



# Cross Connection

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The United Methodist Reporter

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Two Sections, Section A 076059 Volume 157 Number 13 August 4, 2006

## Offering, bracelets support rebuilding churches and communities

By Eleanor Colvin  
Director, Communications Department

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church has asked congregations to collect a special offering for the Katrina Church Recovery Appeal on August 27, which is the Sunday closest to the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's first strike to the United States coast.

As a symbol of continued solidarity and commitment to the communities devastated by Hurricane Katrina, United Methodists can also wear bracelets sharing the Katrina Church Recovery Appeal logo, "rebuilding churches and communities."

Money from purchases of the mason wristbands will support the appeal made by the bishops, mobilizing church members to participate in long-term recovery efforts to the region devastated by Katrina last summer.

With members scattered and buildings destroyed, many churches in the affected areas still seek the assistance of caring

United Methodists to restore their mission and ministries.

The appeal focuses on the needs of clergy, church staff and mission personnel in the affected areas and on the United Methodist facilities — churches, retreat centers, urban ministries, retirement facilities and mission centers — that were severely damaged or destroyed. Many were under-insured, with insufficient coverage for damage rising water caused.

The appeal funds will support relief efforts that United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) funds can not cover, such as: Restore hurricane-damaged United Methodist facilities. Pay salaries for clergy while their congregations cannot do so or until pastors can be reappointed or relocated to another church.

Establish new congregations or consolidate existing ones in storm-ravaged areas. Renew church-based community ministries such as day-care centers and feeding

## First UMC Crockett youth reach greater ministry heights

Thelma Jones, Editor Cross Connection

"I'm sure you've heard it asked, "Where are our youth headed?," or heard the statement, "Youth today have no focus or direction." I myself have said or thought those very same things. I am happy to say that I have an answer.

First United Methodist Church in Crockett, Texas

has a vibrant, growing youth ministry. It is due in part to the leadership of the Youth Director, Cindy Parker. But Cindy would be the first to declare that it all due to the kids who make up the ministry. "I have

found that basically the youth love participating in the ministry, they just have to know the opportunities are there," says Parker.

The church certainly supplies the opportunity! There are group visits to individuals who are shut-in, work opportunities in SHARE, day camp at the church, and Vacation Bible School. These min-

istries and volunteering in their community are avenues that offer youth the chance to have a positive impact on society. Cindy agrees. "I think the attraction is just having the opportunity to be useful and recognized as productive youth and not viewed with the negative perspective that so often comes to mind."



Catherine Hamilton shows off one of her pets at a 4-H Club event.

When asked about future goals for the youth ministry, Parker responded, "We are beginning a Bible reading program in 2007 that will focus on the kids having to keep a journal reflecting their time spent together or separately in reading the Bible to strengthen their own personal Christian walk." "We also have a basketball program

called, *A League of His Own*, which is a wonderful outreach ministry to youth in the community."

Catherine Hamilton and Russell Pennington are two individuals from First UMC Crockett who are very good examples of this successful ministry. Both were awarded the Good Samaritan Award from the General Commission of United Methodist Men.

Following is a brief description of the impact each of these youth has had on their church and their community.

Catherine M. Hamilton  
Maricetta

Hamilton is currently in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She is president of the First United Methodist Church of Crockett's MYF group and has been a member for 2 years. Prior to being a member of the youth group she was a charter member of "The Red Letter Class," a group of 6<sup>th</sup> graders devoted to learning the teachings of Jesus.

As a part of the youth group, Catherine participates in many outreach programs. She visits nursing homes and shut-ins on a regular basis, helps cook for those who are disadvantaged and uses her God-given talent of singing to share words of encouragement to many. She participates in summer programs such as helping with the local SHARE center.

Catherine is also involved in many local and civic-minded activities and clubs. She performs at worship services

### Coming Soon!

South Central Jurisdiction BMCR 2006  
Conference  
September 28-30

For a registration brochure or to volunteer,  
contact Juanita Jackson  
jjackson3014@sbcbglobal.net or 713-523-6392  
or

Frances Dunlap  
francesdunlap@msn.com or 281-999-5114

# First UMC Crockett encourage youth to reach greater heights

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in her own church but also at other churches in the area. Catherine is involved in 4-H, showing a project or animal yearly. She volunteers at the Lions club concession at the local rodeo.

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She is constantly learning techniques that will enable her to carry on traditions such as pipe organist, shape note singing, and ballads, to name a few.

Catherine's life is a wonderful testimony to Jesus Christ. She shows her faith through her words as well as her actions. Any youth director would be

blest to have her in their group and any church fortunate to have her as a member, says Parker. "You can rest assured that she will represent the "Good Samaritan Award" as a worthy recipient that you can be proud to have connected with the honor."

## Russell B. Pennington

"Russell was one of the most unique and special young people I have worked with over 15 years as a youth director," says Parker. "His life was such a testimony to

do through you." In high school he was a leader in sports and academics, very active in school groups and functions; all the while remaining extremely active in his church and youth activities.

According to Cindy, Russell's ministry gifts came into play with people his age. He was a positive influence as a teenager, encouraging good habits and morals among his friends. He was quick to invite high school friends to church, even providing transportation.

He shared his faith through song and through conversation, and proclaiming



Brett Pennington shows off his No. 76 football jersey, the number used in the creation of the *The Spirit of '76 Bible Study* program.

on various occasions that if he died that day he was



what Catherine Hamilton (second from left) leads the Spirit of '76 Bible study group in a youth revival. can

# Mission FORUM offers a Passport to Missions

By Kathie Mann  
Director, Partners in Mission  
Texas Annual Conference

Journey around the world on September 15 and 16th at The Woodlands UMC.

The Partners in Mission FORUM is giving you a "Passport to Missions." The sounds and flavors from every continent

our Partners in Mission program serves will entice each mission heart.

Bishop Janice Riggle Huie will be our keynote speaker on Friday night. Wilke Berman, the VIM Coordinator for Mexico, Dr. Robert Hunt of Perkins, and Rev. Nick Sholas will be the



presenters on Saturday. Music will be provided by the Windsor Village choir and Praise team, plus a performance by the dance team at noon on Saturday.

The Global Village will be ready for touring from Friday at 4 p.m. to Saturday at 2:30 p.m. Here

you will be able to package beans and rice for disaster relief, ride a P.E.T.S. around the track, visit the Mobile Medical Clinic and shop in

the Mission Store.

Over 50 tables of exhibits and fourteen workshops will give you ideas of mission projects which will enhance your local ministry. Project Coordinators will be available to answer questions about specific ministries. Contact Winneva Hankamer (281-366-4500, ext 3) for more information.

Registration forms are



ready because he knew where he was going. Hearing such a bold statement and seeing that kind of assurance and faith can have a tremendous impact on your lives.

Russell is said to have made that statement over and over. He repeated it the morning he was struck by lightning on a football field. It has been repeated by hundreds of young people who have taken the six-lesson Bible study entitled "The Spirit of '76 Bible Study." This is a study written about the life of Russell Brent Pennington, number 76 on the Grapeland Sandies football team. Russell's life made such a statement about accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.

Because his life was such a strong testimony, it was written up as a Bible study that has been taken by over 300 young people in the last year and a half. Only good has come from the life of Russell Pennington. This includes a young man who met Russell shortly before the lightning strike and accepted Christ based on the faith Russell demonstrated just two weeks before his own death.

While Russell is not here to personally receive the

# Memoirs



Tilly Mary Brannon  
May 28, 2006

Jefferson H. Campbell  
June 30, 2006

Thomas C. Davis  
July 5, 2006

Robert E. Jones Felder  
June 13, 2006

Dorothy Wilis Hayes  
July 20, 2006

James Ray Johnson  
June 30, 2006

Donald W. Scott  
July 14, 2006

L. Maurine Rivers Weimer  
May 11, 2005

## Opportunities abound for Christian education in local churches

LEADING



from the

HEART

story board member of the Candler School of Theology, Emory

Mark your calendars!!! The Greater Houston Leadership Education School will be held on Saturday, September 9, 2006 at Memorial Drive UMC in Houston, Texas.

Our theme this year is *Leading From the Heart*. You will be blessed through the experience of this event that includes inspiring workshop, helpful workshops targeted to specific areas of leadership, the marketplace of displays and vendors, and wonderful fellowship and networking opportunities.

Our featured speaker will be Dr. Charles B. Simmons. Dr. Simmons is in his ninth year as senior minister of the Memorial Drive UMC. He is known nationally as a dynamic preacher, dedicated pastor and respected leader among Methodists.

An ordained elder in the Texas Conference, Dr. Simmons is committed to local church ministry and has served effectively as a pastor in a variety of appointments. Presently he is the Chair of the Texas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, a member of the Large Church Initiative Leadership Team, Dean of the South Central Jurisdiction Senior Ministers Network, a trustee of Centenary College, and advi-

University.

Whether you are a leader of children, youth or adults, there are workshops here to encourage you and to for your use as a resource.

John Cates, CEO and founder of Lifeway at Memorial Drive UMC will be leading *There Are Elephants in the Room*, a workshop that targets ministering to teens with substance abuse issues.

Looking for new and creative ways to attract volunteers? Leona Ellis and Lotan Patterson from Windsor Village UMC will be leading *Recruiting, Rewarding, Retaining And Recharging Volunteers*.

There are workshops on creating ministries to families with special needs children, programming ideas for tweens, creative worship experiences with youth, art as prayer, Christian formation of adults with special needs, enriching and empowering single adults and much, much more.

This event will inspire and equip you so that the ministry of Christ will reach others through you!

The cost for this workshop is \$25 per person (before August 31) or \$35 per person

## Offering, bracelets support rebuilding churches and communities

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ngnams provide worship necessities — Bibles, hymnals, robes and so forth — to churches in need.

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"This appeal is impor-

tant because it will provide the financial resources for local congregations to recover their mission and ministry," says Larry Hollen, General Secretary of United Methodist Communications. "The congregations in the storm-affected

ed states are heroic in their efforts to continue their ministry under these difficult conditions."

Wristbands can be purchased in packages of 25 for \$50 by calling toll free (888) 346-3862 or online at [www.umc.org/churchrecovery](http://www.umc.org/churchrecovery). Churches are invited to sell the bracelets to raise funds for mission projects or their other efforts to continue rebuilding churches and communities.

In addition to purchasing bracelets, contributions to the Katrina Church Recovery Appeal can also be made online via credit card or through local church offerings



## CrunchTime: a unique retreat opportunity

by Ryan Martin  
CrunchTime 2006 Co-Chair

Upon arriving at college, many students find themselves lost. Removed from the restrictions and the support provided by their parents, they may struggle to find where they belong.

students, the Wesley Foundation at Texas A&M University provides CrunchTime, a retreat for high school juniors and seniors. While on the retreat,

of the Wesley Foundation, high school juniors and seniors have the opportunity to learn how current college students have faced these challenges.



Additionally, Participants enjoy fun and games night at 2006 CrunchTime event.

one student encounter difficulty joining a group to help them continue their spiritual journey, unaware of organizations such as United Methodist Wesley Foundations. In order to address this group of

students discuss the numerous challenges one's faith can encounter while at school.

Through many theme centered worship and small group events led by students

CrunchTime participants are also able to begin friendships with others their age from across Texas. Since CrunchTime focuses on college life in general and not specifically Texas A&M, participants planning to attend other schools are likely to find new friends heading to the school of their choice. These new friendships can serve as a foundation to build their spiritual walk while in college.

CrunchTime includes various activities to foster interaction amongst the high school and college students, including sports at A&M's recreational center and other

## Upcoming events . . .



August 26, 2006

### ATHENS FIRST UMC TO HOST 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NORTHEAST TEXAS REGIONAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WORKSHOP

Affens First United Methodist Church is preparing to host the fourth annual Northeast Texas Regional Christian Education Workshop. Athens First UMC is located at the corner of East College and Lovers Lane in Adhes, Texas.

With the church's emphasis on Christian education and evangelism, workshops are being offered for children and adults on creative ministries with children, missions, evangelism, the basics of teaching Sunday school, and church programming.

Dr. Falk Landrum, former President/CEO of the United Methodist Foundation, will be the keynote speaker and will also lead the workshop on "Innovation in Church Programming." Dr. Landrum has served churches in the Texas Conference for 22 years, as president of Lon Morris College for 16 years, and retired after 11 years as President and CEO of the United Methodist Foundation.

Rev. Nick Sholars, District Superintendent of the Northwest District of the Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, will lead the session on "Evangelism for Today." Rev. Sholars is a native of Athens and has served churches in Texas for the past 29 years. He is serving his fourth year as District Superintendent and his first year as leader of the newly formed Northwest District.

Cost is \$15.00, if registered by August 11. The fee after that date will be \$20.00, which includes attendance at two of the workshops, lunch, and a visit to the Cokesbury display.

August 19-21, 2006

### MARVIN UMC OFFERS

#### PIRTLE LECTURES

Dr. John C. Holbert, known nationally for his dramatic preaching, teaching and storytelling will be guest speaker for the Pirtle Lectures. His books, articles, tapes, lectures and sermons have impacted the local church for the past 25 years. He is also a renowned musician, serving as a soloist with Dallas Symphony.

Dr. Holbert is a profound teacher of preachers. He has the ability to pull his audience into the biblical story until they see for themselves the very name and nature of God. Plan to participate in our 2006 series: "Windows or Mirrors: Seeing Ourselves in the Bible's Characters" - you will see yourself and God in a new way.

Saturday, August 19, 2006, 6 pm, "The Disaster of Revenge/The Hope of Mercy"

Sunday, Aug 20, 8:45 and 10:55 am, "The Surprise of Grace"

Sunday, Aug 20, 6 pm, "This is No Charlton Heston"

Monday, Aug 21, 10:30 am, NW District Preaching Seminar, "Telling the Whole Story: Narrative Preaching in the 21st Century Pulpit"

Monday, Aug 21, 12 pm, Community Luncheon, "God is a Mouthie Widow"

Reservations for Saturday banquet and Monday luncheon are due by Monday, Aug 14 and can be made by calling 903.534.4236 during the week or on Sunday mornings. For additional information, please contact Karen Beadford at kbeadford@marvinumc.com or 903.534.4236.

November 3-5, 2006

### LIVE OUT LOUD! - 2006

#### SCJ SINGLES RETREAT Mount Sequoyah Conference & Retreat Center

The keynote speaker for this event will be Terry Hershey. Terry is an inspirational and motivational speaker, captivating storyteller, and offers a gentle reminder to slow down and focus on the few things that matter in life.

Music for the retreat will be by Hannah Blaylock & Lest and Found, winners of the *Arkansas Acoustic Festival* in 2003. Numerous honors have followed. Their first CD "Cover Me" has been met with much critical acclaim.

There will also be 24 different workshops from which to choose, including *Achieving Financial Freedom*, *Finding the One While Having Fun*, *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts*, *The Shape of Successful Leadership*, and *Real Life, Real Faith, Real Hope*.

A special opportunity to join Terry Hershey at the Stonebridge Meadows Golf course for a round of golf's being offered. Also, being offered this year are Yoga, Disc Golf, exploring Fayetteville and a work camp on the Mountain.

Come Join Us for the

WellCall   
A Healthy Change

## Focus on women's health – taking care of yourself in the midst of taking care of others

Leading a healthy lifestyle and adopting healthy lifestyle behaviors can help prevent many chronic conditions for which women are at risk. Currently cardiovascular disease is the number one killer of women in America.

Regular exercise, eating

to detect osteoporosis. WellCall members have access to a variety of women's health tip sheets.

Remember, the Texas Annual Conference cares about your health and is rewarding health plan members for taking steps to



improve their health. Simply take a health risk assessment and receive a \$25 incentive.

fruits, vegetables and whole grains, maintaining a healthy weight, limiting a alcoholic consumption, refraining from tobacco smoke, and getting quality sleep all decrease a woman's risk for a number of complications later on in life, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and lung cancer for example.

Besides healthy lifestyle behaviors, getting regular screenings and check-ups can also reduce our risk for chronic conditions.

Women under the age of 40 should conduct breast self exams monthly and women over 40 should get yearly mammograms.

Because skin cancer is the most common form of cancer among women, it is important to wear sun screen, avoid long-term exposure to the sun, and be familiar with moles and freckles and report any changes to your doctor.

Women should also get a yearly pelvic exam, and if you are over 50, get a bone den-

Make follow up calls to a health coach to discuss your assessment results and receive up to an additional



\$100 more!

To take the health risk assessment, visit the members section of [www.wellcall.com](http://www.wellcall.com) (company password: Methodists).

To speak with your own health coach, call 888-493-5522 (individual health risk