



# Cross Connection

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## What's Inside

"In Memory Of -  
Recognition of  
Deceased Clergy and  
Clergy Spouses 2

Annual Conference  
Planning Team

Singles Retreat at  
Mount Sequoyah 3

Continuing Education  
Opportunities from  
Perkins

New Program for  
DCM Participants

Racial Diversity In  
The Church 4

UM Men Launch  
Prison Ministries 6

Mustard Seed  
Ministries 7

Local Church Focus  
On Special Needs  
Families

Spotlight On Local  
Church Ministries 8

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

## 1 online event ÷ 10 days + you = \$10,000 for mission

Mark your calendar and spread the word! From October 10-19, there is going to be a 10-day online event that will mobilize passionate people to stand up and be counted for causes they believe in, and you will have a front row seat. It's called 10-Fold.

Each day will feature a different mission project of the General Board of Global Ministries supported through The Advance, the designated giving arm of The United Methodist Church. Through live webcasts, streaming video, online chats, and other media, you will learn about these amazing ministries that are changing people's lives.

10-Fold is an online event unlike any you have ever attended. It will happen online at 10-Fold.org; visit daily and register interest in a project with one easy click. You will trigger a \$1 donation. Up to \$10,000 will be donated per project.

Daily activities will include live online events throughout the day; downloadable pod casts, fact sheets and videos for each project, and children's resource packets.

You can participate on your own at home or in your office, with family and friends, or with a group. Church groups of all ages can come together and use the 10-Fold activities to start a conversation. And when you do come to 10-Fold.org, take a few minutes to register interest in the featured project and spend time learning about the important work that is being done around the world.

The schedule of featured projects follows:

October 10: **Haiti Recovery** – 3,000 humanitarians helping a country rebuild itself;

October 11: **Children's Health and Wholeness** – Transforming communities so that children can live healthy and whole lives;

October 12: **Missionaries**

**in the U.S.** – Dedicated men and women living their faith through remarkable service;

October 13: **Missionaries Around the World** – Growing a global force for faith and hope in over 60 countries;

October 14: **Training Church Leaders** – Training the thousands called to devote their lives to Christ and the Church;

October 15: **Church Planting Worldwide** – From Asia to Latin America, introducing the United Methodists and sharing the gospel through word and deed;

October 16: **Justice for Our Neighbors** – Church-based teams helping refugee-seekers and immigrants navigate their way as they start their lives in the United States;

October 17: **Clean Water and Sanitation** – Helping families in Africa and South America gain access to safe water and sanitation facilities;

October 18: **Healthcare in**

**Africa** – Combating disease in 22 hospitals and clinics across Africa;

October 19: **Sustainable Agriculture** – Training farmers so rural families and communities can thrive.

There are also opportunities for you to support 10-fold ministries through social media. Become a Facebook Fan and encourage your friends to join you. RSVP to the 10-Fold Event on Facebook, and as the event approaches, you will get 10-Fold updates on Facebook.

You're also invited to follow the 10-Fold on Twitter and tweet about the event to your followers. Stay up-to-the-minute on the conversation and use #10Fold.

Contact Rev. Noel Denison, [noel-denison@att.net](mailto:noel-denison@att.net), Texas Conference Global Mission Secretary for more information on 10-fold or mission in the TAC.

## Racial diversity still a concern for the church

By Rev. Diane McGehee  
Director of Missional  
Excellence

Several weeks ago, I had the privilege of attending a gathering of the South Central Jurisdiction Commission on Religion and Race in Little Rock, Arkansas. Rev. Paul Kethley, Chair of the Texas Annual Conference Commission on Religion and Race ("CORR"), and Mrs. Eleanor F. Colvin, a member of the TAC CORR, also attended.

We gathered not only to worship together and celebrate the strides that have been made in race relations, but also to face and own the challenges that still lie ahead of us – we remain divided along ethnic and

racial lines within the church – a witness that does not reflect the Gospel of Jesus Christ who came to tear down the walls that divide us and make of us one new family in God. While in Little Rock, I picked up the book, *A Mighty Long Way*, by Carlotta Walls Lanier, the youngest of the Little Rock Nine who, in 1957, integrated Central High School as a 14 year old, withstanding daily verbal and physical abuse, as well as threats to her life and the lives of her friends and family, including the bombing of her home.

I was struck with not only her courage, but also her conviction at such a young age, that her life was not her own, and if it meant hardship and



A sculpture in Little Rock, Arkansas, of the nine students who have become known as "The Little Rock Nine." They were the first African American students to attend Central High School in 1957.

*Continued on page 4*



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



## Countdown to Conference

### Team previews new voting system, fine tunes budget

By Eleanor L. Colvin  
Texas Annual Conference  
Director of Communications

Members of the Annual Conference Planning Team are diligently working to ensure the 2011 Texas Annual Conference event is spirit-led, excellent and an exercise in good stewardship.

Among the innovations at this year's annual conference will be an electronic voting process. Powered by key pads and cards that contain an information chip to identify the delegate voting, this process is expected to accelerate the lengthy process of electing



clergy and lay delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences.

The previous scantron system was purchased by the annual conference in the early 1990s, and presented many operational challenges during the 2007 elections. The results of ballots were often delayed, and, eventually a repair person was hired to come on site and fix the machine.

Mike Vinup, vice president of IML, which is the vendor of the electronic voting system, was on hand at the September 29 Annual Conference Planning Team meeting to demonstrate the process and walk ACPT members through a mock election. Delegates will be issued their voting cards at registration, and, since the equipment is leased to the TAC, all cards and keypads should be returned by the end of the annual conference. Individual delegate cards are water resistant and are not magnetically impacted – so, typical use and storage of the cards in wallets and purses will not impact the data stored on the card.

Using the electronic system

will cost the annual conference approximately \$44,000, and IML representatives, will be on site to operate and respond to any technical issues immediately.

Rev. B.T. Williamson, assistant to the Bishop, observed the voting of 1,400 delegates at the General Conference of United Pentecostal meeting in the Toyota Center. "Even with delegates entering names by texting, the ballots took less than five minutes to complete and report back to the assembly," he said.

In addition to the demonstration, much of the meeting was devoted to establishing a budget for the annual conference event. Last year, conference expenses totaled approximately \$290,000, which included speaker's fees, items for worship, video production, child care and expenses paid to the host church. This year's budget currently is estimated at \$250,000. The ACPT has not finalized this budget, as it has requested revisions in some areas that would reduce the total amount spent.

The next Annual Conference Planning Team meeting is set for Wednesday, November 10. Contact team members with questions, so that the concerns and needs of the annual conference membership will be fully represented. ACPT members include: Bill Jobe, chair of Committee on Disabilities Concerns; DeAndre Johnson, Worship Chairperson; Charlotte Newton, lay representative; Chap Temple, clergy representative; Linda Summers Pierce, Worship team member; John Hines, communications; Bishop Janice Riggle Huie; B.T. Williamson, Assistant to the Bishop; Jan Ervin, administrative assistant to the Assistant to the Bishop; Nancy Sweeten, Fiscal Office; Don Waddleton, Congregational Excellence; Elijah Stansell, Conference Treasurer; and Eleanor Colvin, Communications.

Additionally, the most current 2011 annual conference event information is online at [www.txcumc.org/2011tacfaq](http://www.txcumc.org/2011tacfaq).

## In Memory Of . . .

Texas Annual Conference remembers the ministry of deceased clergy and spouses



*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? . . . One thing have I desired if the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.*

*Psalm 27:1, 4*

Following is a list of clergy members and clergy spouses who have died this year.

### Clergy Members January 2010

Rev. Hansel Albert  
Springfield

### February 2010

Rev. John Nihart  
Rev. Connie R. Balsey

### March 2010

Rev. Durwood L. Bristow  
Rev. Donald C. Dodge  
Rev. Lee Roy Williams

### April 2010

Rev. Robert Bascom Lowe  
Rev. Emmitt Connolly  
Barrow

### May 2010

Rev. John W. Wilkins

### June 2010

Rev. Robert Langham

### July 2010

Rev. Victor Garoutte  
Rev. Edwin E. Locke  
Rev. Henry F. Hynson

### Clergy Spouses January 2010

Erlinda Cabello de  
Intipampa  
Shirley R. Stultz

### February 2010

Thera Freed  
Patricia Pierce  
Dorothy Haygood  
Schneider Dubberly  
Eugenia P. Stokes  
Lisa Fraley

### March 2010

Jessie Mae Robinson

### April 2010

Bill Ratchford  
Valeria Thomas

### May 2010

Dolores Tyler  
Frankie Jean Cragg

### July 2010

Lonnie B. Strong  
Lydia R. Stivers

*The Cross Connection will begin to feature a memorial list for deceased clergy and their spouses on a quarterly basis.*



# Full Throttle: Living the Life that God Intended

Singles Retreat and Conference at Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center

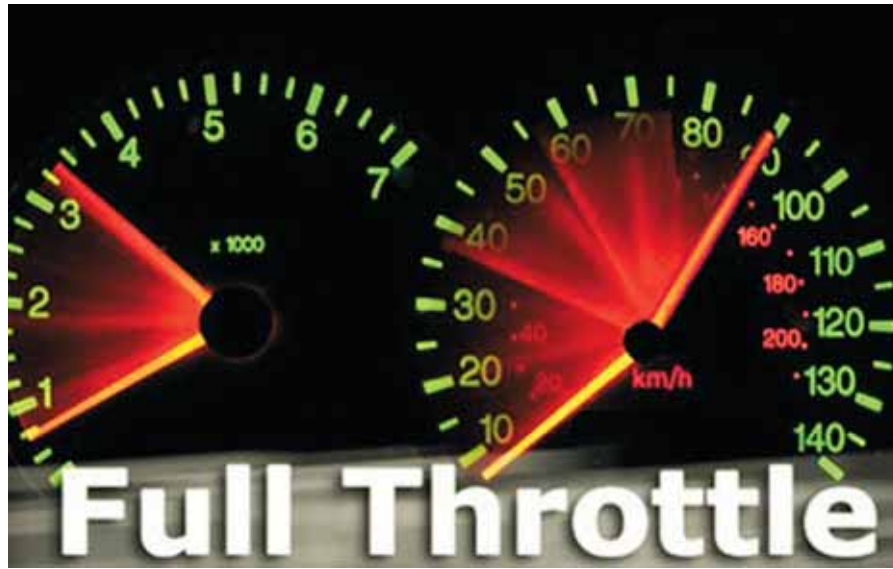
*“I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.” (John 10:10)*

The green flag has dropped, the race has begun – are you running at “full throttle” or are you cruising along not quite sure of what to do or where to go?

Join other single Christian adults for this three-day weekend retreat, November 5-7, 2010 at Mount Sequoyah Conference and Retreat Center as we learn what it means to live our lives for Christ “Full Throttle.”

This weekend will be a chance for spiritual renewal and growth in our faith as we discover new ways to focus our attention on the Good News that Jesus Christ brought.

Our keynote speaker, Terry Hershey, is a national-



ly known speaker on living a life for Christ. His storytelling abilities will mesmerize, and his message will touch you deeply.

Joining Terry is national Christian recording artist Jason Gray. Jason’s music

and his story will provide the backdrop that ties the weekend all together.

In addition to sessions with Terry and Jason, there will be workshop opportunities for personal growth and social activities to get to

know the other retreat attendees.

This event is sponsored by the United Methodist Single Adult Ministry Task Force of the South Central Jurisdiction.

This task force for Single Adult Ministry has been formed to envision, plan, implement, and

evaluate ministries with single adults and to assist singles as they grow in their understanding of themselves and their Christian faith so that those persons may become better disciples of Christ.

To take advantage of the group registration discount rate, singles from the Texas Annual Conference will submit their applications as a group. Fill out the application and mail it with your check by October 8 to Sheri Kelley, Memorial Drive UMC, 12955 Memorial Dr., Houston, Texas 77079.

The Texas Annual Conference is covering the cost of transportation for the Methodist singles who attend. A van or bus will be leaving from Houston early Friday, November 5, and returning late on Sunday, November 7.

If you would be interested in riding to Arkansas with the group from Texas, contact Sheri Kelley at [sherikelley@mdumc.org](mailto:sherikelley@mdumc.org) or 713-468-8356 ext. 119.

## Perkins School of Theology to offer new lecture series

Perkins School of Theology is offering a lunch lecture series entitled, *Perkins Ministry Mondays* in Houston, Texas starting October 18, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at St. Luke’s UMC.

Richard Dean Nelson, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor of Biblical Hebrew and Old Testament Interpretation will be the featured speaker.

This will be the first of

Director of Continuing Education says, “There have been requests from clergy in the Houston area for continuing education opportunities. In trying to meet this need, we have formatted this event as a

combined lecture-luncheon to allow clergy the opportunity for continuing education without taking too much time away from their office and ministerial needs.”

**Pam Goolsby**  
Associate Director of Continuing Education  
Perkins Theological Seminary

The cost is \$19 with lunch being provided. The registration site link is <http://www.ergonline.com/PerkinsMinistryMondays>.

For more information contact Pam Goolsby at 214-768-2251.

**“There have been requests from clergy in the Houston area for continuing education opportunities. In trying to meet this need, we have formatted this event as a combined lecture-luncheon to allow clergy the opportunity for continuing education.”**

The theme for the series is, “Grow Up! Maturity in the Old Testament.” Its focus is maturity in thought and behavior in the Old Testament from the Garden of Eden to the book of Proverbs.

what is hoped to be a series of luncheons to offer clergy in the Houston area. If the endeavor is successful, a schedule along with a list of presenters will be offered in the Spring of 2011.

Pam Goolsby, Associate

## New program for DCM participants

Launchpad Leadership is about to take off.

This program is designed to help new clergy learn how to begin their ministry or new appointment from some of the most “fruitful” clergy in the Texas Annual Conference.

Nearly 30 top leaders (including 3 bishops) have been interviewed and a program has been created that teaches their best advice, wise counsel, and proven strategies for starting strong.

This application-oriented new program is sponsored by the Center for Clergy Excellence and lead by leadership consultant Christian Washington.

DCM (Developing Connectional Ministry) participants in their last year before ordination will be contacted to schedule their first two regional gatherings that will focus on “How to get the most out of your first 100 days in a new place.” Each Gathering will last 3 hours and feature live mentoring from one of our outstanding leaders.





# Racial diversity still a conc

Continued from page 1

sacrificing most of what she had looked forward to about high school – the fun things, the sports events and camaraderie, the parties and dances, and just enjoying being a teenager – she would sacrifice them because the future of her generation and generations to come depended upon her faithfulness and her willingness to do whatever it took to tear down the walls that kept her and other young African-Americans from receiving an equal, quality education.

What would happen if we, along with Carlotta Walls Lanier, the Apostle Paul, and other saints who have gone before us, decided to live more fully into our faith claim that our lives are not our own; that we have been bought with a price, and therefore we have decided to lay aside every weight and the sinful division that so easily besets us, and, keeping our eyes on Jesus, to intentionally roll up our sleeves

and begin the hard work of becoming one family in God – a family that honors and makes a place for the richness of our ethnic and cultural diversity while at the same time making room at the table for all?

We might just change the world for Jesus Christ. It will take sacrifice. It will mean risking our comfort and the way we have always done things. It will take a willingness to be open and vulnerable to those we have been unwilling to see and understand with God's eyes and heart.

It will mean that we will have to change. Hard? Yes. Impossible? No, because the God of the impossible goes before us. That God calls us to be one and what God has called us to do, God will do in us and through us, if we are willing to be obedient. The choice is ours, the time is now, and much is at stake. If not us, who? If not now, when?

Membership Ethnic Demographics: 1998 and 2008 % Membership Distribution		
	1998	2008
Asian	0.7%	1.1%
African American/Black	4.6%	5.8%
Hispanic	0.5%	0.7%
Native American	0.2%	0.3%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.2%
White	86.9%	90.0%
Multi-Racial	N/A	0.4%

The figures are based on the denomination's total U.S. membership. They do not total 100 percent because some annual (regional) conferences do not fully report racial/ethnic makeup. Source of Information: General Council on Finance and Administration.

## Church lacks racial diversity, officials say

By Heather Hahn  
United Methodist News Service

The United Methodist Church, since its formation in 1968, has aspired to promote racial inclusion and end centuries of segregation that divided black and white churchgoers.

Rev. Lovett H. Weems, Jr., director of the Lewis Center says, "The nation is getting younger and more diverse and the church is getting older and less diverse. There is an increasing gap between the makeup of the church and the people God has given us in the United States to minister with."

The denomination as a whole has made some strides. In recent decades, church members have elected a greater diversity of bishops, seminaries have enrolled more multiracial student bodies, and general agencies have hired more racial and ethnic minorities.

Yet the church still has precious few children who are red,

yellow or black. The faces in United Methodist pews remain overwhelmingly white.

The church's racial and ethnic profile remained constant from 1998 to 2008. The denomination's General Council on Finance and Administration reports that as of 2008, the church's U.S. membership was 90 percent white, 5.8 percent black, 1.1 percent Asian, 0.7 percent Hispanic, 0.4 percent multiracial, 0.3 percent Native American and 0.2 percent Pacific Islander.

In 1998, the figures show the church as nearly 87 percent white. The church's demographics were included in an Operational Assessment of the denomination released earlier this summer. They support the assessment's conclusion that the church is experiencing a "creeping crisis" of relevance, said Erin Hawkins, top executive of

the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race.

"How relevant is a 90 percent white denomination to a nation that's rapidly becoming less white?" she said.

### Changing country

According to the U.S. Census, whites comprised 74 percent of the nation's population in 2008. Hispanics accounted for 15 percent and blacks 12.3 percent.

In the past decade, immigration accounted for about a third of the nation's growth. By 2042, the census projects the United States will be a majority-minority country.

To minister to a changing population, the denomination needs to focus on local congregations, church officials say.

Hawkins said her commission is working with clergy and

lay leaders "to effectively lead outside their own cultural contexts." That includes training in communication, conflict resolution and connecting with changing neighborhoods, she said.

"People being able to worship in communities that are reflective of their lives and relationships is not a negative thing," Hawkins said. When "churches are exclusive of people and promote segregation by not being welcoming," problems arise.

### New places for new people

Efforts to reach out are going on across the denomination.

The church now has five "national plans" to reach different racial/ethnic or language groups in the United States.

The Rev. Paul Chang, executive director of the Korean American National Plan, said

the church needs to be sensitive to recent arrivals from South Korea who want to worship in their native language and second- and third-generation Korean Americans, who often prefer services in English.

The Korean-American National Plan has set the goal of developing 12 new Korean-language faith communities and seven new English-language ministries by 2012.

Chang and other national plan leaders are working with Path 1, a division of the United Methodist Board of Discipleship that focuses on starting new churches.

Since 2009, Path 1 has worked with conferences to reach growing populations in their regions. For example, Path 1 has a goal to form 75 predominantly Hispanic congregations where the immigrant population is growing.



# ern for the Church



**The Rev. Ronnie Miller-Yow, pastor of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church, preaches. During his sermon, he welcomes churchgoers to text each other about the day's topic.**

Some of the new churches will be multiracial from the get-go; others will serve specific ethnic groups, said the Rev. Candace Lewis, new church strategist with Path 1.

"I think it's a 'both/and' approach," she said. "People want choice in worship styles. There are people who want the historic African-American church experience and those who are looking for a more diverse experience. I think we live in a time when both can be valid."

#### Open existing doors

The Rev. Yolanda Pupo-Ortiz has this piece of advice for long-established congregations that want to become more diverse: Expect changes.

She is in the process of merging the smaller Latino congregation Camino de Vida (Road of Life), where she serves, with the larger Epworth United Methodist Church in Gaithersburg, Md. The new congregation, for now, is called Epworth-Camino.

Having a truly multicultural church, Pupo-Ortiz said, is more than sharing worship space. It also involves sharing leadership and learning from each other.

"It's finding a way that everybody feels at home," she said. "When you have a multicultural church, it's like a marriage. You can't do things the same way you did before. You expand your family, learn new traditions and eat new food."

The Rev. Ronnie Miller-Yow had a slightly different experience as pastor of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church in Little Rock, Ark. He decided the key to his predominantly black congregation's revival was reclaiming the historic black church experience of call-and-response worship. But he added a contemporary twist.

For years, the denomination's African-American membership — like its overall U.S. membership — has been shrinking. Last year, 23 historically black United Methodist churches closed their doors. Now, there are slightly fewer than 2,300 black churches in the denomination, said Cheryl Walker, director of African-American ministries with the Board of Discipleship.

But that's not the experience of Wesley Chapel, which over the past decade has seen its average attendance climb from about 30 to almost 200. Since Miller-Yow became pas-

tor in 2003, the church has added 152 members. Most have been students from neighboring Philander Smith College, a historically black United Methodist college, where Miller-Yow is chaplain.

"The secret to our success is that you can't put new wine in old skins," said Miller-Yow, who is the president of Black Methodists for Church Renewal. "We've created a space for traditional worship and contemporary worship."

Miller-Yow, who grew up in the Church of God in Christ before joining The United Methodist Church in college, jokes that Wesley Chapel's style of worship is "Methocostal."

That Pentecostal fervor is evident during the service. Where once parishioners relied on hymnals, they now follow the lead of an exuberant choir, music leader, a Hammond organ, piano and drum set. Some of the worshipers in the pews raise their hands in the exultation.

Like many traditional black churches, the sermon is an interactive affair with parishioners shouting "Amen" and clapping when they feel led by the Spirit. But some of the students who attend also have their cell phones handy and text each other lines from the sermon that they want to remember.

At the end of a service in August, five worshipers — all in their 20s — joined the church.

*\*Hahn is a multimedia news reporter for United Methodist News Service.*



**Top Photo: Churchgoers clap during Sunday worship at Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church in Little Rock, Arkansas. Despite The United Methodist Church's longtime goal of racial diversity, scenes like this are rare. UMNS photos by Heather Hahn**

**Middle Photo: A memorial plaque at the location of the house of Daisy Bates, civil rights activist who was instrumental in the desegregation of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.**



**Bottom Photo: Participants listen attentively to Sally Vonner, one of the presenters at the South Central Jurisdiction GCORR conference held in Little Rock, Arkansas.**



# UM Men launch prison ministries

The General Commission on UM Men has forged a partnership with DISCIPLE Bible Outreach Ministries of North Carolina in order to bring DISCIPLE Bible study to prisons across the U.S.

The 21-member board approved an agreement with the Rev. Mark Hicks, executive director of North Carolina's DISCIPLE Bible Outreach Ministries.

The mission of the ministry is "Making disciples through Bible study to bring God's grace to a hurting world," said Hicks.

Hicks has been leading DISCIPLE program in correctional settings since 1999, and he says the studies are transformational for both volunteers and prison participants.

"I was always excited by the possibility of transformation among the inmates," Hicks said, "but I'm equally excited by the transformation occurring in our volunteers, and as a result, our churches." Hicks has also created a program for juvenile offenders that is currently being used in every Youth Development Center in North Carolina.

"I was involved in a prison ministry weekend at a maximum security prison in Texas," said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the commission. "That experience

changed my whole perspective and perception of prisons and the need for our engagement in this vital ministry. I believe that Jesus' list of places of service (Matthew 25:31-46), is all inclusive and ongoing. If I give to a food pantry or clothes closet once, I don't think that fulfills Jesus' request; I'm not off the hook. I don't think we can pick one from that list that is the easiest or most comfortable for us. Jesus directs us to

where the need is greatest and we should be obedient."

## Inmates' Response

"My DISCIPLE Bible study class represented love to me," said a North Carolina prison inmate. "It is a blessing for me to know that God loves me. In the group there was no inmate feeling. When we studied the word everybody had value. When you're sitting on the other side of the wall, you need all the encouragement you can get."

"For the last five months I have been involved in the DISCIPLE program. My time could not have been spent any better doing anything else. This class has enabled me to deal with my circumstances better and find answers to live my life with peace and love.

I have come to know the Lord better, and am convinced that He is greater now than ever before. It is my prayer that the DISCIPLE course will continue to grow throughout the prison."

**"I was involved in a prison ministry weekend at a maximum security prison in Texas," said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the commission.**

**"That experience changed my whole perspective and perception of prisons and the need for our engagement in this vital ministry. I believe that Jesus' list of places of service (Matthew 25:31-46), is all inclusive and ongoing.**

## Guidelines

Hicks offers the following guidelines for beginning the ministry:

- DISCIPLE prison ministry requires careful planning and approval from both the local church and the agency sponsoring the ministry, as well as from the prison authorities where the studies will take place.



- Prisons require volunteers to complete an application form and submit to a criminal background check prior to approval as a volunteer.
- The scheduling of a time and place for the study, the recruitment of inmates for classes, and the ongoing supervision of prisoners will require the help and cooperation of correctional staff.
- In prisons where there is a chaplain on staff, you'll want to coordinate your activities through this person. It is important to deve-

lop a relationship with the prison chaplain and to respect his or her authority as the person responsible for the spiritual needs of the inmate population.

- To be involved in prison ministry, you must agree to follow all training procedures, rules, and regulations mandated by the prison or the sponsoring church or agency.

Beyond these specific issues and suggestions, be aware that a DISCIPLE prison ministry will only be effective if you and your group have planned for the long term. The prison authorities—especially the chaplain—need to trust that your church or conference is making a continuing commitment. Your initial plan should include which units of Disciple you're going to lead after the first one, how soon after you've finished the first unit you plan to start the second, and who is committed to teaching not just the first unit, but the second and third units as well.

Recruiting the initial group of participants from the prison population will require laying some groundwork. If a church is already engaged in a mentoring or penal ministry at the prison, then participants in those programs can become part of the core group. Barring that, look for a pastor in your area who regularly visits the prison, and ask his or her help in recruiting participants.

## Study materials

DISCIPLE Bible materials are available at Cokesbury bookstores [www.Cokesbury.com](http://www.Cokesbury.com).

In addition, Bishop Richard Wilke has provided a booklet of questions and activities for men based on DISCIPLE II; that study is available in the resource section of [www.GCUMM.org](http://www.GCUMM.org) (UM Men DISCIPLE Bible Supplement).

## The Plan

The North Carolina-based ministry and the commission are seeking \$5,000 for each pilot project in up to eight states.

Some states have been tentatively selected, but this partnership should be viewed as an open door for interested groups to participate.

For more information, contact Hanke ([ghank@gcumm.org](mailto:ghank@gcumm.org)) or Hicks ([MCHicks@northstat.e.net](mailto:MCHicks@northstat.e.net)).



# Ministry Snapshots

## Mustard Seed Ministries planting seeds of hope

By Debby Schamber  
Staff Writer  
The Examiner

Mustard Seed Ministries of the United Methodist Temple is not offering a handout but a hand-up by giving the community and school children a chance to reach for their dreams of a successful future through education and technology.

The idea began in Tyler and has since grown. With the help of officials from Tyler, the program was launched in Port Arthur in January. The Tyler program has expanded beyond their community to include 14 counties. The Rev. Russell Hall of Aldersgate Trinity Campus of the United Methodist Temple plans to follow in the Port Arthur program as well.

Since January, the program has grown along the way and the first round of computers to be given away to fifth graders at Sam Houston Elementary will be in November. The program is aimed at fifth graders to allow for the maximum benefit. During their eighth-grade year of school, they will receive an upgrade for their high school experience. As they prepare for college during their senior year of high school, they will receive another upgrade.

The donated computers are from area individuals and businesses. The computer is first checked to see if it is in working order. It must meet the minimum requirements as determined by the staff of volunteers.

Even if the computer is not refurbished but instead used for parts, the hard drive is completely wiped clean using data destruction software approved and used by the Department of Defense.

If the computer is useable, it is reprogrammed with Windows XP, Office 2003 and learning programs. The learning programs will help the students work on math, English and reading skills, according to Hall.

Applications to participate in



**The beginner's computer class is designed to help individuals with little or no computer knowledge. It focuses on learning the practical uses of the computer.**

the program are given to children to complete and return. They must also write a short essay of why it is important to have a personal computer and how they plan to use it.

In addition, they must also complete 10 hours of community service. To help students complete the community service hours, some teachers have taken entire classrooms to local parks for a cleanup project.

"The church is giving back to the community, and with this requirement (the kids) are giving back to the community as well," Hall said.

On the day they finally get to take the computers home, the students and a parent arrive at the school to meet with members of the ministry. The computers are set up to allow a 1½ hour class to review how to use them. Then the computers are packed up and sent home with a quick-start guide. Once the computer is taken home, if it should develop a problem, it is fixed and, if it cannot be repaired, it is replaced, Hall said.

But the world of technology does not end there. The church also offers a computer lab with four free 90-minute classes open to people of all ages. People can take the classes as many times as necessary.

The beginner computer class, which opened in May, is an edu-

cational program that is focused on educating beginner level participants on the practical use of a computer. The class of up to 15 people focuses on Microsoft Word, Windows XP and the general functions of a computer. In addition, they will learn how to use a digital camera and other external devices. Plus, students will learn how to use the Internet.

The intermediate class, which began in August, includes an advanced look at Microsoft Office Suite, which includes Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Outlook.

Both classes offer easy-to-understand language, classroom helpers and a hands-on learning environment with each student sitting at a computer. Class size is limited and seat are filled on a first come, first serve basis.

Hall said he hopes to offer an advanced class in the future. The class will allow people to become Microsoft Office certified. Hall has a goal of partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission to help people improve their job skills.

To sign up for the classes, receive more information or to donate a computer, call 409-985-8861.

*This article first appeared in The Examiner in Port Arthur, Texas.*

## Delivering faith to families with special needs

St. Peter's UMC in Katy featured in local news

By Ford Atkinson  
My Fox News

Husbands and wives worshipping together is taken for granted by millions of couples.

But author Kathleen Bolduc says for parents of special needs kids, an hour together at church may never happen because one of them must be with their child.

"I don't think it's too much to expect that we can go to church on Sunday morning

es should supervise special needs kids while their parents worship.

St. Peter's UMC is one church that has already created a network of volunteers to help with special needs children and adults.

The church's special needs coordinator Sarah Morrison says she began recruiting volunteers about two years ago.

"Through exposure, people become more comfortable and they learn. It's the best way. You can't teach them from a

**St. Peter's UMC is one church that has already created a network of volunteers to help with special needs children and adults.**

and be able to worship with our spouse," Bolduc says.

Bolduc, the mother of an autistic son, was a featured speaker Thursday at a symposium on special needs at St. Peter's UMC in Katy.

The event was designed to teach religious leaders in the Houston area how to minister to special needs families.

The symposium was the brain child of Leslie Phillips, founder of the Katy Faith & Disability Network.

"They need fellowship, they need support, and they need to feel like they belong. They need people who seek to understand what's going on in their lives," Phillips says.

Bolduc says more church-

book," Morrison says.

Without support, many special needs parents choose to stay away from church. It isolates them and robs their children of a chance to grow closer to their church.

"Suddenly you realize that the most critical thing in your child's life is missing and that is a spiritual education," Phillips says.

The church is located at 20775 Kingsland Blvd. in Katy, Texas. For more information about St. Peter's UMC ministry for special needs families, contact the church office, 281-492-8031.

*This story first appeared on line on KRIV Fox 26 News.*



## Spotlight on Local Church Ministries

### Fellowship Opportunities

#### Book Group to Discuss

*Anything but Typical*

At the October 19 meeting, the Chapter One Book Group at St. Paul's UMC in Houston, Texas will discuss *Anything but Typical* by Nora Raleigh Baskin.

The publisher states that this is a "breathtaking depiction of an autistic boy's struggles-and a story for anyone who has ever worried about fitting in."

The Chapter One Book Group meets at 7 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month, in the church's Youth Library, J-202. The group is open to anyone who enjoys reading and discussing a wide variety of books. To be added to the group's e-mailing list, contact [Linda@hibit.com](mailto:Linda@hibit.com).

At 5501 Main, 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 about St. Paul's, see [www.stpaulshouston.org](http://www.stpaulshouston.org).

#### Chapelwood Senior Retreat-October 2010

Experience the beauty of the Ozarks in the fall at the, *Leaves of Gold Conference*, Monday, October 18 - 21, at Mount Sequoyah, in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

The program is headlined by retired United Methodist Bishop Richard Wilke, the author of *Disciple 1*. Bishop Wilke will serve as the preacher and Bible study leader.

Departure will be by chartered

bus, 7 a.m. on Monday, October 18, from Chapelwood UMC Houston, and return the evening of October 21.

There is a \$50 per person deposit due by Friday October 1 to Chapelwood, 11140 Greenbay Drive, Houston, Texas 77024, c/o Judy Jones. Registration for the retreat should be done directly with Mount Sequoyah, as soon as possible online at [www.mountsequoyah.org](http://www.mountsequoyah.org). Click on Programs.

For more information, contact Rev. Scott Endress, Associate Pastor, Reaching and Senior Adults Chapelwood UMC [sendress@chapelwood.org](mailto:sendress@chapelwood.org) or (713) 354-4470 - office.

#### St. Paul UMC Port Arthur, Church Rededication

You are invited to celebrate the rededication of St. Paul UMC in Port Arthur, Texas, Sunday, October 3 at 10:45 a.m.

St. Paul began renovations on the sanctuary in June 2010. They have been completed and everyone is invited to celebrate the new sanctuary building. St. Paul UMC is located at 821 Texas Avenue in Port Arthur, Texas.

For more information, contact the church secretary, Kristal Whitley at 409-985-9977 or email Rev. Patricia Wells at [stpaul\\_revwells@att.net](mailto:stpaul_revwells@att.net).

### Mission Opportunities

#### Book Fair and Gift Bazaar at St. Paul's UMC

October 19 and 20  
St. Paul's School's annual Scholastic Book Fair and Gift Bazaar will be from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on October 19 and 20.

The Book Fair will include spe-

cially priced books and educational products from more than 150 publishers and may be purchased free of state sales tax.

The Gift Bazaar will also sell children's clothing, toys, jewelry, women's accessories, home décor, specialty foods, personalized stationery, and other gift items.

Proceeds from the fair and bazaar will help support the school's classroom libraries as well as the children's library. Additionally, donations of books in Spanish and monetary donations to purchase them are encouraged. These will supplement the curriculum of Rutabaga Territory, an after-school mentoring and enrichment program based out of St. Paul's for predominately Spanish-speaking children.

For more information, contact St. Paul's UMC at 713-528-0527.

### Learning Opportunities

#### Coping With Grief During The Holidays

St. Luke's Center for Counseling and Life Enrichment will conduct a workshop that focuses on how loss can affect us when we least expect it. Leader, Angela H. Caughlin, LCSW, is an author and psychotherapist/life coach will be the guest speaker.

The date and time for the workshop is Thursday, October 14 at 6:30 p.m. The center is located at 2719 Joanel, Houston, Texas. For additional information, contact Sally Penning at 713-402-5043.

#### St. Paul's School Presents "Redirecting Children's Behavior"

St. Paul's School presents a par-

ent education series, "redirecting Children's Behavior" by Dr. Deborah Fry. It will be conducted from 9 to 11:30 a.m. on Thursdays from October 7 to November 11.

This six-week, 15-hour course teaches parents how to help children grow in a way that enhances self-esteem, teaches responsibility, and promotes cooperation and self mastery. At the completion, participants should be able to discipline without yelling; interact to build self-esteem; reduce sibling rivalry; develop a sense of responsibility; redirect mistaken goals and create an encouraging family.

Dr. Fry is a certified instructor of the International Network for Children and Families. The fee for the series is \$225 per person or \$325 per couple. To register for the series, please call 713-528-6779 or email [spschool@stpaulshouston.org](mailto:spschool@stpaulshouston.org). With two days' advance notification to the school, childcare will be provided for parents attending the series.

Affiliated with St. Paul's UMC, St. Paul's School has provided quality education for children from age four months through kindergarten for more than 50 years. The preschool was one of the first in Houston to earn accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Website: [stpaulspreschool.org](http://stpaulspreschool.org)

#### Annual Conference 2011

Following are links to TAC 2011 information. These links are for specific items regarding Annual Conference 2011.

For facts about Annual Conference 2011: [www.txcumc.org/2011tacfaq](http://www.txcumc.org/2011tacfaq); for meetings and events:

[www.txcumc.org/2011meetingandevents](http://www.txcumc.org/2011meetingandevents); for scheduled meals: [www.txcumc.org/2011meals](http://www.txcumc.org/2011meals); and for scheduled meetings: [www.txcumc.org/2011meetings](http://www.txcumc.org/2011meetings).

#### Founders' Day at Gammon

The 127th Founders' Day and 71st Thirkield-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](mailto: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](http://www.gammonseminary.org).

#### Spirit Journey 2010

*Embracing the Mystery of Prayer* is the theme for the event scheduled for October 28-30 at Lakeview Methodist Conference Center in Palestine, Texas.

Spirit Journey is a 3-day guided spiritual life retreat. It is modeled after the Upper Room's Academy for Spiritual Formation and is open to lay and clergy of all denominations.

The rhythm of the retreat will be a Benedictine schedule with worship, rest, study, times of silence, free time, shared meals, community time, fellowship and the Eucharist; with shared silence from evening prayers until morning prayers.

For registration information, contact registrar, Beverly Pichon at 936-588-6774 or [bnp@consolidated.net](mailto:bnp@consolidated.net).

Send Spotlight submissions to:

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