah Taylor
Texas Conference Lay Leader

School has started and football season is in full swing, which means it must be time for Charge Conferences! As part of our new Model for Ministry and the redistricting, our District Superintendents have changed the way they work. So, some of you will see Charge Conferences handled in new, creative ways.

As laity in the United Methodist Church, Charge

to honor the leaders in our churches who have served faithfully for many years.

Ideally, establishing experienced leaders as mentors for new lay leadership would honor our past, create continuity, and support and encourage new young leaders in all levels of the church.

Recently, the Core Leadership Team, at the recommendation of the Annual

What if each of us sought out just one young person to mentor and encourage? Just one new face and heart, working to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world to the glory of God.

Can you imagine what that would look like?

Conference season is an ideal time for us to step back and evaluate – ourselves and our personal ministries, as well as our local church and how each church is doing. Now is a perfect time to reflect on what God is calling each of us to do in the life of our church, our community and the world.

Many of our local churches are involved in transformation. If your church is one of these, there may be an opportunity for you to participate in an important way. In fact, if you are passionate about Radical Hospitality, your enthusiasm could impact the success of transformation for your entire congregation.

At Charge Conference we will see the work done by our Committees on Lay Leadership to prepare laity for leadership roles. If we are truly committed to grow our church, the Committee on Lay Leadership has a critical job to do.

To grow, it is imperative that we tap younger people within our churches to fill some leadership roles. In so doing, we need

Conference Planning Team, voted to shorten Annual Conference by one full day. Because Annual Conference is held over Memorial Day, this will allow laity to serve as delegates without taking so much time away from jobs and families.

As we work intentionally to involve more gifted young laity in the leadership of our churches, God's plan for us will certainly be revealed in exciting new ways! Each of us in leadership in our local church, District or in the Conference has a story of how we were called. Each of us had encouragers who mentored and supported us.

What if each of us sought out just one young person to mentor and encourage? Just one new face and heart, working to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world to the glory of God. Can you imagine what that would look like?

Charge Conference season is a time to reflect on possibilities. Just imagine.

Spirit Journey 2007

Come to experience...leave empowered to share

By Alan Van Hooser
First UMC – Groves, Texas

Spiritual formation is only a phrase until it takes wings in our daily lives. The third annual Spirit Journey's spiritual life retreat will be held at Lakeview Camp and Conference Center October 25-27. This year's theme is *Come to Experience ... Leave Empowered to Share*.

through trial and error during Jerry's 16 years of ministry, along with his education through Eugene Peterson at Regent College, The Oblate School of Theology and the Pecos Benedictine Abbey.

"My desire over the last seven or eight years is to pre-

At the local church level, good things flow down from spiritually prepared leadership.

Dr. Jerry Webber

Dr. Jerry Webber, Director of the Center for Christian Spirituality and minister of prayer and spiritual formation at Chapelwood UMC in Houston will lead the retreat.

Dr. Webber's philosophy is that, "At the local church level, good things flow down from spiritually prepared leadership. All who come are significant, but the leaders are where the energy flows from. My hope is that these leaders will attend Spirit Journey and be formed spiritually to do what God wants done."

The retreat will forge and follow a rhythm of worship, rest, study and fellowship. The Eucharist is central to the community experience. Lessons that will help participants understand and be able to model spirit led discernment will be offered.

These lessons were learned

pare leaders to make decisions from God's inner guidance. We all need this, but the leaders must get it."

Spirit Journey is for everyone, lay and clergy alike, who is seeking nurture, rest, and empowerment for their personal ministry. Webber adds, "The person who experiences something personal here and receives these tangible tools can and will take these lessons and model them to Sunday School classes, board meetings and other everyday ministries of the local church."

The cost for the retreat is \$140. A limited number of scholarships are available. For more information, contact either Alan Van Hooser at revvanhooser@aol.com or 409-962-1076 or Kathy Kothmann, k.kothmann@verizon.net.

REMINDER!!!

Dates for the *Making Connections* tour throughout the Conference:

Sunday, September 30
2:30 p.m.
First UMC, West Campus
3663 Westcenter Drive,
Houston, Texas

Monday, October 1
7 p.m.
Wesley UMC, Beaumont
3810 N. Major Drive,
Beaumont, Texas

Tuesday, October 2
7 p.m.
First UMC, Lufkin

805 E. Denman, Lufkin, Texas

Wednesday, October 3
7 p.m.
First UMC, Linden
400 E. Rush Street, Linden,
Texas

Thursday, October 4
7 p.m.
Marvin UMC, Tyler
300 W. Erwin
Tyler, Texas

Sunday, October 14
2:30 p.m.
Christ UMC, College Station
4201 State Highway 6 South
College Station, Texas

Texas church helps community prepare for storms

By John Gordon*
GROVES, Texas (UMNS)

Each new weather report of a tropical storm that could move into the Gulf of Mexico puts residents of the upper Texas coast on edge, still mindful of how Hurricane Rita devastated the

losing contact with some members in Rita's aftermath and also seeing residents struggle to evacuate due to medical needs or financial problems.

"Hurricane preparations are

those with special needs. Without advance planning, Farris says they might have difficulty making arrangements or get left behind during an evacuation.

"I think it will save lives,"

Texas Annual (regional) Conference committee that is preparing a disaster-response plan.

"This preparation will certainly save physical lives by allowing smoother exits, smoother evacuations," Van Hooser says. "But I think it will also help people to cope, emotionally and spiritually."

Carol Carpenter, a member of the Groves church, says it's time to acknowledge that hurricane systems are all part of life near the coast. "Rita was terrible," she says. "Can't change it; might as well get used to it."

is encouraging other churches to develop disaster-preparedness and response plans. United Methodist churches in Louisiana and Mississippi are also looking to improve their emergency plans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

"Preparedness is still a major, major issue because most families just don't do what they need to do to be prepared," says the Rev. Richard Goodrich, assistant to Bishop Janice Riggle Huie, who leads the conference. "They wait until the storm is close and then get in line like everyone else."

Not if, but when

The Rev. Freddie Henderson, director for disaster preparedness for the Louisiana Annual Conference, says a disaster coordinator has been appointed for each of the jurisdiction's seven districts and additional training is planned in local areas. "We try to get people to think in terms of not if, but when," Henderson says. "We talk about hurricanes and talk about being prepared for three days of survival."

About 300 United Methodist churches are in hurricane-prone areas in Louisiana, according to Henderson. Information on disaster planning and recovery efforts is also posted on the conference Web site at www.la-umc.org.org. Training in disaster preparedness is also under way in Mississippi, according to Gwen Green, a spokeswoman for the Mississippi Annual Conference.

*Gordon is a freelance producer in Marshall, Texas.

News media contact: Fran Coode Walsh, Nashville, Tenn., (615) 742-5470 or www.news-desk@umcom.org.



Barbara Farris (right) talks with Mary Stafford during a seminar on hurricane preparedness at First UMC in Groves, Texas. Farris is the parish nurse and has led two training sessions to help area residents develop a storm plan, with an emphasis on helping those with special needs.

area two years ago.

"I do get concerned about it. We all do down here; it's a natural thing," says Herb Stafford, 81.

Stafford's church, First United Methodist of Groves, is leading a community effort to make sure residents — especially those with special needs — are better prepared for the next big storm.

The Rev. Alan Van Hooser started the ministry after briefly

more than just buying canned tuna and bottled water," says Van Hooser. "We saw lives shortened from the stress of evacuation. We simply cannot have another hurricane come ashore in the Port Arthur-Beaumont area and be as ill-prepared as we were last time."

The church's parish nurse, Barbara Farris, has led two seminars on hurricane preparations, with an emphasis on helping

UMNS photos by John Gordon.

Farris says of the ministry. "If they know the plan's in place, it's going to decrease their anxiety level. And by decreasing their anxiety level, that's going to help them physically to cope with the crisis situation."

Church members are encouraged to help identify those in the community with special needs. Van Hooser, who was appointed to the Groves church shortly before Rita hit, also serves on a

UMCOR partners with Texas Conference to aid Rita, Humberto victims

By Eleanor L. Colvin
Director of Communications
Texas Annual Conference

While Hurricane Humberto failed to cause a fraction of the damage of its two-year predecessor

Committee on Relief (UMCOR) has responded with initial emergency grants for the Texas and

Texas Annual Conference will be distributed via the TAC Rita Recovery office. UMCOR

toppled their FEMA trailers.

Angela Baker, director of the Rita Recovery office, said they have received a few calls from people affected by Hurricane Humberto. Recognizing that all are still in the midst of hurricane season, she has a special request: "Pray that the waters are calm."

What began as a tropical storm, Hurricane Humberto strengthened with intensity into an 85 mile-per-hour hurricane — the fastest transformation on record according to forecasters.

Thousands of homes were damaged in the same area that was struck by Hurricane Rita in 2005.

In Southwest Louisiana increasing floods are feared to cause further damage. UMCOR remains in contact with both conferences as damage assessments are being made.

To help support the Louisiana and Texas Annual Conferences, give to Hurricanes, 2007, UMCOR Advance #982511.

'Pray that the waters are calm.'

Angela Baker
Director, Rita Recovery Office

sor — Hurricane Rita — the storm still managed to affect Southeast Texas residents who were still in the midst of recovery.

The United Methodist

Louisiana Annual Conferences affected by Hurricane Humberto, which struck the Texas-Louisiana border on Thursday, Sept. 13.

The \$10,000 grant to the

reported the greatest needs to be for people not yet recovered from Rita, for whom Humberto ripped off the blue tarps temporarily covering their homes or

ExxonMobil commits \$500,000 to Nothing But Nets

Charitable gift kicks off week of 'netraising' activities throughout East Texas



Houston Mayor Bill White greets Sheryl Swoopes of the Houston Comets. Other supporters pictured include: Oliver Luck (right), President and General Manager of the Houston Dynamo and Dr. Ken Lindemann, Global Medical Director for Exxon-Mobil Corporation.

At a press conference on the steps of Houston's City Hall, Houston Mayor Bill White and City Councilmember Ada Edwards declared September 17-23 *Nothing But Nets* week in Houston.

The event, which brought together partners from the faith, sports, cultural and business communities of Houston, is one of several that will take the story of *Nothing But Nets* across the Texas Annual Conference.

A global, grassroots cam-

pan McKee, executive director of *Nothing But Nets*. "We thank Mayor White and Council Member Edwards for their city-wide commitment to *Nothing But Nets*. We also thank ExxonMobil Foundation for their tremendous contribution to this program which will help us continue to send nets and save lives throughout Africa."

The ExxonMobil Foundation is one of the largest private sector donors to malaria research and prevention.

awareness for malaria prevention. In addition to Mayor White and the United Nations Foundation, a number of organizations will be raising awareness about the devastating effects of malaria, a disease that kills one million people each year, the vast majority of whom are children.

The Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, the Houston Dynamo, the Houston Rockets, the Houston Comets, and the World Affairs Council of Houston co-hosted

"Mosquito netting is cheap, but it's not cheap to a person without the money to pay or to those in places where it's not available at any costs. That's why Nothing But Nets is nothing but good."

Mayor Bill White

aign to prevent malaria by providing insecticide-treated bed nets, *Nothing But Nets* has attracted a new partner. The Texas-based ExxonMobil Foundation signed on with a commitment of \$500,000.

The new partnership will help *Nothing But Nets* expand its network of supporters. Already, more than 60,000 people are involved, nationwide.

"What a wonderful way to kick off our series of events in Houston to raise awareness about malaria, a leading killer of children in Africa," said Elizabeth

"With a workforce in Africa that numbers in the thousands, and as one of the largest direct foreign investors in the continent, ExxonMobil has witnessed firsthand the devastating impact of malaria," said Gerald McElvy, president of ExxonMobil Foundation. "We are proud to stand with *Nothing But Nets* in the fight against malaria."

East Texas activities

Throughout September, *Nothing But Nets* hosted a series of events in Houston as part of its national effort to raise money and

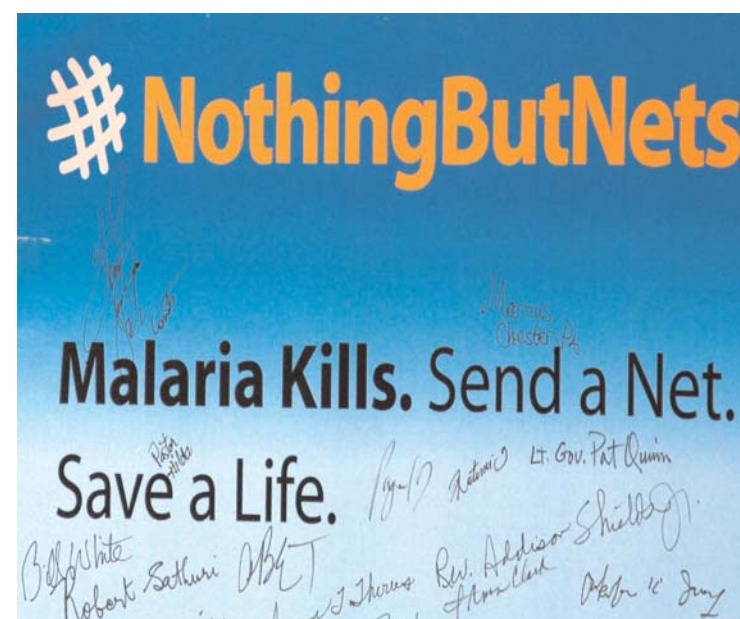
several events, including a Malaria Boot Camp for youth with three-time Olympian and Houston Comets player Sheryl Swoopes; an interfaith luncheon in Houston and a faith leaders' dinner in Tyler, Texas, featuring Cote d'Ivoire Ambassador Daouda Diabate; and a World Affairs Council forum with Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. Earlier in the month, the Houston Dynamo held a *Nothing But Nets* in-stadium event.

Mayor White remarked on how far we've come in the fight against Malaria, and how much



Above: Memorial Drive UMC youth participated in the Soccer Fest that preceded the Houston Dynamo Nothing But Nets event in September.

Below: Houston Mayor Bill White and Houston Comets player, Sheryl Swoopes recently added their names to the Nothing But Nets banner of supporters.



more there is to be done.

"Here in Houston, 100 years ago, one of the biggest impediments to growth was the malaria and yellow fever that afflicted this region," White said. "Sometimes we take for granted just how short ago that was. We also take for granted the fact that many people in places through this world are still having to struggle with what our ancestors in this region did."

"Mosquito netting is cheap, but it is not cheap for someone who doesn't have money to pay for it, or where it is not available at any cost. That's why Nothing But Nets is nothing but good."

About Nothing But Nets

Inspired by *Sports Illustrated* columnist Rick Reilly, tens of thousands of people have joined the *Nothing But Nets* campaign that was created by the United Nations Foundation in 2006. Founding campaign partners include the National Basketball Association's NBA Cares, The People of the United Methodist Church and *Sports Illustrated*.

Visit www.txcumc.org/nets to send a net and save a life. It only costs \$10 to provide an insecticide-treated bed net that can prevent this deadly disease.

Malaria boot camp for youth unites partners, empowers students to serve



More than 250 students from the Greater Houston area participated in a Malaria Boot Camp at Bellaire High School. The World Affairs Council, which is one of the Nothing But Nets partners, sponsored the event.

In an introduction of the campaign, Nothing But Nets Executive Director Elizabeth McKee explained the focus on “nets.”

“In soccer we’ve got nets, in basketball we’ve got nets – we’ve got nets all over the place,” McKee said. “But do any of those save lives?”

The answer to that question is “no.” However, athletes, whose livelihoods center on “nets,” are turning that answer into a “yes,” by lending their voices to Nothing But Nets.

Top: A Bellaire athlete explains her ideas for raising the awareness of Nothing But Nets and raising money to purchase insecticide treated bed nets to stop the spread of Malaria.

Middle: Nothing But Nets Executive Director Elizabeth McKee interviews Mike Harris of the Houston Rockets about the team’s partnership with Nothing But Nets. Harris discussed the commitment of the Rockets and of basketball players nationwide, who serve others through NBA Cares.

Bottom Left: A high school student asks players from the Houston Dynamo and Houston Rockets, if they had “a million more dollars” what disease would they use that money to fight. The student was the first to identify that the Nothing But Nets campaign originated from a column in Sports Illustrated.

Bottom Right: Houston Dynamo player Dwayne De Rosario, who has three children, discusses his personal commitment to Nothing But Nets and to save the lives of children worldwide. “It’s a good thing that we’re looking to Africa and places like that to help,” De Rosario said. “Kids here take things for granted...When kids are dying daily from a curable disease, we should help out.”



Sweet 16

St. John's celebrates 16-year rebirth with transitional living center's groundbreaking

By Eleanor L. Colvin
Texas Annual Conference
Director of Communications

Sixteen years ago, when Rudy and Juanita Rasmus arrived at St. John's UMC in downtown Houston, there were nine members, the first lady recalls.

Today, with more than 8,000 members, St. John's redefines "mega-church" – with homeless worshippers lifting holy hands next to young professionals. And, some things never change: The most important work at St. John's continues to occur outside the church walls.

To celebrate 16 years of ministry to the homeless and urban communities, St. John's UMC broke ground in September on a new transitional living facility for the homeless.

The center's name – Tenemos – means "a safe place." It will be constructed next to the church's Bread of Life Center, and as board chairman, Adrian Patterson stated, will be a "continuation of the work done of this block by St. John's over time."

"We've been at this work for 16 years," said Pastor Rudy Rasmus. "Seventeen years ago my life changed for the better forever. On this side of good, I've seen a lot of positive things happen."

It takes a village

A community-serving vision such as Tenemos, requires the

community's help to come to pass. Tenemos' chief development partners include longtime St. John's members the Knowles Family, which consists of music and fashion icons Matthew and Tina Knowles; entertainers Beyonce Knowles, Kelly Rowland and Solange Knowles. The Beyonce Knowles Survivor Foundation is a major underwriter of Tenemos. The family has contributed \$1 million to realize the vision of Tenemos.

At the recent groundbreaking, Tina Knowles spoke of her personal involvement in the ministries of Pastors Rudy and Juanita Rasmus.

"It's near and dear to my heart, because I know it's real and not something for show," Tina Knowles said. "I thank God for everyone here."

Matthew Knowles recalled the valuable lessons learned in the 29 years he's known the clergy couple.

"What they've taught us all is that church is not a building," Matthew Knowles said. "Church is the community."

Walking the walk

In addition to the personal gifts of the Knowles, the City of Houston is a major contributor to Tenemos.

"We are proud to invest roughly \$2.5 million (in the Tenemos project)," said Donald

Sampley, of the Housing and Urban Development Department. "We look forward to seeing it occupied by 40 people, who will have received a hand up."

These single-room housing units may not seem like much, but they will be invaluable to those working to establish a residence in order to get a job or those simply struggling to stay off the streets.

"It's one thing to be depressed and go home and rest on your Sealy Posturpedic mattress and 600 count Egyptian sheets," said Juanita Rasmus, while encouraging people to reflect on their blessings and take risks that bless others. "It's another thing to be depressed and go to sleep under the Pierce Elevated with a cardboard box as your mattress."

Another champion of the rights of the homeless, is Houston City Councilwoman Ada Edwards, who also participated in the groundbreaking. Edwards celebrated the tenacity required of the Rasmuses to be fully engaged in ministry that truly touches the community.

"It's one thing to talk and another to walk the walk," Councilwoman Edwards said. "We all have great ideas ... but it takes vision and boldness. Not everyone has a Joshua mentality, to say: 'Let's take this!'"



Supporters praise God at the groundbreaking for the Transitional Living Center. A homeless man watches the activity from across the street.



Pastors Rudy and Juanita Rasmus celebrate the groundbreaking with entertainment icon, Tina Knowles (Center).



Entertainer Kelly Rowland greets Pastor Rudy Rasmus with a smile.

PALS for life

PALS Sunday school class defines faith-forming relationships for 6 decades

By Jill Krone

First UMC Henderson Communications

First United Methodist Church in Henderson, Texas is thrilled to celebrate the 60 year anniversary of the PALS Sunday school class this October.

Started in the fall of 1947, under the ministry of the late Rev. Thomas Price, this class was established to emphasize service and outreach among their membership of young adults. Class member, Don Gage, shared, "If you miss a couple of Sundays, someone will check on you. We always report on our sick and we call each other."

Two founding members, Bill and Geneva Willard, continue to attend classes and remain active in the ministries of this group. "It has meant so much to me to know I've had such close friendships for so many years," Geneva Willard said.

Decades of dedication

As the age of the members has increased so has their devotion to serve the church through meeting the needs of growing

families. The PALS class has been the catalyst for meeting many church-wide needs through their generosity and service.

First Henderson's original nursery was a response to a need of class members and was supplied and staffed by many PALS participants, as they became parents.

For more than 30 years, the class hosted a Chicken & Spaghetti Lunch as an annual fund-raiser, providing money for church-related gifts, sponsoring of children in The Methodist Children's Home, and providing compassionate emergency assistance to persons in need within the community. Two couples even took leave-of-absences from the PALS class to serve as house parents at the Waco-based Methodist Children's Home.

Many area youth have bene-

fited from scholarships made possible by the PALS Sunday school class. Today, members raise funds

for their service projects by contributing \$1 to the class treasury in honor of each other's birthdays, a tradition started with the late Bill Orr, himself a PALS class member.

Humble beginnings

Originally, PALS met in a basement storage space that was cleared and cleaned up. The class members made the most of their room, by furnishing it with sofas, chairs, and items from their homes. Years later, the classroom relocated to the Education Building, which remained their

home until the boiler explosion in the fall of 1967 tore the building to pieces. That didn't end the

PALS class though. They continued to meet and serve the church and community.

The PALS class started with 14 members, grew to a membership of 62 in 2000, and currently has 45 members. Over the years, the class has been blessed with the consistency of the loyal leadership of only four teachers: Kenneth Koonce, Dr. Jimmie Griffith, Judge Alfred Waldrop and Bob Minton, the current facilitator who has led the PALS class for more than 36 years.

When asked how he came to be the teacher for the class, Bob

Minton reminisced: "Alfred Waldrop, my boss, indicated the benefits for my future in the law firm we worked for, should I undertake class teaching responsibilities."

Celebrating PALS

The class plans to honor their years together with recognition during church services on Sunday, October 21, 2007 and during a luncheon at noon that day. A highlight of the events will be in welcoming previous class members and their families as they return to participate in the joy of the celebrations.

"In all of its definitions, it is fellowship we experience, despite our differences," Bob Minton said of the PALS class and their 60 years together.

To learn more about the PALS Sunday school class or the ministries of First United Methodist Church of Henderson, visit the church Web site at: www.fum-chenderson.org or call the church office at 903-657-6588.

"In all of its definitions, it is fellowship we experience, despite our differences."

Bob Minton



members of the PALS Sunday School class of First UMC Henderson. The class, created by Bill and Geneva Willard in 1947 is a growing and vibrant ministry today.



Spotlight on Local Church Ministries

Learning Opportunities

Healing The Brokenness: Shaping Communities of Peace & Reconciliation in Christ September 28-29, 2007

Brought to you by *Duke Center for Reconciliation, Bellaire United Methodist Church, Mission Houston, and the 5th Ward Coalition of Churches*

"I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me..." John 17: 20-21

"Healing the Brokenness" is designed to encourage us in continuing the difficult work of becoming one as the people of God. Dr. Emmanuel Katongole and Rev. Chris Rice, co-directors of Center for Reconciliation at Duke Divinity School, will be speaking at a pastor's and lay leader's luncheon on Friday September 28, 2007 and leading a workshop on Saturday September 29.

The purpose of this event is to assist laity and clergy in the greater Houston area with naming, addressing, and healing the personal, social, and structural divisions that divide us as the people of God, including racial, economic, denominational, class and other social barriers.

Adam, Eve, and Lucy

"Adam, Eve, and Lucy" will be the topic of a three-week series at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Houston. It will be taught by Dr. L. James (Jim) Bankston, senior minister, in the Chapel Sunday, September 23 at 9:45 a.m.

His scriptural reference will be Genesis through chapter 11. "Lucy" is the 3.18-million-year-old partial skeleton that is on exhibit at the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

At 5501 Main Street, St. Paul's is on the corner of Main and Binz/Bissonnet, across from the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The church is within one block of both Museum District MetroRail stops, and free parking is available in two lots behind the church on Fannin Street.

For more information, contact Dr. Bankston at bankston@stpaulshouston.org or 713-528-0-527 or Donna V. Adair, Director of Communications at church, 713-528-5027 and email dadair@stpaulshouston.org and g-mail: donna.adair@gmail.com.

Being One - A Marriage Seminar, Learning to Love Your Partner Without Losing Yourself: Saturday, **September 29**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Marvin UMC, 300 W. Erwin Street, Tyler, Texas.

An experience for engaged and married clergy and their spouses. Dr. Bill Kerley and Sherri Beeman, licensed marriage and family therapists, will examine the natural stages of married life, and how to deal with conflicts that arise between two persons who are close. Cost: \$20 per couple.

For more information, contact Peter Cammarano, Jr., 979-236-3407, Peter_Cammarano@hotmail.com

Community Health Fair St. Mark's UMC Houston

St. Mark's UMC (Patterson) will host a community health fair Saturday, September 29 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Christus Community Health Ministries mobile clinic will be on site to do free screenings for diabetes, blood pressure, vision, prostate exams and more.

For more details, call the church at 713-862-2407 or call Alice Cebrun, Health and Wellness Ministry at 713-864-5030.

Pre-Retirement Seminar November 14 & 15, 2007 Lakeview Conference Center

Have you ever wondered about your social security, pensions, finances and insurance after retirement? This is the seminar to get these answers.

If you are within 10 years of retirement you need to attend this very important seminar.

Check in time begins at 10:00 am on Wednesday, November 14 and the seminar concludes with the noon lunch on Thursday, November 15.

For registration forms, contact Marty Gordon at 713/521-9383 x322, (Fax) 713/523-9173, (email) martyg@methodists.net.

Checks should be made payable to the Texas Annual Conference and sent to the Conference Board of Pensions, 5215 Main Street, Houston, Texas 77002; attn: Marty Gordon.. Registration deadline is October 1, 2007.

No Man Left Behind Conference

The weekend of September 27-29, Kingwood UMC will host the *No Man Left Behind* conference.

The three day conference is a regional event being held to train pastors, and men's ministry leaders. The conference will focus on how to create, capture, and sustain momentum among men.

The United Methodist Men have partnered with Man in the Mirror to provide leadership training for the United Methodist Church. Due to this partnership, a discounted rate is being offered.

If you are interested in Men's Ministry and would like to attend the conference, go to the Man in the Mirror Website at <http://register.maninthemirror.org/SearchResults.asp?Cat=60>, or contact Rev. Patrick Evans. 281-358-2137

Fellowship Opportunities

Countryfest Bazaar and Pumpkin Patch

Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 13217 FM 1764, Santa Fe, Texas, will hold their annual Countryfest Bazaar & Pumpkin Patch on Saturday, October 13, 2007, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Antique tractor show, country store, crafts, plants, silent auction, games, music and sweets—something for all ages. barbecue dinners (\$6) and sandwiches (\$4) will be served from 11-2. A live auction will begin at 1:30 p.m. Proceeds will benefit the new Family Life Center building fund.

Contact Joanna Wilson, Publicity Chair, for more information at 409-925-8466

Fall Youth Extravaganza

Sunday, **September 30**, 10 - 11:45 a.m., Trinity UMC, 2600 Holman St., Houston, 77004, Harold Mitchell, 832-866-8310.

Featuring: Youth of Trinity and the Youth/Children's Choir performing a variety of music. Event is Free; \$3 lunch; Details: triumc@sbccglobal.net, www.tumc-houston.org.

Mission Opportunities

Volunteers needed immediately for UMCOR/Rita Recovery's 'Building Blitz', Sunday - Saturday, **September 23-29**. Location to be determined; Cost is minimal; Individuals not required to serve all week; Must be Safe Sanctuary trained and checked.

Contact Rick Carpenter, 936-662-7119.

TMOM Dental Project

Texas Mission of Mercy Dental Project unites hundreds of dentists, dental professionals and volunteers to provide improved dental care access to the community.

Thursday - Saturday, **November 1-3**, Spring Branch Development Center/San Jose Clinic, 8575 Pitner, Houston, 77080.

Contact Jacque Banman, Associate Director for Missional Excellence at 713-521-9383 or Jbanman@txcumc.org. Volunteer Training/Registration Dinner: November 1, 6:30 p.m. Sponsored by: Texas Dental Association Smiles Foundation, www.tdasf.org; Texas Annual Conference, and The Methodist Hospital.

Trinity UMC men celebrate

The men of Trinity United Methodist Church invite the connection to join them in celebrating Men's Month throughout October. This year's theme is *"Trinity Men: God's Agents for Change."*

The celebration begins with a concert Friday, October 5 at 7:30 p.m., featuring the concert choirs of Prairie View A&M University and Wiley College.

The weekend continues with the Johnny Peoples Golf Tournament on Saturday, October 6 at 7:30 a.m. at the Hermann Park Golf Course, 2155 N. MacGregor Drive in Houston. For tournament details, call 281-528-4893.

A Father & Son Breakfast (to which wives and daughters are welcome) is set for Saturday, October 13 at 8:30 a.m.

Donations of \$10 accepted. And, for a \$7 donation, all are invited to the men's Soul Food Cookout on Friday, October 19, from 4-9 p.m.

The month's activities will conclude in worship on Sunday, October 28 at 10 a.m., with Dr. Martin G. McCain of Grace UMC of Memphis, Tennessee, preaching. Trinity UMC is located at 2600 Holman Street in Houston.