



Cross Connection

a Texas Annual Conference publication
an edition of The United Methodist Reporter

Two Sections, Section A

076000 Volume 157

Number 14

August 06, 2010

What's Inside

Celebration Women's
Ministry hosts
Fall FEST

2

Radio representatives
visit from Cote d'Ivoire

3

Flood of support sent
to disaster areas

4

9 Pastoral Interns
spend summer
discerning call

6

St. James UMC
Houston dedicates
historical marker

7

Spotlight on Local
Church Ministries

8

*Vibrant, growing
congregations
changing lives and
reshaping futures
for Jesus Christ*

Flood of support!

TAC response to Hurricane Alex flooding: 5,000 pounds of relief

By Renee Teel
Christ UMC Sugar Land
Director of Missions

When God calls, the Texas Annual Conference answers very quickly!

Just weeks ago, enormous flooding in Mexico caused by Hurricane Alex created a great deal of suffering for people who already have so little.

When Bishop Raul Garcia de Ochoa of the Eastern Conference of the Methodist Church of Mexico called and asked for help, the Texas Conference moved into action!

Within two weeks, the following churches sent a flood of relief to devastated regions of South Texas: Bellville UMC, Christ UMC College Station, Christ UMC Houston,

continued on page 4



Volunteers fill a truck with aid for South Texas and Mexico.

Summer internship enables 9 servant leaders to discern God's calling

Since its inception in 2007, 30 college students have completed the Texas Annual Conference Pastoral Intern Project.

As a result of the program, there are nine Certified Candidates for ministry; four of whom are enrolled in seminary. And, the first former intern was Commissioned for ministry at the 2010 gathering of the TAC.

Learn more about the value of the experience by reading the testimonies of the 2010 class of interns.

Julie Aftab
School: San Jacinto College
Church: Deer Park UMC
Internship: Bellville UMC

When asked why she signed up for the Pastoral Intern

Project, Julie Aftab responded: "I wanted to see God's call for me." Throughout the summer she learned to put her trust in God and help other people, and, as a result, "saw God everywhere."

The 24-year-old's responsibilities included teaching two classes, assisting the pastor with Sunday service and visiting people in the community.

Two words Aftab uses to describe the ministry experience: "Thank God!" And during one summer sermon, she focused on Deuteronomy 31:6, "It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." Aftab said she's sure this scripture came true for her this summer: "God went before me. He

created love and respect for me in all those people's hearts."

Respect and acceptance have been a lifelong struggle for Aftab, who is originally from Pakistan. "First, I was not accepted because I was a girl – in my home, or in my country; and then because of the attack." Aftab endured acid being thrown in her face and being shot. And, because of that, she is certain of the power and truth of Deuteronomy 31:6: "He's not going to send you there and get busy. He's going to be there every step of your life," she said. "Sometimes you're going to forget him, but he'll never forget you."

Before the internship, she said, she was not sure what God

continued on page 6



Intern Julie Aftab discusses God's faithfulness during Chapel at the United Methodist Service Center.



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

Resident Bishop
Janice Riggle Huie

Director of Communications
Eleanor L. Colvin
ecolvin@txcumc.org

Editor
Thelma Jones
thelmaj@methodists.net

Web Content Manager
Brant Mills
bmills@txcumc.org

Communications Assistant
Rebecca Garcia
garciar@methodists.net

Conference Web Site:
www.txcumc.org

To Subscribe:

Send your subscription fee of \$20 payable to the Texas Annual Conference to:

Cross Connection
5215 Main Street
Houston, Texas 77002
713-521-9383



'Faith Empowered Sisters Together'

Celebration event set for September 25



At the Celebration TAC luncheon, several women took part in a skit which displayed the true testimonies of women who have been mentored through Celebration. Upon walking across the stage, they shared their burdens on a poster and then flipped them over to show the promising results that Celebration has blessed them with. From left, top row: Committed Adultery, Abusive Behavior, Had an Abortion, Suicidal Thoughts, Broken & Defeated, Guilty. Second row: Abandoned/Divorced, Angry at the Murderer of Mother, Sexually Abused, Inadequate, Angry, Physical Injury, Lost. In the Center: Alone.

Faith Empowered Sisters Together is the focus of the Houston area Celebration Women's Ministry Fall F.E.S.T. on September 25.

Keynote speaker Kirsten Hart will share her remarkable story of accidentally discovering at the age of 41 that she was adopted. The full-day seminar will have two sessions with Kirsten, lunch, plus extraordinary praise and worship. The event will close with significant prayer time.

Celebration's Fall F.E.S.T. will be held at Cypress United Methodist Church, 13403 Cypress N. Houston, Cypress, Texas, 77429.

Registration is \$20. And, childcare is available at the church for children age 12 and younger. For more information or to register online, visit the

website at [www.Celebration Ministries.org](http://www.CelebrationMinistries.org).

Celebration Women's Ministry is a woman-to-woman ministry of sharing, encouraging, discipling and mentoring in the faith. Its focus is presenting the truth and beauty of the message of salvation, healing, renewal, and restoration in a manner that reaches the inner woman.

Celebration Women's Ministry, Inc. is open to all women regardless of denomination, age, or cultural or ethnic heritage. Since June of

1999, Celebration has 32 active chapters in Texas, with chapters in Wisconsin, South Carolina and New Mexico.

Besides the local chapter meetings, the national Celebration ministry hosts an annual conference each spring and has brought in well-known speakers such as Joanna Weaver, Liz Curtis Higgs, Donna Partow and Edwina Patterson.

Celebration's purpose is to strengthen and enrich the spiritual lives of women by helping them discover and grow in the

fullness of life that God intended for all women to experience as citizens of His Kingdom on earth. The organization's vision is based on Luke 4:18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (NKJV).





U.S. visit helps 'The Voice of Hope' radio representatives learn new marketing methods

Tours of two diverse radio stations were among the highlights of a recent visit to Texas by Madame Lydie Acquah, director of "The Voice of Hope" radio station in Cote d'Ivoire, and Isaac Broune, conference communicator and translator.

The music, message and audiences of KROI Praise 92.1, an urban gospel station, and KRBE 104.1, a contemporary pop and rock station, are different; yet, both proved to be learning grounds for Acquah and Broune.

"Although the stations were different in content, they pretty much function the same way," said Rev. Rick Goodrich, who leads the Texas Annual Conference ministries with Cote d'Ivoire. "In particular, how they promote themselves out in the community. I think that was an eye-opener for them."

The Ivoirian station is engaged in a fund-raising campaign that has garnered small pledges and gifts among its supporters. The purpose of their July trip to Texas was to increase awareness of the station in their partner annual conference and to learn more about promoting and positioning the station for even greater success. A meeting with Ross LeFevre, a member of Memorial Drive UMC and the United Methodist Communications Foundation, helped to spur additional promotion and marketing ideas.

Already, in the first six months of operations, La Voix de L'Esperance has moved from broadcasting eight hours per day to being a 24-hours-a-day operation. "Thank you for this fabulous initiative and the support the Texas Annual Conference brings to Cote d'Ivoire for this project," Acquah said. "The project was an old desire of the United Methodist Church to have a radio station...within six months time the Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference has discovered just how powerful a

radio station is – within six months, we have made the church very well known in the country."

In addition to music and evangelistic programs, the station offers spiritual coaching, with pastors on air to receive the calls of listeners and programming that addresses legal matters, health issues, the environment, education and more.

"We were the first confessional radio station to include in our broadcasts developmental programs," Acquah said, "and now others are trying to do this."

Broadcasting in French and 17 local languages, The Voice of Hope is ringing our loudly and clearly among millions of Ivoirians – with room to grow.

The station's budget, of roughly \$180,000, is being financed equally in the first year by the Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference, the Texas Annual Conference and United Methodist Communications. After leaving Texas, Acquah and Broune traveled to

Nashville, Tenn., where UMC is headquartered, where they participated in a national web-based conference call to engage the entire denomination in their quest to continue sharing the Voice of Hope with more than 3 million residents in and around the capital city of Abidjan.

To support The Voice of Hope, visit www.txcumc.org/missionalexcellence or call the TAC Center for Missional Excellence at 713-521-9383.

"Within six months time, the Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference has discovered just how powerful a radio station is."

*Madame Lydie Acquah
Director,
La Voix de L'Esperance*



Cote d'Ivoire communicator and translator Isaac Broune translates the presentation of Madame Lydie Acquah, radio station director, during their recent visit to Texas.



Madame Lydie Acquah, director of The Voice of Hope radio station in Cote d'Ivoire, and consultant Ross LeFevre, a member of Memorial Drive UMC, exchange ideas on promoting the station. Below: Snapshot of a welcome banner at Christ UMC Sugar Land, which hosted the Ivoirian visitors for dinner and time of sharing.





Flood of support from Texas

continued from page 1

Christ UMC Sugar Land, First UMC Sugar Land, H.I.S. Ministries of Aldersgate UMC Santa Fe, and Wesley Memorial UMC Huntsville.

The donated items included the following:

- 1,138 lbs of water
- 1,060 lbs of dry beans
- 520 lbs of rice
- 586 lbs of canned goods
- 1,032 lbs of fruit cocktail
- 216 lbs of vegetable stew
- 314 lbs of pasta
- 216 lbs of pork and beans
- 275 health kits
- 211 paper towel rolls
- 2,902 diapers
- 144 containers of baby wipes
- 624 boxes of cereal

All of the items were stored at Christ UMC Sugar Land and when it was time to deliver those items, 50 volunteers showed up and loaded everything on the trucks in 15 minutes!

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator DeWitt Cox and Christ UMC Sugar Land member Sonny Tutt got behind the wheels of those trucks at 3 a.m., the next morning and drove all of God's bounty to McAllen, where they met with Susan Hellums of First UMC McAllen and Border Area Mission Coordinator. With the help of Hellums and her team, they unloaded all the donations and were back home by 3 p.m.

Rev. Clay Whitaker, Texas Conference Disaster Response Consultant, commended the organizers and volunteers for their work.

"I was at Lakeview for the South District Church Camp when the floods hit along the Texas/Mexico borders. What a wonderful comfort to have skilled leaders in place who could get the 'response-ball' rolling," Whitaker said. "When the delivery was made on Friday, July 30, churches from the Texas Conference donated as much or more than did churches from the SW Texas Conference!"

Items will be transported to Mexico and given through the Methodist Church of Mexico to those in need in Monterrey and in the border towns across from McAllen, Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Laredo and east toward the Rio Grande Valley. Thanks for your generosity!



Conference Disaster Response Coordinator DeWitt Cox helps load trucks with relief supplies before driving them to the border town of McAllen.



Boy Scout Troop 441 of Christ UMC Sugar Land assisted with the 15-minute speed load of trucks with storm relief supplies.

You can still help!

Make checks payable to:
SWTX Conference of the UMC
 16400 Huebner Drive
 San Antonio, TX 78248.

Memo line: Mexico Disaster Relief,
Advance #2050



Conference flows South



Dozens of youth volunteers contributed muscle and energy that revved up the truck loading process.

More than 50 volunteers showed up to load 5,000 pounds of flood relief supplies in a matter of minutes.

The donations will help people impacted by Hurricane Alex's rains last month.



Pastoral Intern Project empowers 9 servant leaders

continued from page 1

wanted her to be. “Today, I know God wants everyone to smell the flower God created,” said Aftab, whose original name means “proud flower.” “My mother didn’t name me that – God did.”

Nathan Briggs

School: Stephen F. Austin University

Church: Lighthouse Fellowship

Internship: First UMC

Livingston

“My calling isn’t going to be consistent.” That was among the lessons

Nathan Briggs learned this summer. Another lesson: “God moves!”

At First UMC Livingston, Briggs helped lead worship; preached a sermon, and visited new members, retirees and people who were shut-in. In addition, he helped lead youth activities, such as a mission trip and the youth camp at Lakeview.

One memory that Briggs, age 21, said will always be with him is “the moment I realized I like the business portion of the Annual Conference.”

His favorite scripture: Psalms 51:10-12, “Create in me a clean heart, Oh God, and put a new and right spirit in me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.”

Matt Childers

School: Texas A&M University

Church: Kingwood UMC

Internship: Wesley UMC

Nederland

Wrestling alligators and preaching for the first time are among the top two memories Matt

Childers, took away from his summer of service, which included leading Bible stud-



ies, youth events, mission projects, hospital visits, attending church camp and, of course, attending meetings.

The 21-year-old Childers, who also led music, said the internship helped him “to learn where my gifts in ministry lie, and allowed me to learn about things that I wouldn’t have otherwise had the opportunity to.”

Where did Matt see God this summer? “Through seeing true Christian community and hospitality as God intended it to be,” Childers answered. “Through seeing how passionate very young and older people can be with their faith; through using me as His hands and feet and truly allowing Him to work through me.”

“For just as the body without the Spirit is dead, faith without works is dead,” Childers (who cites James 2 as his favorite scripture) was blessed with countless occasions to work his faith, during what he described as an “inspiring and shaping” ministry experience.

Briana McCord

School: Stephen F. Austin University

Church: First UMC Palestine/SFA Wesley Foundation

Internship: First UMC

Cypress Trails

Feeling called toward a career in youth, children or college ministry, Briana McCord said the Pastoral Internship Project sounded like a perfect way to explore if ministry is where she is truly called to serve.

“I learned about my strengths with youth and children, and my weaknesses in public speaking,” she said. “I learned that I could continue to work for God no matter how out of my comfort zone I am.”

Listening for the voice of God was easier in a place where God’s presence was obvious – at First UMC Cypress Trails. “The community was incredibly welcoming and encouraging,” McCord said. Their support and



enthusiasm allowed me to work harder and push myself further.”

Her summer duties ranged from studying the Book of Discipline and creating orders of worship to participating in mission trips, Vacation Bible School and a community outreach event

All in all, she declared the work was illuminating and inspirational.

Jonathan Rios

School: Embry-Riddle

Aeronautical University

Church: The Woodlands UMC

Internship: First UMC

Livingston

Jonathan Rios felt a call on his life in November 2009. So, when Rev. Terence Hagans sent out an e-mail about the Pastoral Intern Project, Rios thought it would be a good way to explore that call.

Rios described the summer as “amazingly awesome,” and said he learned that he’s “passionate about youth and helping them get connected with God. I am good with all age groups, especially groups that I thought I couldn’t connect with.”

In addition to providing music in all three of First UMC Livingston’s worship services, Rios provided pastoral care at nursing homes and home visits to new members; preached, taught Sunday school and more. Among the places that Rios saw God at work this summer were UMARMY and Lakeview, where Rios said “so many lives were changed.” Six of his seven campers either said they felt the Spirit or recommitted their lives to Christ.

Strengthened by scriptures like “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your path” (Proverbs 3:5-6), and Colossians 1:15-28, which explores the supremacy of Christ, the 21-year-old is positioned to



continue exploring and growing in his call.

Matthew Marchetti

School: Baylor University

Church: Chapelwood UMC

Internship: Wesley UMC

Nederland



Spending six weeks preaching and teaching youth Bible studies helped Matthew Marchetti learn he is a good public speaker and further discern his call.

His youth director, Rev. Josef Klam, encouraged him to apply for the Pastoral Intern Project, rather than intern at his home church, Chapelwood UMC, for the summer. “I finally applied, because I realized my great need for clarity,” said Matthew, age 20.

When asked where he saw God at work this summer, his answer was simple, yet profound: “In me.”

The ministry experience itself was “super awesome” – not to mention the people of the church. “[They] changed my life with their hospitality,” Marchetti said.

Cameron Shotlow

School: Navarro College

Church: St. Paul UMC Double Bayou

Internship: Jones Memorial UMC



Cameron Shotlow’s favorite scripture is John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” God’s unmerited love and grace is the very foundation of faith and of call-

ing; God’s love calling God’s children to love God and others.

Shotlow, age 20, applied for the Pastoral Intern Project to get a better understanding of this calling, under a different pastor in a different setting, he said. Participating in the life of the church as a trustee; music teacher; guitar, bass and piano player, and visiting the sick and shut-in, enabled him to do just that.

It also taught him another lesson: “I could really do anything through Christ,” Shotlow said. “I felt empowered.”

One of the primary places Cameron said he saw God working – during what he described as an “intriguingly spectacular” summer – was in his own life. “He supplied me with patience, which I prayed for.” The Lord also supplied him with a supportive group of laity: “[They were] perfect examples for me to follow,” he said. “They were hardworking and caring.”

Brandi Tevebaugh

School: Texas A&M University

Church: First UMC Hallsville

Internship: First UMC

Cypress Trails

Preaching at UMARMY in her home church was the most memorable (and weird) moment of Brandi Tevebaugh’s pastoral internship.

Preaching was one of many tasks for the 21 year old, who said, “It feels like I did anything and everything. I attended all meetings the church had, I led a Bible study, I preached, I went to UMARMY and I helped at VBS.”

The summer was challenging and exciting, in part, because of the church members. “The laity were amazing. They were so encouraging and yet challenging.



continued on next page

Q: Where did you see God at work this summer?

A: “In me.”



Ministry Snapshots

St. James UMC Houston dedicates historical marker

One of Houston's oldest African-American congregations marked a milestone this summer, as the state of Texas presented St. James UMC with an historical marker.

Organized in 1873, St. James has stood in "Freedman's Town," which is the original name of the historic Fourth Ward neighborhood, for nearly 140 years.

Historic origins

Immediately following the abolition of slavery, African-Americans migrated to different sections of the state, with many settling in the part of Houston known as Freedman's Town. In settling, they did not forget or forsake their God. They assembled in their humble homes for prayer meetings until they found their way to Trinity Church located on the corner of Bell and Travis streets. As the settlement grew, so did the need for a new church – a place to worship closer to their homes.

With the assistance of their pastor, the presiding elder, and members of the Trinity Church, the "West Point Church Brush Arbor" was organized at the Annual Conference held at Galveston, Texas in 1873.

Rev. Gabriel Todd was appointed the first pastor of West Point Church, which stood at the corner of Howard and Nash streets. Between 1878 and 1880, the name was changed from West Point to St. James Methodist Episcopal Church. Folklore holds "that the West Point/St. James M.E. Church building was moved from the Howard and Nash Street site to its current site on Wilson and Andrews, by horse and wagon.

The pioneering pastors of the church were Rev. L.B. Allen, Rev. R.H. White, Rev. Richard H. Robinson, Rev. Joseph Cox and Rev. Luther B. Felder. St. James also was served by: Rev. Mary J. Cebrun, Rev. Marvin Jiles, Rev. Andre' Dukes, Rev. Warrell Kimble, Rev. Develous

Bright, Rev. Rhanel Y. Johnson, and currently, Rev. Conrell Lockett.

It is impossible to write about St. James United Methodist Church without the inclusion of Fourth Ward and equally as impossible to write about Fourth Ward without the inclusion of St. James United Methodist Church, Colored High, The "Colored" Library and the Pilgrim Temple, which was the first multi-story office building owned by African-Americans in Houston.

In the beginning, when many of the church's forbearers settled in Freedman's Town/Fourth Ward, they settled with faith in

God, determination, humility, the desire to learn, to establish a good life for their families and hard work. The results were fruitful – they carved the best

life possible for their families in that era, which included St. James United Methodist Church.



Participating in the dedication festivities were St. James members Lillie B. Stewart, Gloria Jones; Rev. Rhanel Y. Johnson, who was pastoring the church at the time of dedication; historian Debra Blacklock-Sloan; St. James member, Robert Fleming, and William Young.

Servant leaders discern call through internship

continued from page 6

They challenged me to delve deeper into my faith and calling."

And, when she did that, she discovered some things: "I learned that God has given me some amazing gifts to use for his kingdom," Tevebaugh said. "I knew that he was a gracious God, but I learned just how gracious he has been in my life. I embraced those gifts this summer."

Additionally, she said she saw God at work in the church family and even closer to home. "I definitely saw God at work in me – changing me and growing me." No doubt, growing her in love, since her favorite scripture is Romans 12:9, "Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold

fast to what is good."

Andrew Wolfe
School: Clemson University
Church: St. Luke's UMC
Bryan
Internship: First UMC
Pearland

"Don't stop" are the two words Andrew Wolfe uses to describe his ministry experience through the Pastoral Intern Project. "Don't stop" is a fitting mantra for a 21 year old



whose favorite scripture is 1 Timothy 6:12, "Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

Creating a green energy project that saves water and energy resources was among his priorities this summer, along with hospital visits, Vacation Bible School and mission trips. Even in the midst of all the work, he

said, the people of the church "allowed me to slow down and reflect on what I had in my life."

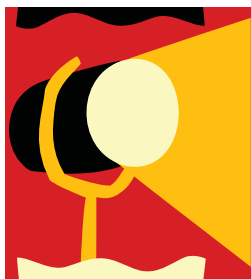
What did Andrew learn? He gained confidence in preaching and learned that he worked well in a large church setting. And where was God at work? "In my faith with God," he said, "and in the kids and clients on the mission trips."

To learn more about the Pastoral Intern Project, contact Rev.

Taylor Meador Fuerst at tfuerst@txcumc.org or 713-521-9383; or visit www.txcumc.org/clergyexcellence and click on Clergy Recruitment Ministries.

All scriptures are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

"I learned that I could continue to work for God no matter how out of my comfort zone I am."



Spotlight on Local Church Ministries

Fellowship Opportunities

Young to preach

Asbury Memorial revival

Asbury Memorial UMC will host its annual revival August 25-27, at 7 p.m. nightly.

Rev. Lawrence Young, District Superintendent of the Central South District, will be the featured speaker.

Men will lead the services on Wednesday; women will lead on Thursday and the youth are in charge on Friday.

“Oh, For A Closer Walk With Jesus” is the theme, based on Luke 24:13-35, where Christ is on the Road to Emmaus.

The address of Asbury Memorial UMC is 215 Medina Street, Houston, Texas, 77012. The church phone number is 713-926-5601. Rev. Anjelita Dirden is the church's pastor.

Mission Opportunities

Healing Hands Ranch needs workers

Volunteers are needed for week-long or weekend service at the Healing Hands Ranch in Conroe.

The ranch is a halfway residence for deaf men who have been released from prison. Cost: \$250-275 per person.

Contact Scott De Loach, P.O. Box 1455, Willis, 77378; 936-856-0819 or sde-loach@deafprison.org. To learn more about the ministry, visit: www.healinghandsranch.org.

Nurses needed in Haiti

UM Volunteers in Mission, the

General Board of Global Ministries, and UMCOR are seeking nurses with prior Haiti mission experience to volunteer for earthquake relief for an extended period of time. Service opportunities range from two months to two years. For more information, contact Nancy Eubanks at nteubanks@gmail.com.

Call issued for volunteers in Chile

Teams are now needed in Chile for earthquake recovery. Contact Denise Soto Vergara, UM Volunteers in Mission Coordinator for Chile at denise_178@yahoo.com. Three host churches in the area have been identified and are ready to receive teams.

Learning Opportunities

North District to train local church workers

“Let's Make It Easier” is the theme of an upcoming “sharing workshop” in the North District. Informative sessions will be held for local church workers on: DOVE, Vital Statistics, Salary Sheets, Communications, Membership Rolls, Finance, Charge Conference Reports, and more.

The event is free and includes lunch. Mark your calendar for Tuesday, August 24, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Let's Make It Easier will be held at First UMC, 400 N. Fredonia St., Longview, 75601. For more information, contact Anna M. Rohde at 903-758-7003 or aroh@sbcglobal.net.

Perkins Lay School of Theology is August 14

The author of the book, “Longing for Enough in a Culture of More,” Dr. Paul Escamilla, will present

the semi-annual Perkins Lay School of Theology at St. Paul's UMC Houston on Saturday, August 14.

Dr. Escamilla was recently appointed the senior minister at St. John's United Methodist Church in Austin, and for two years prior he was an adjunct professor of preaching at Perkins.

Gathering and at-the-door registration are from 8:15-9 a.m. with the class from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., breaking for lunch. Registration fees range from \$49 to \$65, varying with mode and timing; all include lunch. Continuing education units are available for an additional \$20. Questions or to register:

www.smu.edu/Perkins/PublicPrograms/LaySchools/Houston/Aug2010.aspx or call 214-768-2251.

Engaged Encounter

A Christian-based, United Methodist-approved, marriage preparation event for engaged and newly-married couples will be held August 20-22. Beginning Friday at 7:30 p.m., and concluding on Sunday at 12 p.m., the Engaged Encounter will be held at the Marriott Hotel North at Greenspoint, 255 N. Sam Houston Parkway East, Houston, 77060.

For more information, contact Rev. Don and Vivian White at 281-429-7686, 832-794-8162 or donvivwhite@juno.com.

Cost: \$400 per couple, which includes lodging, meals and supplies. State-approved certificate waives \$60 state portion of marriage license fee. Register: www.encounter.org.

Save the Date for Founders' Day at Gammon

The 127th Founders' Day and 71st

Thirkiel-Jones Lecture Series is planned for October 18-20, at Gammon Theological Seminary, 653 Beckwith St., Atlanta, Georgia, 30314.

The event will begin Monday at 6 p.m., and conclude Wednesday at noon. For more information, contact Madelyn Greene at 404-581-0310 or mgreenegammon@bellsouth.net.

Continuing education credits available; event will be enriching for clergy and anyone in Christian-related vocations. Cost: \$185. To learn more about Gammon, visit: www.gammonseminary.org.

Clergy health summit

Lake Junaluska, along with the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of The United Methodist Church will host the African-American Clergy Health Summit: A Self Care Covenant, September 27-28, 2010. Participants will participate in a self-care covenant workshop designed specifically for African-American clergy, which reflects the health summit's theme, “Wanting to Heal and Be Healed,” John 5: 1-9.

The summit and workshops will be led by The Rev. Dr. Embra Jackson, Assistant to the Bishop of the Mississippi Annual Conference, and Edmond Pienkosz, Health and Wellness Manager of the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. Details: <http://www.lakejunaluska.com/2010-health-summit> or 828-454-6730.

Mission Bend UMC seminar slated on Healing and Reconciliation

Father Matthew Linn, S.J., who has conducted seminars in over 50 countries, will lead this seminar to

help heal the hurts of your past relationships and provide a simple process to allow you to walk into a brighter future with new freedom. Father Linn has co-authored 21 books which have sold over a million copies in English alone and translated into over 20 languages.

The seminar is scheduled for August 28 at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m. The registration fee of \$20 includes a continental breakfast and lunch. For more information, contact Pat Howell at (281) 498-5701 or pathowell@hotmail.com.

The Mission Bend UMC address is 3710 Highway 6 South, just north of the Westpark Tollway and south of West Oaks Mall. The church phone number is 281-497-4491.

Caregiver Conference: Equipping and Encouraging Family Caregivers

A free one-day conference is planned for Saturday, August 21 at St. Luke's UMC to provide insight, support and resources for caregivers in the Houston region.

The conference includes over 20 workshops on topics ranging from elder law, hearing loss, in-home care, and changing roles and relationships, in addition to many other related needs. The event begins at 8:30 a.m. and includes a complimentary lunch with registration, and exhibitors with targeted information and resources. Information about this group, which is open to all, is available by calling the Center at 713-402-5046.

Registration and class information is available [online](http://www.stlukesmethodist.org/caregiver) at www.stlukesmethodist.org/caregiver.

Send Spotlight submissions to:

thelmaj@methodists.net or call 713-521-9383