

UMMEN

The magazine of United Methodist Men



The reason for reading

Some of us read to be entertained by a talented author.

Some of us read to learn more about a particular subject.

Some of us read to be challenged.

I hope you will read this issue with a renewed intent to change your behavior. Ask this question as you begin, "How can I use the content of this magazine to change me

in my missions work, or to be more obedient to God's call," or "How will I use what is in this issue to bring more men and more youth into a deeper relationship with Christ?"

Those of you who participated in the National Gathering or in other training sponsored by the commission have figured out that we do two kinds of evaluations from those events.

The first evaluation wants to know if we met your expectations, and is typically filled out at or within a few days of the event.



The second and more important evaluation is several months after the event. The core questions of this second evaluation is: "What are the changes in your behavior, your devotional life, in your walk with Christ because of what you learned or experienced in that event?"

You see, this magazine is not sent to you just so you know more. It is sent to you so you can do

more, to be more in your on-growing relationship with Christ. You may not have a leadership title within your local church, but each of us carries a servant leadership responsibility as a disciple of Jesus Christ. So read all that follows and ask yourself, "How can I use what I read to guide me into new expressions of being a disciple of Jesus?" I don't expect you will change the world; but I do expect that the Holy Spirit will guide you to change your world.

Still striving to serve,
Gil Hanke



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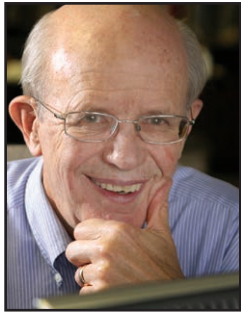
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Editor's note: This magazine includes articles from individuals who hold diverse opinions. We hope all articles are thought provoking; they are not necessarily the opinions of the General Commission on UM Men.

United Methodist Men exists to declare the centrality of Christ in every man's life.



At the time of Jesus, nearly all Jews consider the words “Good Samaritan” to be an oxymoron.

No Samaritan can be “good.” They are evil and no Jew should converse with

them.

The parable is offensive, not only because a Samaritan is the hero, but because the priest and the Levite are villains. Priests and Levites are respected members of the Jewish community; they hate Samaritans.

If Jesus were to tell the parable to us today, he might make a minister and a physician the villains while making an undocumented Mexican the hero.

Jesus teaches us not to judge people by race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, language, profession, cleanliness, or any number of ways in which we classify people as undesirable.

This issue focuses on the need for advocacy to accompany our charity. We are good at providing food and housing for the disadvantaged, we are not as active in advocating for legislation that addresses ways to reduce hunger and homelessness. We, too frequently, regard charitable ministries as part of our Christian responsibility, but we think of advocacy as political.

In this issue, Jacob Dharmaraj helps us understand the importance of both charity and advocacy; Bishop Kenneth Carder suggests policies we should support, and Dr. Anthony Hunt gives us 10 specific ways we can advocate for peace with justice.

We admire the good Samaritan for carrying the wounded victim to the hospital and providing funds for his care. Perhaps, we should also admire those who advocate for the presence of protectors who make sure people can travel the road from Jerusalem to Jericho in safety. That protective service might eliminate the need for the charitable work of the Samaritan.

—Rich Peck

Advocacy vs. charity

By Jacob Dharmaraj

As we rumble along the potholed 21st century mission road, the hurting world hopes to hear the church respond: “We see you; we truly care about you. We will not normalize destitution; we will not substitute Christian charity as our only response to violence, oppression, inequality, and injustice.”

The overwhelming need of the hour is to listen to the cry of the victims of abuse and exploitation both in our own backyard and beyond. We are not called to be more dogmatic in our belief but to demonstrate our commitment to Jesus Christ through active intervention for the weak and to stand in solidarity with the exploited. By doing so, we join with biblical advocates like Joseph, Moses, Nathan, Nehemiah, Daniel, Esther, Paul, and Apollos for humane and compassionate treatment of strangers and neo-neighbors.

Why advocacy?

Accordingly, as a denomination we work for the healing of the nations, to raise awareness, to initiate changes, and to organize group actions to alleviate human suffering for a long haul. The action begins with the local church.

Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscape, a World Council of Churches document, affirms, “Advocacy for justice is no longer the sole prerogative of national assemblies and central offices but a form of witness which calls

for the engagement of local churches. . . Churches must help in identifying the everyday choices that can abuse and promote human rights, gender justice, climate justice, unity and peace. Local churches’ grounding in everyday life gives them both legitimacy and motivation in the struggle for justice and peace.”

This process would carry Christians from being mere gratified charitable relief workers to ardent agents of advocacy mission to cause societal changes and assist all those who are negatively affected by oppressive institutional systems or exploitative political structures.

Such an advocacy work will not limit us to running a food pantry or providing an after-school program. It will take us to a place where we will be enabled to influence laws, public policy, and resource allocation within political, economic, and social systems and institutions that powerfully affect the lives of the people. This advocacy mission process will move the church from “what is” to “what ought to be,” as residents of the kingdom of God.

Normalizing charity or advocacy?

There is a fundamental difference between charity and advocacy. The former is the translator of the gospel; the latter is the interpreter of the Gospel.

In *Sweet Charity*, Janet Poppendieck writes that charity acts as “a sort of a moral safety valve.

It reduces the discomfort evoked by visible destitution in our midst by creating the illusion of effective action and offering us



There will not be a contest for the best units of UM Men this year. Submit articles and photos for the magazine to Rich (rpeck@gcumm.org) 1000 17th Ave. South, Nashville, TN 37212).

myriad ways of participating in it. It creates a culture of charity that normalizes destitution and legitimates personal generosity as a response to [inequity and injustice].”

Essentially, charity robs one’s identity and fosters a dependent, paternalistic, donor-donee paradigm.

Charity injures human dignity as it fosters and perpetuates inequality’ it does little to change the unjust social and political systems that breed and foster injustice. Unlike advocacy that stands for justice, charity offends no one, including the perpetrator.

William Coffin, former pastor of Riverside Church in New York City, said, “Charity must not be allowed to go bail for justice.”

Vatican II fittingly depicted, “The demands of justice must be satisfied first of all; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity.”

Advocacy has never more important than in today’s worldwide diasporic context.

An eye on the forest and another on the tree

The ministry of advocacy is less direct. One may never receive immediate emotional, spiritual or missional gratification resulting from charity. Advocacy is a slow and laborious process.

Advocates may have no contact with people in need, and they may never see the transformative change or end result first hand. Yet their efforts address the root causes of the problems and generate a lasting result for all involved.

Advocacy is goal-oriented and calls for a plan and preparation to correct an unfair or harmful situation that negatively affect individuals or a community. Acts of advocacy usually challenge large institutions


or unfair power structure or legislation to correct their unfair or harmful behavior. Hence advocacy employs persuasion through political or legal action which some deem and detest as un-Christian.. The truth is that this is a truly biblical act exemplified by Elijah, Samuel, and Nathan.

The outcome of advocacy ministry is totally unpredictable and is riddled with trials and challenges. Unlike charity work, advocacy is not for novices and the ill-prepared. Not everyone can thrive in this mission and ministry. It needs specialized skills and deep commitment to remain steadfast even when others leave. Novices need not apply.

Advocacy keeps an eye on the forest while working on the trees one at a time. Hence, one needs to develop a detailed blueprint based on the knowledge of opponents and the possible allies.

Charity mission work can be carried out with a smaller budget, fewer volunteers and limited donation or resources, but over the long run, charity cloys.

Advocacy needs multiple partners with specialized skills. Challengers to advocates are well-prepared and waiting in the tall grass; there is a great deal of risk involved. But, many will persist in advocacy work because they believe together they can bring about transformation.

Whether it’s ending homelessness or working to protect global-level human rights, each of us is driven by our commitment to mission, and we are called to take a stand for what we know to be true and just. 



Jacob Dharmaraj is president of the National Federation of Asian Americans. Article was originally written for UMC global.

For what policies should we advocate?


By Bishop Kenneth Carder

As I understand, the criteria determining if a policy or practice meets the test of biblical justice is this: “Does it enable the poor and vulnerable, the orphans, widows, and sojourners, to have access to God’s table of abundance?”

What if Congress began every debate on healthcare, taxes, voting, and banking regulations with that question?

Any policy designed to protect the privileges of the privileged will inevitably result in injustice. When “the least of these” have no voice in shaping the policies, the powerful protect and enhance privileges at the expense of the poor and vulnerable.

I also suggest that the question is relevant for the church as well as Congress. What if all the decisions regarding building

programs, clergy compensation, evangelism, worship, and pension policies were made in light of this question: “What impact will this have on the most vulnerable—the poor, the children, the mentally ill, the homeless, the frail elderly, and the addicted?” 




Bishop Kenneth Carder was elected to the episcopacy in 1992 while serving as pastor of Church Street Church in Knoxville, Tenn. He served the Nashville and Mississippi Areas. Upon retiring in 2004, Ken joined the faculty of Duke Divinity School.

Greg Ricks, former director of a youth involvement program in Boston, compared the situation of community service volunteers to people trying to pull drowning children out of a river. Of course we must try to rescue the children. But we also need to find out why they’re falling into the river—because no matter how hard we try, we lack the resources, strength, and stamina to save them all. So we must go upstream to fix the broken bridge, stop the people who are pushing the children in, or do whatever else will address the problem at its source.

Ten ways to promote peace with justice

By C. Anthony Hunt

1. Support and develop community-wide plans aimed at expanding economic opportunities for racial-ethnic persons and women specifically in the areas of housing, banking, and employment practices.
2. Actively participate in programs that reach out to help those in the most need – the hungry, the homeless, and the unemployed.
3. Do your part to assure that every inner city and rural young person can look forward to an adequate education. Adopt an inner-city or rural school. Offer your skills where appropriate.
4. Encourage schools, colleges, and universities in your area to include the teachings of Dr. King and other freedom fighters in their curricula and programs.
5. Take specific actions to deal with the problems of drugs, alcohol dependency, teenage pregnancy, and family violence in your community.
6. Advocate for the removal of all weapons from our streets, homes, and schools. Support causes that promote freedom, justice, and peace abroad.
7. Help extend human rights, dignity, health, and economic well-being to all persons.
8. Actively oppose groups that promote hatred and violence. Vigilantly oppose racism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other forms of hatred in our communities.
9. Sponsor and participate in programs that encourage interracial, intercultural, and inter-religious goodwill and unity.
10. Read the Social Principles of UMC and strive to make them an integral part of your life and the life of your church and community. 



The Rev. Dr. C. Anthony Hunt

The Rev. Dr. C. Anthony Hunt is the senior pastor of Epworth Chapel UMC in Baltimore, Md., and a former district superintendent in the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

HUMOR

Did Noah fish?

A Sunday school teacher asked, “Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?” “No,” replied Johnny. “How could he, with just two worms.”

Unanswered prayer

The preacher’s 5 year-old daughter noticed that her father always paused and bowed his head for a moment before starting his sermon. One day, she asked him why. “Well, Honey,” he began, proud that his

daughter was so observant of his messages. “I’m asking the Lord to help me preach a good sermon.” “How come He doesn’t answer it?” she asked.

The content of a mother’s prayer

A United Methodist pastor said to a precocious six-year-old boy, “So your mother says your prayers for you each night? That’s very commendable. What does she say?” The little boy replied, “Thank God he’s in bed!”

United Methodists advocate for social policies


We support and encourage social policies that serve to reduce and control the creation of industrial byproducts and waste; facilitate the safe processing and disposal of toxic and nuclear waste and move toward the elimination of both; encourage reduction of municipal waste; provide for appropriate recycling and disposal of municipal waste; and assist the cleanup of polluted air, water, and soil. We call for the preservation of old-growth forests and other irreplaceable natural treasures, as well as preservation of endangered plant species. We support measures designed to maintain and restore natural ecosystems. We support policies that develop alternatives to chemicals used for growing, processing, and preserving food, and we strongly urge adequate research into their effects upon God’s creation prior to utilization. We urge development of international agreements concerning equitable utilization of the world’s resources for human benefit so long as the integrity of the earth is maintained. We are deeply concerned about the privatization of water resources, the bottling of water to be sold as a commodity for profit, and the resources that go into packaging bottled water. We urge all municipalities and other governmental organizations to develop processes for determining sustainability of water resources and to determine the environmental, economic, and social consequences of privatization of water resources prior to the licensing and approval thereof.

Energy resources utilization

The whole earth is God’s good creation and as such has inherent value. We are aware that the current utilization of energy resources threatens this creation at its very foundation. As members of The UMC, we are committed to approaching creation, energy production, and especially creation’s resources in a responsible, careful and economic way. We call upon all to take measures to save energy. Everybody should adapt his or her lifestyle to the average consumption of energy that respects the

limits of the planet earth. We encourage persons to limit CO2 emissions toward the goal of one tonne per person annually. We strongly advocate for the priority of the development of renewable energies. The deposits of carbon, oil, and gas resources are limited and their continuous utilization accelerates global warming. The use of nuclear power is no solution for avoiding CO2 emissions. Nuclear power plants are vulnerable, unsafe, and potential health risks. A safe, permanent storage of nuclear waste cannot be guaranteed. It is therefore not responsible to future generations to operate them. The production of agricultural fuels and the use of biomass plants rank lower than the provision of safe food supplies and the continued existence for small farming businesses.

Science and Technology

We recognize science as a legitimate interpretation of God’s natural world. We affirm the validity of the claims of science in describing the natural world and in determining what is scientific. We preclude science from making authoritative claims about theological issues and theology from making authoritative claims about scientific issues. We find that science’s descriptions of cosmological, geological, and biological evolution are not in conflict with theology. We recognize medical, technical, and scientific technologies as legitimate uses of God’s natural world when such use enhances human life and enables all of God’s children to develop their God-given creative potential without violating our ethical convictions about the relationship of humanity to the natural world. We reexamine our ethical convictions as our understanding of the natural world increases. We find that as science expands human understanding of the natural world, our understanding of the mysteries of God’s creation and word are enhanced. 

These positions are from the Social Principles in the 2016 Book of Discipline

African bishop focuses on evangelism, education and health care

By Heather Hahn

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS)

Bishop Kasap Owan, a member of the Commission on UM Men, leads a growing part of The UMC, but with that growth comes great challenges.

Kasap, one of three new Congolese bishops elected in 2017, leads the South Congo Episcopal Area — which straddles his native Democratic Republic of Congo and its southern neighbor Zambia.

Massive area

Kasap presides over four annual conferences in Congo and one in Zambia. The central Africa area includes 52 districts, 1,045 pastors and more than 1.1 million church members. To put that in perspective, the U.S. North Central Jurisdiction — with nine bishops — has about 1.18 million members.

Most UMs in his area live on less than \$2 a day, and they are contending with the aftermath of war or continuing factional violence.

“The church is growing in Congo first of all because people are poor and when people are suffering, they look to God to help them,” he said. “Secondly, Congo is a missionary country.”

Kasap and other Congolese believe the church, with God’s help, can relieve people’s suffering through evangelism and the promotion of social well-being.

He said, some Congolese churches preach the prosperity gospel, a faith that positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one’s material wealth. Instead, he said, the UMC provides practical means toward prosperity such as providing education.

The UM commitment to educated clergy is especially important to Kasap. He has



Bishop Kasap Owan

a Ph.D. in New Testament studies, and before his election as bishop, he served as president of Katanga Methodist University in Mulungushi. Six UM bishops, including Kasap, are among the university’s graduates.

Part of his heritage

Kasap’s ancestral roots in the church go back to Methodism’s arrival in Congo in 1912. That year, Methodist Episcopal Bishop John Springer approached a Congolese chief with plans of planting churches in the area. The chief persuaded the bishop to establish a much-needed hospital first, and then a church. That chief was Kasap’s grandfather.

In his own ministry, Kasap aims to carry on this family tradition of caring for both people’s spiritual and physical needs.

Three needs

Kasap identified three primary needs in his area: Evangelism, education and health care. Specifically, he said, his area needs help building and restoring churches in a part of the world where many United Methodists still hold services outdoors.

He also wants help providing the sort of schooling he received as a youngster, and improving health care.

He spoke especially of the need to train and hire more doctors for the UM hospital in Kaponda, which has 250 beds but only two doctors.

Few roads

Even getting to health care is a challenge in Congo. The country — which is about the size of the U.S. east of the Mississippi River — has fewer paved roads than the state of Maryland.

In another part of Congo, North Katanga Episcopal Area has the “Wings of the Morning,” which flies people to receive medical care. Kasap would like to expand a smaller South Congo Wings of the Morning aviation ministry in his area.

To address these and other pressing needs, he has built relationships with the General Board of Global Ministries and a number of U.S. conferences, including New Mexico, Northwest Texas, Oklahoma and Pacific Northwest.

He also is working with “Bikes and Bibles,” coordinated by Joe Kilpatrick of

the North Georgia Conference. That ministry provides motorcycles, bicycles and native-language Bibles across Africa.

“The bicycle is the horse of the circuit rider, and this is a circuit-rider economy,” Kilpatrick said. “This is where the United States was in the 1750s.”

Hope for the future

Despite his area’s many challenges, Kasap speaks with great hope for the work ahead.

“My hope is God,” he said. “If we have not confidence in God, we cannot do anything.”

He added that he also has hope in the UMC and the connections it provides.

“My hope is my partners,” he said. “You, my friends, can help us with the development of the church. The church is a change agent.” 



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

One more time

It was the day of the big sale. Rumors of the sale, and advertising in the local paper, were the main reason for the long line that formed in front of the store by 8:30 a.m.

A small man pushed his way to the front of the line, only to be pushed back, amid loud and colorful curses. On the man’s second attempt, he was punched in the jaw, knocked around a bit, and then thrown to the end of the line again.

As he got up the second time, he said to the person at the end of the line, “That does it! If they hit me one more time, I’m not opening the store!”

No need for prayer

Little Johnny and his family were having Sunday dinner at his grandmother’s house. Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served. When Little Johnny received his plate, he started eating right away. “Johnny! Please wait until we say our prayer,” said his mother. “I don’t need to,” the boy replied. “Of course, you do,” his mother insisted. “We always say a prayer before eating at our house.”

“That’s at our house.” Johnny explained. “But this is Grandma’s house and she knows how to cook.”

HUMOR

Don't stop believing in yourself

By Bishop James E. Swanson Sr.

I've had my share of opportunities to give up and quit on myself and to believe that good things were not intended for me.

One illustrative story come from my experience following high school graduation in 1968.

I was determined to attend college, but my high school guidance counselor never helped me understand how to apply. In fact, I didn't know that you had to apply.

That fall, I caught the city bus and made my way to Texas Southern University in my hometown of Houston.

I arrived at the Registrar's Office and stood in line with all the other students. That's when I discovered that they had applied and were prepared to be processed and admitted.

I learned you can't just show up and enroll. I was also not aware that it costs money to attend a university.

I was told that since I had not applied, I would not be able to register.

That's when I recalled my mother's words, "God will never let you down, so don't you ever stop believing in yourself."

I refused to leave.

That's when a woman came from behind the desk and asked me to go with her.

She worked three miracles.

1. She calmed a scared young man down.
2. She helped him get all the necessary paperwork completed including a waiver on the required ACT.

3. And she found grants so he could walk away without the need for a student loan.

I returned home, and with a big smile on my face, I told Momma, "Your baby boy is a college student." That was a first for my family.

Today, I have a Bachelor of Science degree, a Master of Divinity degree and a doctoral degree. 

This article is an excerpt from Success Stories, a book by Reginald Grant that includes articles by 19 successful African American men, many of whom came from disadvantaged communities and achieved greatness in their academic and professional careers. Four of the contributors are former members of the National Football League. Others are from a range of occupations. The book, is used in Los Angeles high schools. A separate workbook encourages students to compare their lives with others and develop essays.

Grant is a former NFL player, a teacher of international students, and a member of the General Commission on UM Men.



Mississippi Area Bishop James E. Swanson Sr. is president of the General Commission on UM Men

The 20-year anniversary of UM Men magazine and 93 years of men's publications

A history of United Methodist Men publications

The 1922 session of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, created a Board of Lay Activities.

Dr. George Morelock, lay leader of the Memphis Annual Conference, was a delegate to that assembly and worked on the legislation that created the board.

"There was a strong movement to merge agencies in the church, and some people feared that a general agency would take the work of men away from their local churches," said Morelock. "We had every reason to believe the delegates would not support a separate agency. It was a long, hard fight to create a Board of Lay Activities."



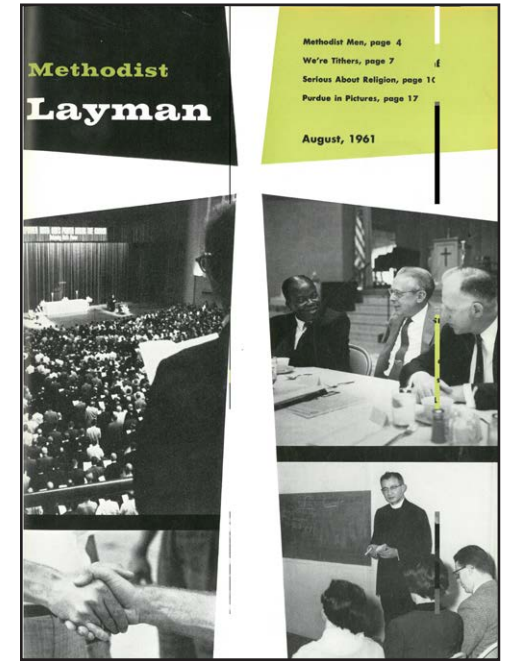
Dr. George Morelock at his home in Florida after his 1948 retirement as top staff executive of the Board of Lay Activities.

The new board was organized at a 1922 meeting at Lake Junaluska, N.C.

Morelock was elected secretary of the new agency.

The first issue

In 1924, Morelock created *Methodist Layman*, a digest-sized quarterly magazine for Methodist men.



The August, 1961 cover of *Methodist Layman* with photos from the Third National Gathering at Purdue University.

The magazine carried news of Methodist men, a "Tips-Tool-Talk" section for local, district and conference officers of Methodist Men, "Laymen in the News," book reviews, information about award presentations, and editorials by Morelock.

In 1934, at the suggestion of the full Board of Lay Activities, the magazine was absorbed into the Nashville-based *Christian Advocate*.

Following the 1939 merger of the Methodist Episcopal Church (the northern section), the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church, a new Board of Lay Activities elected Edgar Welch president; Dr. Morelock continued as executive secretary, and Dow Bancroft was hired as the first associate secretary.

The new agency reissued *Methodist*

The new agency reissued *Methodist Layman* in 1941 and the following year, the agency began chartering groups. Six charters were granted in 1942.

The magazine was changed from a quarterly to a monthly publication in 1945.

Morelock retired in October 1947; He was replaced by Shelby E. Southard, editor until April 1959. Robert G. Mayfield was then elected general secretary and served as editor until June 1960 when he hired Newman Cryer, former editor of *The Pastor*, a magazine for Methodist clergy, as editor of *Methodist Layman*.

In 1961, the year of the Third Methodist Men Congress, the magazine was changed from a digest size to a full sized, two-color monthly magazine. Cryer carried photos, news, and evaluations of Purdue conference attended by 4,700 men.

"Evaluation sheets on the 1961 Purdue Conference contained more than a

hundred suggestions for improvement," wrote Cryer. "The number of men whose lives were changed for the better cannot be evaluated. But we can believe that God's power was truly present at Purdue to enable man's power to bear fruit there for the Kingdom

The end of *Methodist Layman*

In the July, 1964, edition of the *Methodist Layman*, Mayfield announced the discontinuation of the publication.

"In view of the establishment of two new church-wide publications, *Together* and *The Methodist Story*, there does not now appear to be the need for our magazine that there was at the time of its inception," wrote Mayfield.

In his last editorial, Cryer, a graduate of Vanderbilt Divinity School, wrote, "With this issue, *Methodist Layman* comes to an end, and for the time being The Methodist Church will have one less voice for the

laity. Thus a magazine whose roots go back 40 years reaches the end of another phase in the history of communication to laymen." Cryer said the Board of Lay Activities would replace the magazine with orientation materials, program guides, and newsletters. Having served as managing editor of the *Daily Christian Advocate* for three General Conference sessions, he noted other Methodist periodicals would pick up the major concerns of the *Methodist Layman*.

Other church-wide publications

Cryer went on to serve as a contributing editor of the Chicago-based *Together* magazine, published by the Methodist Publishing House. Leland Case was the editor of that publication that was sent to more than 1 million families, most of whom received the monthly magazine as part of an "All Church" plan in which churches put the magazine into their budgets and every church family received a copy. Each episcopal area prepared a 4-page newsletter that was inserted into the magazine.

Together was discontinued in 1973, after it dropped its area news inserts. Churches dropped the magazine from their budgets and conferences created separate news publications. *The Texas Reporter* began introducing conference editions and changed its name to the *United Methodist Reporter*

Together and the *Christian Advocate*, a magazine sent free to clergy, were replaced by *Today* magazine and *Today's Ministry*, a section for clergy in the back pages of *Today*. Within two years, those publications were replaced by *Circuit Rider* and *Newscope*. The Rev. Rich Peck, former associate editor of *Today* and *Today's Ministry*, was later named editor of both new publications.

News of UM Men was included in several of these general church and conference newsletters, but there was no

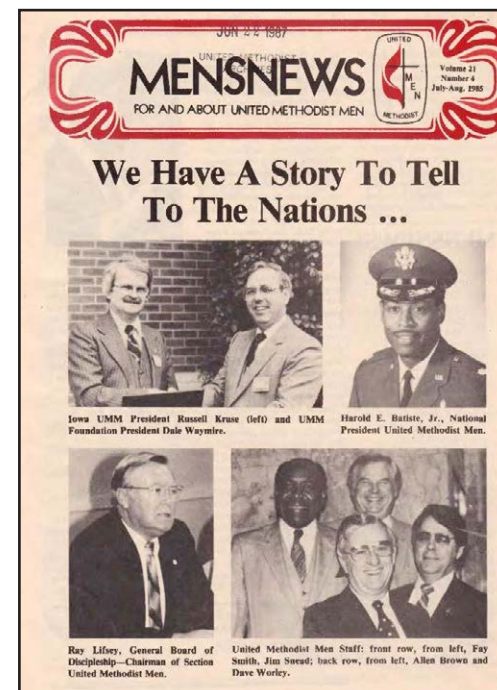
magazine that focused exclusively on men's ministry.

Men's ministry in the United Methodist Church

Interest in men's ministry was reduced following the 1968 merger of the Evangelical United Brethren Church with the Methodist Church to form the United Methodist Church.

The 1972 General Conference created the General Board of Discipleship and placed United Methodist Men as a unit within the Nashville-based agency.

During the 24 years under the umbrella of the General Board of Discipleship, UM Men were shuffled around during several restructurings. In 1976, UM Men were moved to a section of Lay Life and Work;



A 1985 edition of Mensnews includes photos of Dale Waymire, president of the UMM Foundation; Harold Batiste, president of the National Association of Conference Presidents; Roy Lifsey, chair of the General Section on UM Men of the General Board of Discipleship; and UMM staff members: Fay Smith, Jim Snead, Allen Brown and Dave Worley.

in 1980, UM Men were listed as one of 12 program sections; and in 1993, the board made UM Men into part of the Laity in Ministry “stream.”

During the 24-year stint within the Discipleship Board, UM Men offered “Mensnews” a quarterly newsletter, program information, Scouting and Men’s Ministry *Guidelines*, scouting news, and “Tacklebox,” a publication that listed ordering information for books, shirts, hats, jackets and other items supporting men’s ministry.

Generally dissatisfied with the lack of independence and visibility within the Board of Discipleship, UM Men asked the 1996 General Conference to create a General Commission on UM Men. Delegates to the 10-day meeting in Denver approved that request.

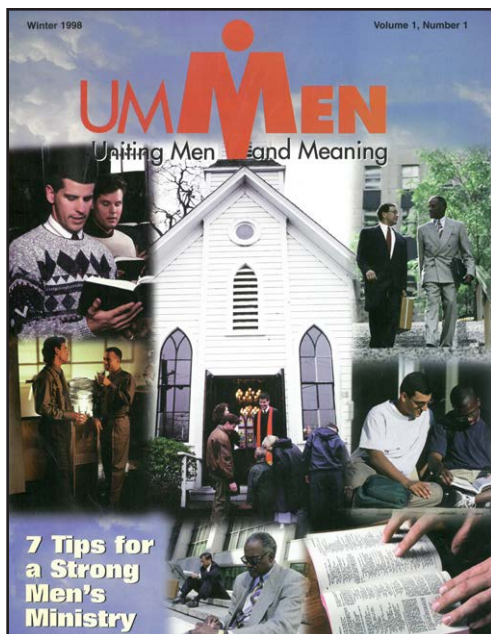
In 1997, Dr. Joseph L. Harris, a district superintendent in the Oklahoma Conference, was elected general secretary of the new commission. Larry Malone was named director of men’s ministry, and Larry Coppock was named director of youth-serving ministries.

New magazine

In 1998, the commission published *UM Men: Uniting Men and Meaning*, a standard size, full color quarterly magazine for UM men. Malone served as editor of the 24-page magazine.

“Welcome to the first step of a long journey,” wrote Harris in the first issue. “The purpose of the quarterly magazine is to inspire, instruct and inform men to become spiritual leaders in their homes, churches, and communities.”

In 2002, the magazine changed from



The first issue of UM Men published in 1998 as a standard size quarterly magazine.

the standard size to a digest-size quarterly publication. Dr. Kwasi Kena, a D.Min graduate of United Theological Seminary, served as editor of the 28-page magazine.

In 2005, Kena accepted the position of director of evangelism ministries at the General Board of Discipleship, and Peck, former associate editor of *International Christian Digest*, and the *Daily Christian Advocate*, assumed editorship of the 42-page quarterly magazine.

Ninety-three years after George Morelock launched a magazine underscoring the importance of men’s ministry, his legacy continues of the guidance of Gilbert C. Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men and publisher of *UM Men* magazine. 



HOUSTON, Texas— Churches respond to Hurricane Harvey

Hurricane Harvey displaced more than 30,000 people, and prompted more than 17,000 rescues. UM churches opened their buildings to flood evacuees while members helped people get out of their flooded homes.

In the days following the Aug. 24-28 storm, volunteers mucked out houses, carried damaged furniture to the curbs, and removed damaged Sheetrock.

“Harvey has been an equal-opportunity destroyer,” said the Rev. Kirbyjon Caldwell, pastor of Windsor Village UMC in Houston. His church became an overnight shelter and provided clothing and personal hygiene articles to evacuees.

The Rev. John Mooney of First UMC in Vidor, Texas, opened the church gym on Aug. 29. When that filled, he opened the sanctuary. In spite of the fact the church lost electrical power, some 150 people, including babies and toddlers, sheltered there.



Volunteers from Houston’s Bear Creek UMC used boats to help residents evacuate from Tropical Storm Harvey’s rising floodwaters. Photo by Michele Sibley, courtesy Bear Creek UMC.

The UMC in Buna took in 45 flood evacuees.

Faithbridge Church, at its campus Spring, Texas, provided overnight accommodations and became a rest station for police and other emergency personnel. “This is why we’re here,” said the Rev. Ken-

neth Werlein, senior pastor.

Members of Christ UMC in Sugar Land helped the family of a staff member evacuate their home by boat.

Members of Chapelwood UMC provided a boat to help Dorothy Baker, 92, evacuate her home. On the following days, the team used crowbars and power tools to pull out ruined Sheetrock. A

couple of streets away, another Chapelwood team mucked out another home.

Members of Westbury UMC also mucked out houses, distributed supplies to victims, and provided supervised care for children.

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla.—

Churches aid neighbors

Hurricane Irma caused at least 81 deaths, including 43 in the Caribbean and 38 in the U.S.

On Sept. 10, the storm made landfall in the Florida Keys with winds of 130 mph and then continued up through Florida into neighboring states.



Floodwaters surround First UMC in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Photo courtesy of First UMC.

Florida Area Bishop Kenneth H. Carter Jr. and a conference assessment team made a 325-mile roundtrip across the peninsula of Florida on Sept. 13 to pray with residents and listen to stories of survival and loss from Hurricane Irma.

“We heard testimonies of broken people who are already feeding hundreds in their communities. At times, it was honest and raw. At times it was healing and almost hopeful,” Carter said.

Suntree UMC in Melbourne, Fla., loaded up a 20-foot truck to send to Big Pine Key and Key West UM churches. The Revs. John and Terri Hill, who lead those churches, are former pastors of Suntree.

WISNER, Neb —

Bike riders raise funds to feed the hungry

For 22 years, some 150 UM cyclists have engaged in a four-day bike ride around Nebraska in order to raise funds for the Society of St. Andrew.

Last June, riders pedaled some 250 miles in a circle route. They made overnight stops at campgrounds in Wisner, Albion, Plainview, and Ponca.

Local churches provided riders with dinners and breakfasts.

Each year since 1996, the Rev. Bill Ritter and Greg Bakewell have coordinated the rides, raising a total of \$854,000.

Ritter is superintendent of the Great Plains Blue River District.

The two bike riders met while they waited out a rainstorm in a hog barn during a 1995 bike ride in northern Nebraska.

CONROE, Texas—

Boy Scouts to the rescue

The Rev. Scott Moore, director of missional excellence for Texas Conference, wanted to deliver 20 pallets of water to flooded neighborhoods in Beaumont, 120 miles away.

To his surprise, a Boy Scout troop showed up at the mission center to help unload the water and verify hygiene kits. However, they were not the answer to flooded roads that prohibited the delivery of supplies by truck.

The following day, a Boy Scout leader told Scott about an Army Reserve Black-



Bill Ritter, one of the originators of the Nebraska bike ride.

hawk helicopter that could fly supplies into Beaumont.

Fourteen pallets of water were loaded onto a truck for the North Houston Regional Airport in Conroe, and then transferred to a helicopter for delivery to Beaumont.



The Rev. Scott Moore uses a forklift to load pallets of water on a truck for delivery to a Conroe airport. Photo by Brant Mills, courtesy of the Texas Conference.

ATHENS, Ga.—

Volunteers introduce scouting to 13 churches

Thirteen churches in the North Georgia Conference are creating new Scout units or introducing PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) programs as the result of conversations with Scout leaders at an annual conference display table.



North Georgia Scout leaders huddle for a photo following a session of the North Georgia Annual Conference. From left: Chris Karabinos, Bill Swilley, Steven Fitz, Brad Ripple and Jerry Stillabower.

FORT KNOX, Ky.—

Chaplains receive devotional books

St. Louis-based World Wide Technology purchased copies of *Strength for Service to God and Country* for the 84th Training Command.



Col. David Hunter (right), command chaplain of the 84th Training Command, presents a *Strength for Service* book to Chaplain Robert Lewis, deputy chaplain.

DILLON, S.C.—

Golf tourney raises \$20K for disaster relief

Every year, men of Main Street UMC conduct a golf tournament to raise funds for the Red Cross. In 2017, 80 golfers raised \$20,000 for the agency.



Golfers gather prior to the 2017 tourney

BLUEFIELD, W.Va.—

Pastor provides devotional books to police officers

The Rev. Greg Godwin, pastor of First UMC in Clarksburg, W.Va., presented 32 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to members of the Bluefield Police Department.

The department was in mourning following the death of Lieutenant Aaron Crook. The nine-year veteran officer died in a crash during the pursuit of a DUI suspect. Aaron is survived by his wife and two children.

Bluefield Police Chief Dennis Dillow expressed appreciation to the Strength for Service organization for its support during the tragic loss.

Godwin also distributed books to first responders in Clarksburg during a First UMC service to honor the community servants.



The Rev. Greg Godwin, a member of UM Scouting Ministry Committee, presents books of daily devotions to police officers in Bluefield, W.Va. From left: Godwin, Lieutenant J.C. Whitt, Dillow, Lieutenant J.D. Vance, and Army Lieutenant Keven Hazuka, a member of Godwin's church and a former member of the Bluefield Police Department now on duty at the Bridgeport Airport.

**ROCK HILL, S.C.—
Men learn tenets of Knight's Code**

Robert Noland, author of the *Knights' Code*, told 35 men from the Rock Hill and Hartsville districts about the four tenets of King Arthur's code: Live pure; speak true; right wrongs; and follow the king.



Robert Noland describes the tenets of King Arthur's code as described by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

**SWANSEA, S.C.—
Men provide scholarships**

For the past eight years, men of Swansea Community UMC have presented high school graduates with checks to help fund college expenses.



Sammy Fogle, president of the Swansea Community UMC Men, presents a \$500 check to Kayla Nelums, a 2017 graduate of Swansea High School. Photo courtesy of Joe Riley.

**RICHMOND, Va.—
Conference men gather at college**

Sixty-three men from the Virginia Annual Conference met at Randolph-Macon College to hear the Rev. Max Blalock. "Max kept men on the edge of their chairs hanging onto his every word as he skillfully blended real-life experiences with topics that embraced love, joy, and the Holy Spirit," said Andrew Kissell, president of Virginia Conference UM Men.



Men meet in small groups to discuss insights offered by the Rev. Max Blalock.

**BLUFFTON, S.C.—
Black and white congregations picnic together**

Following demonstrations by white supremacists and neo Nazis at a statue of Jefferson Davis in Charlottesville, members of St. Andrew By-The-Sea UMC, a

predominantly white church, gathered for a picnic in Bluffton with members of the predominantly black First Zion Missionary Baptist Church. They used the picnic as an opportunity to grow closer as a community and show others what it looks like to live a life of faith together.



White and Black church members demonstrate how to live together in harmony following a rally where a speeding car rammed into the crowd of anti-racism protestors, killing one woman and injuring many others. Two police officers also lost their lives. Photo by Phyllis Brodie.

**HARRISONBURG, Va.—
Men present 52 devotional books to police officers**

The Otterbein UM Men used a portion of the profits from a spaghetti supper to purchase 52 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* for members of the Harrisonburg Police Department.



Harrisonburg, Va. Police Chaplain Tom Murphy (center) presents *Strength for Service* books to Police Lieutenant R. D. Knott. Bill Pollard represents Otterbein UM Men.

**HOLDEN, La.—
Men build handicap ramp**

Men of First UMC in Denham Springs built a 32-foot ramp that would ease the wheel chair entry for 12-year-old Connor Redden.

Connor was born with spina bifida, a birth defect in which a developing baby's spinal cord fails to develop properly.

Collections during two Sunday services at First UMC in Denham Springs raised some \$2,000 to pay for supplies.



Men of First UMC in Denham Springs put in 55 hours to complete the ramp for Conner



Conner is joined on the new ramp by his mother, grandmother, and members of the construction team.

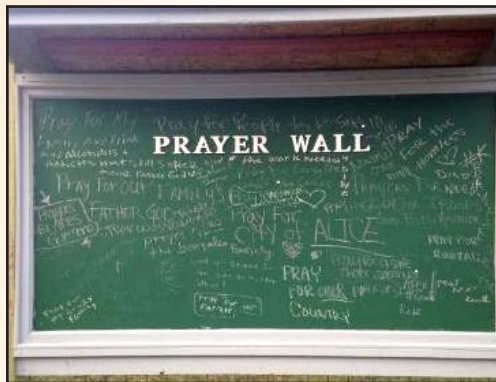
**ALICE, Texas —
Men establish community prayer wall**

"It's only a 4 x 8 inch piece of plywood with a little roof to protect the surface, but what a difference it's made," said

Jim Callaway, a leader of UM Men at First UMC. "We put it up across the street from the main entrance to the Post Office."

The men say they stole the idea from The First UMC of La Feria, Texas, and they made a portable prayer wall to place beside their booth at the county fair.

"Just one word of warning," said Callaway, "some of the prayers are emotionally moving, some are sad and some are up lifting."



People write prayer requests on the prayer wall. The prayers are reprinted in the church bulletin of First UMC in Alice, Texas.

**AURORA, Ill.—
Chalk it up to heaven**

The Rev. John Bell, pastor of Wesley UMC, invited the public to chalk prayers on church sidewalks during the month of August.



Pastor John Bell chinks a prayer on a sidewalk at Wesley UMC. He invites the public to add chalk prayers during an August "Sidewalk Chalk Prayer Walk." Chalk is provided at six stations. Al Benson photo.

**PLANO, Texas—
Church sends 346 devotional books to military base**

Members of St. Andrew UMC purchased 346 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Country* for troops based at Fort Sam Houston.

Air Force Col. Jimmy Brown, senior chaplain, distributed the books at the San Antonio base. "Please convey our deepest appreciation to St. Andrew UMC," said Chaplain Brown.



Mike Kelley and Dr. Robert Hasley, pastor of St. Andrew UMC, boost efforts to provide *Strength for Service* books for troops at Fort Sam Houston, "home of the combat medic."

**STANLEY, N.C.—
Scout builds church gateway**

For his Eagle project, Dominic Rocco, a life Scout with First UMC Stanley N.C., built a gateway and a path for Mt. Pleasant UMC.



Dominic Rocco cuts the ribbon at the dedication of the new gateway.

**LANCASTER, S.C.—
Men renovate basketball court**

Hopewell UM Men, Lancaster, unveiled their newly renovated basketball court during this year's vacation Bible school. The men also created a shuffleboard court and a nine-square court for the church.



VBS volunteers play a friendly game of full-court basketball with the youth.

**CHESTERTON, Ind.—
Men thank first responders**

Men of Chesterton UMC provided breakfasts and presented *Strength for Service* books to police and fire fighters in 2015 and 2016. In 2017, they visited the first responders to thank them for their service.



From left: Greg Schoeneck, president of Chesterton UM Men, presents devotional books to Police Officers K. Bruning and D. Virijevich. Terry Rhine and Ken Keller are part of the UMM team expressing appreciation to the police officers.

**HUNTSVILLE, Ala.—
Church celebrates Men's Ministry Day**

"Let God's Light Shine on You" was the theme for the 25th annual Men's Ministry Day at Lowe's Chapel.



Robbie Wiley (back row second from left) president of UM Men of Lowe's Chapel, organized all 25 annual Men's Ministry Days at the Huntsville church. The Rev. Waymond Smith, pastor of Lowe's Chapel, is to the right of Robbie.

**WESTON, W.Va.—
Men and Scouts gather**

UM Men of the West Virginia Annual Conference sponsored the 29th Annual "Circuit Rider" September weekend.

More than 400 Scouts and leaders gathered at Jackson's Mill where UM Men served the Saturday meal. The evening concluded with a campfire.

The men and boys gathered again on Sunday morning for a Communion service.

Dressed as Francis Asbury, West Virginia Southern District Superintendent Joe Kenaston delivered the meditation.



Scouts gather for flag raising.



Bishop Steiner Ball and Rick Vance serve hamburgers and beans to 400 Scouts and UM Men at the Jackson's Mill campout.

**WEST COVINA, Calif.—
Troop receives Bishop's Award**

West Covina UMC hosts a Cub Scout pack, a Boy Scout troop and a Venturing crew. California Pacific Bishop Grant Hagiya presented the church with the Bishop's Award of Excellence

Scouts engage in a series of mission projects including cleaning the church, Crop Walk, Walk for the Hungry, Ash Wednesday traffic control, Relay for Life, Scouting for Food, conservation projects, a toy drive for children and Earth Day at the parks.



Members of Troop 724 prepare meals at West Covina UMC.

**SELLERS, S.C.—
Men replace bathroom**

UM Men in the Greenwood District built a complete bathroom for Allen James of Sellers, S.C.

They also redid his kitchen by adding a full stove and refrigerator and by replacing damaged cabinets.



UM Men repair the porch of Allen James.

Allen's home was damaged by an October, 2016, hurricane. In spring, 2017, the Rev. Mike Evans and Matt Brodie organized a team of UM men from several churches to restore Allen's home. Photo by Carolyn Cantrell, South Carolina Conference.

**DENHAM SPRINGS, La.—
Ramp moved from trailer to trailer**

Miss Howell, a person with pulmonary problems, was living in a FEMA trailer after a 2016 flood destroyed her home. When FEMA wanted their trailer returned, Miss Howell purchased a new trailer and located it at the back of her property.

Eight men of First UMC modified the ramp from the FEMA trailer to fit her new trailer and repositioned a carport.



Men of First UMC in Denham Springs modify ramp for Miss Howell's new trailer.

**ROCKVILLE, Md.—
UM Men raise more than \$50,000 for wounded golfers**

Oakdale UM Men has raised more than \$50,000 in the past 10 years for "Salute Military Golf Association," a national organization that has served more than 2,000 wounded veterans and provided more than 1,500 custom fitted golf clubs since 2008

Oakdale men support this ministry and many others by providing free all-you-can-eat fundraising breakfasts on the first Saturday of each month to 150 or more



Oakdale UM Men support the "Salute Military Golf Association," a national organization that conducts some 80 annual golf clinics for wounded veterans.

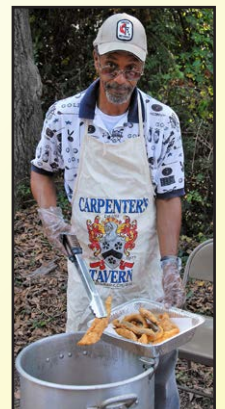
people. Ray Johnson, past president of the organization and editor of their newsletter, says the key to these fund-raising breakfasts is to invite free-will offerings rather than charging \$6. Also, each breakfast is dedicated to a specific mission so people know exactly where their donations are going. "Over the past 10 years we have raised well over \$150,000 for various mission projects," said Ray. He noted that recipient organizations are also invited to provide volunteer cooks and servers for the breakfasts, so they have a vested interest in their support.

In October, some 250 people enjoyed a breakfast that provided \$8,500 for the "Andrew Gallup Special Needs Trust."

**FLORENCE, S.C.
Men serve 400 meals**

Men of Cumberland UMC served 400 meals at an annual September community fish fry.

Wallace Felder cooks fish for the people of Florence, S.C. Photo by Milton Phillips.



Larry Coppock named top executive of SFS Corporation

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

Larry Coppock, director of scouting and youth-serving agencies for the General Commission on UM Men, will retire from that position on June 1, 2018, to become executive director of the Strength for Service (SFS) Corporation.

Meeting at the commission office, Sept. 29-30, the 12-member SFS Board of Directors, voted to remove the word “acting” from Larry’s present title as “acting executive director.”

The 20-year veteran Scout leader has been involved in providing *Strength for Service* books since 1999. That’s the year Evan Hunsberger first conceived of the idea of republishing *Strength for Service to God and Country*, a book of daily devotions created for military troops in 1942 by the Methodist Publishing House.

Evan, a 17-year-old Roman Catholic Boy Scout, proposed republishing the historic book as his Eagle Scout project.

It was natural for the leader of scouting in the UMC to help the Eagle Scout candidate republish a Methodist book. Larry became the point person in securing rights from the UM Publishing House, securing the support of the Defense Department, adding 40 devotions from current religious leader, and raising funds for the republishing effort. In 2013, Larry was also instrumental in editing and publishing *Strength for Service to God and Community*, a similar book written for police officers, fire fighters and other first responders.

In 2014, the commission created the SFS Corporation, a non-denominational 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. L.W. Smith, a South Carolina leader of UM Men, was elected president, and Larry was named “acting executive director,” a post he held along with his chief responsibilities as



Larry Coppock

leader of scouting ministries in the UMC.


“The United Methodist Church in second largest sponsoring organization for Boy Scouts in the world, and we are number one in Cub Scouts,” said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the commission. “There is one simple reason for that ranking. For the last 20 years, Larry has begun each and every day working to expand our scouting ministry. He has done an outstanding job, and has been a great member of our team, working with scouting ministry on a national level with all our scouting partners, and the UMM Foundation and with SFS.”

SFS is thankful and blessed to have Larry serve as executive director,” said L.W. Smith. “His love and commitment to this ministry will help us fulfill our purpose to distribute devotional books to the military and first responders.”

Addressing his experience with the

commission, Larry says, “It has been my great honor to serve as director of scouting ministries for the commission for more than 20 years, I have been blessed beyond my expectations. I have met some of the most awesome volunteer servant leaders. We have moved scouting ministry forward in partnership fashion. I shall cherish these special relationships for as long as I live.

Looking forward to his role as executive

director of the SFS Corporation, Larry says, “With the advent of SFS many years ago, I feel a stronger call to that ministry which has its roots in scouting. I look forward to serving as executive director alongside board members, an advisory group, and many donors and friends to better position SFS in its mission to resource first responders and military with devotional material.” 

Devotional books sent following death of three Boy Scouts

HALLSVILLE, Texas—


The Strength for Service organization rushed 52 copies of the Boy Scout edition of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to the troop that lost three Boy Scouts when their sail boat hit a power line at Lake O’ the Pines on Saturday, August 5.

Three boys were on a catamaran when the 30-foot mast hit a power line. The voltage immediately killed Will Brannon, 17, and Heath Fauchaux, 16.

Thomas Larry, 11 was thrown from the

boat where he was rescued by troop leaders. He was airlifted to the Louisiana State University Medical Center, where he died on Monday, Aug. 7.

The boys were members of Troop 620, chartered by Winterfield UMC. David Perkins serves as charter organization representative. He and his wife, Glenda, coordinated book distributions.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott called the boating accident a “terrible tragedy” and said his “thoughts and prayers go out to the Boy Scouts and their families.” 



More than 300 people gathered at a Hallsville park for a vigil honoring the Scouts.

Photo by Les Hassell/Longview News-Journal.

How to deal with anger

By Jane Ives

I grew up in a home where anger was denied, suppressed, and sometimes punished. Not surprisingly, I came to believe that nice people—and especially Christians—don't get angry. This mistaken assumption caused tension in my marriage and with my children because, when I became upset, I would blame someone else.

When overcome by strong feelings, unable to articulate my feelings and needs, I slammed cupboard doors. My husband, also uncomfortable with strong feelings and conflict, would disappear, finding something to do elsewhere in the house or outdoors.


When we attended our first Marriage Enrichment event and learned about feelings, I was shocked to discover that anger, in fact, is an important and helpful clue that something needs attention. Marshall Rosenberg, founder of the Center for Nonviolent Communication, likens anger to the red light on the dashboard of your car. He provides strategies to discover what is behind that "red light" and give it the attention it needs.

The trick, of course, is to express anger in a way that others can hear, without driving them away or triggering their defensiveness. That requires self-awareness enough

to figure out what sparked the anger and what unmet needs are in play.

Through our ongoing involvement with Marriage Enrichment, parenting education, and other forms of relationship education, we have learned to own and state our feelings with "I" messages and to listen to each other with empathy and a desire to understand.

We have learned to resist the temptation to make the other person wrong, accepting the fact that we are two different people with our own unique perceptions, desires, and beliefs.

David and Vera Mace, founders of the marriage enrichment program in which we participated and trained, offered a model for couples to use in dealing with their anger. Instead of trying to justify angry feelings by pointing out the failings of the other person, one can simply say, "I am feeling angry. Would you be willing to help me sort out why and help me resolve it?" Or the other person might say, "You seem upset. Tell me about it." 



Jane P. Ives is a UM marriage and family ministries consultant.



Pride and prejudice

By Tom Tozer and Bill Black

In the 1813 novel by Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, two lovers overcome their own shortcomings to come together. We wanted to take a closer look at the tendency to let our pride misdirect us and our prejudice blind us.

Current events cause us to reflect on how we treat others and what that says about the values we hold and teach our children.

Our chameleon selves

Often, our pride keeps us from admitting mistakes in judgment. Our prejudices are often thinly veiled; yet many of us reveal them by what we say or do.

We were jarred by devastating storms in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico. At the same time, we witnessed many stories of human compassion and kindness—people risking safety to rescue neighbors and complete strangers. This juxtaposition—hostility in segments of society and genuine caring in times of trouble—cause us to think about the values we want to teach our children.

The real us


We want to think that the examples of brotherhood and sisterhood are the real America—people reaching out to each other regardless of race, status or religion. A foregoing of pride—a release of prejudice. It's what we hear in the great religions—love one another. Too often we do not conduct ourselves by that precept.

Concern for social connections, status, and reputation in Jane Austen's novel created impediments to the true love of Elizabeth and Darcy. But once they were able to recognize the obstructions, they rose above their pride and prejudice to value each other and see the beautiful person inside.

The other us

Often we make judgments about people we hardly know. Princeton psychologists Janine Willis and Alexander Todorov show it takes a tenth of a second to form an impression of a stranger. We tend to make those same snap judgments based on race, religion, job, residence, or possessions. We can choose to ignore the mistreatment of others by believing they are different from us. But by making that choice, it is our own humanity that is diminished.

The totality of us

How do we teach our children to respect others? How do we learn to treat others, not as "others," but as ourselves? As in *Pride and Prejudice*, we need to examine our own shortcomings and be sensitive to others who don't look, believe or live like us. We need to talk about this with our children, again and again and again. By doing this, we will open their minds to the totality of humanity—not just our small corner of it. We will plant a value that could change lives. 

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Thank you and God bless!

Tom and Bill

In Memoriam

Ron Sarver

LAFAYETTE, La.—

Ron Sarver, former vice president of the RUM Men Foundation, former president of Louisiana Conference UM Men, former member of the General Commission on UM Men, and former president of South Central Jurisdiction UM Men, died October 18.

A men's ministry specialist and district lay leader, Ron worked with churches in the Acadiana and Lake Charles Districts to create a pastors' appreciation dinner, provide training in "Understanding Men's Ministry," and strengthen their scouting ministries. He served his local church as an adviser to the pastor, a member of the choir, a Sunday morning greeter and a member of the Ministry Team.

"I first became active in UM Men in 1968 at the age 26 when an older man of Asbury UMC in Lafayette invited me to go on a retreat," said Ron in a 2006 article in *UM Men* magazine. "That man mentored me into leadership in the church."

"Ron was a leader and friend to me in our various roles with men's ministry in the South Central Jurisdiction, the commission and the UM Men Foundation," said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men. "For several years we purposely miss-spelled 'men's ministry' as 'men's menistry'—I believe at his suggestion. Sher and I were honored to have Ron as an unexpected houseguest when a late snow cancelled his flight. From an early training held at the BSA headquarters in Irving, to his continued work

in spite of his illness to bring men of all ages to Christ, Ron was the model of a servant leader."

"Ron Sarver was the epitome of a servant leader," said Larry Coppock, director of scouting ministries for the commission. "When the UM Men Foundation and the commission were pondering ways to generate new operating funds in 2005, Ron came up with an idea of 'Legacy Builders'. He not only leaves a legacy of giving faithfully of his time, but he crafted a philanthropic plan that lives on. God rest his soul."

A graduate of the University of Southwestern Louisiana (B.S., agricultural engineering) and Louisiana State University (M.S. agricultural engineering), Ron owned an engineering firm for 35 years prior to selling it to a younger associate.

In the 2006 magazine article, Ron encouraged older men to mentor younger men. "After you have planted the seed to these young lives it is a simple task to ask for the commitment to discipleship. They will respond."

Ron was a living example of that principle.



Ron Sarver



Ken Tielke

Ken Tielke

RICHMOND, Texas—

Ken Tielke, past president of the South Central Jurisdiction of UM Men and a member of the General Commission on United Methodist Men Board of Directors, died Oct. 16 following a more than five-year battle with cancer.

In a September 2017 resignation letter to officers of UM Men (UMM), Ken wrote, "The battle is just about over. At this stage, I can no longer travel or be effective in any way that is required of the position of president. It has been an honor to represent the South Central Jurisdiction and the Texas Conference for the past 15-plus years."

Even while under hospice care, Ken continued serving as treasurer of the National Association of Conference Presidents. He assured other officers that Dan Ramsey, former NACP president, "has signature and full access rights to the NACP accounts, so we are covered."

Ken also said he would continue working with Dan to restart the UMM organization in the Texas Conference.

"I am still very active in my local church

UMM and plan to continue as long as God needs me to serve," wrote Ken. "I will continue taking part in our Wesleyan Building Brothers Zoom conferences on Thursday evenings. And, finally, I do plan to continue serving my conference as a men's ministry specialist as best I can, wherever I am called."

Ken did not know the meaning of quit.

Gil Hanke, top staff director of the General Commission on UMM, said, "Ken loved this church and loved to see men who were actively growing in their walk with Christ. He was a good friend who was an important part of team that worked with

me when I served as the Texas Conference UMM president, and was there for each president who followed. In spite of pain and discomfort, Ken gracefully chaired a meeting of the UMM during the Texas Annual Conference 2017 session to select an interim president to re-start the conference UMM. In the last few months, he has carefully handed off each responsibility he held, so that the work of the jurisdiction, the conference, the commission, and his local church would continue after his death."

New presidents elected in five conferences

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

Five annual conferences now have new presidents of UM Men as the result of a "re-start" effort by staff and officers of the General Commission on UM Men.

Bishop James Swanson, president of the commission, and Bishop Gary Mueller, vice president, wrote letters to bishops of 18 targeted conferences and offered assistance in starting or restarting conference organizations.

Gil Hanke, top executive of the commission, noted that new conference presidents are now in place in Kentucky, Susquehanna,

Oklahoma Indian Missionary, Wisconsin, and Desert Southwest annual conferences. He hastened to note that there are active units in annual conferences without functioning annual conference organizations. For example, in 2016, the winner of the best local church unit was in the Desert Southwest Conference which at the time did not have a functioning conference organization of UM Men.

The effort to revitalize men's ministry in annual conferences is supported by 38 men's ministry specialists and 350 scouting ministry specialists.

UM Men to provide free smoke alarms in April

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

The General Commission on UM Men agreed to participate in “Sound the Alarm,” a Red Cross effort to provide free smoke alarms in high-risk areas across the U.S.

Original plans called for the effort to begin shortly after the commission’s August meeting. However, because of the unprecedented humanitarian need caused by the hurricanes in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico, the Red Cross rescheduled the campaign for April.

Noting that seven people die every day from home fires, the 20-member board of directors, agreed to ask units of UM Men across the nation to join the effort to provide 100,000 free smoke alarms in high-risk neighborhoods.

Each year, the Red Cross responds to nearly 64,000 disasters, the vast majority of which are home fires. So the agency set a goal to reduce fire-related deaths and injuries in the US by 25 percent by 2020.

Red Cross trains volunteers about where and how to install the smoke detectors, and local



UM Men install free smoke alarms in high risk areas.

UM churches frequently provide space for that training. For information visit <https://www.redcross.org/sound-the-alarm>

Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the commission, said the nation-wide effort provides opportunities for UM Men to become better acquainted with their neighbors. He suggests men should return to the same homes in April 2019, to install new batteries.

The year 2017 by the numbers

- 15 UM clergy served as chaplains for the National BSA Jamboree
- 16 Bishop’s Awards of Excellence presented to Scout troops
- 18 Hunger relief advocates
- 19 Organizations granted affiliate or endorsed relationship with GCUMM
- 25 Scout leaders trained the Florida Sea Base
- 35 Volunteers operated the UM exhibit at the National Scout Jamboree
- 38 Men certified as men’s ministry specialists
- 54 Young people received Good Samaritan Awards
- 100 Conference presidents and prayer advocates trained face to face
- 220 Small group e-meetings conducted from the GCUMM office
- 175 Adult leaders received Cross and Flame Awards
- 354 People certified as scouting ministry specialists
- 630 Number of people registered for National Gathering
- 3,534 Chartered groups of UM Men
- 4,874 PRAY awards given through UM churches
- 6,500 Churches with scouting units
- 10,131 Scouting units in UM churches
- 25,000 New Testaments with Psalms given to Scouts at high adventure centers
- 26,756 Dollars contributed to the Upper Room Prayer Line
- 40,000 Copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* distributed
- 167,000 Dollars provided by UM Men to Meals for Millions
- 264,940 Prayer requests received by the Upper Room Prayer Line
- 327,405 Youth served by scouting units in UM churches
- 874,307 Pounds of food given to food banks by Society of St. Andrew
- 530,000 *Strength for Service* books printed for military troops since 2000
- 6,400,000 Servings of food provided by UM Men through Meals for Millions

UM Men Awards

Gaylen Lael Custodian serves as membership secretary

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—

Ron Edwards, president of UM Men of Asbury UMC, presented Gaylen Lael with a Life Membership Award for his service as church custodian and membership secretary of UM Men.



From left: Ron Edwards, Gaylen Lael and the Rev. William Burton, pastor of Asbury UMC.

David Sheely Men honor secretary

NORMAN, Okla.—

UM men of McFarlin UMC presented David Sheely with a Life Membership Award for his service as secretary of the UM

Men Leadership Team and his faithful participation in monthly meetings, work projects, and other activities.

He is the seventh member of the group to receive the honor.



Rod Foster (left) presents a Life Membership Award to David Sheely during an Administrative Board meeting at McFarlin Memorial UMC.

Judy Lambert Men honor chair of church council

ELLOREE, S.C.—

Men of Elloree UMC presented the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence to Judy Lambert.



Warren Lambert joins his wife Judy following the award presentation. The couple have been married for 53 years, and they have two grown children.

Judy served in various leadership positions at Elloree UMC for the past 53 years. She served as chair of the Church Council for 15 years. She is also the lay leader and lay member of the South Carolina Annual Conference.

Mark Giles Passion for service is contagious

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.—

In 2012, men of Middlebrook Pike UMC rarely met, and they provided no services to the church or community.

Mark Giles decided to do something about that. He recruited new members, reinstated regular meetings, elected officers, and chartered the organization. Membership grew from 8 to 35.

“Mark’s passion for service and ministry is contagious and inspiring,” says Ralph Skinner Jr., district president of UM Men. Under Mark’s leadership, the men helped build a Habitat House, provided refreshments for a Christmas party for special-needs children, provided free hotdogs for the church’s Halloween “Trunk or Treat” event, maintained church grounds, and supported Boy Scouts.

**Albert Hines and Jay Knotts
Oldest and youngest honored**

SALEM, S.C.—

Salem UM Men honored their oldest and youngest members during their annual Father's/Men's Day program

Henry Bailey presented UMM Treasurer Albert Hines Sr., 86, a plaque as the oldest member, and he gave Jay Knotts, 17, a Life Membership Award.



Henry Bailey presents a Life Membership Award to Jay Knotts.

**Carter Knapp
Scout receives scholarship**

Chestnut Memorial UM Men gave Carter Knapp the Tommy Jobe Memorial Scholarship and presented him with a Good Samaritan Award.

Carter helps young Scouts meet their advancement requirements, and his Eagle project provided the church with new signs for the parking lot. He participates in mission trips, serves meals to the homeless, and serves as a church usher.

**Russ Moore
Men honor founder**

HAMILTON, Ohio—

Men of Lindenwald UMC presented Russ Moore with a Life Membership Award as one of four men that started the local chapter of UM Men. The other three have passed on.

The four men attended the July 1977 UM Men's Congress at Purdue University. They came back inspired and formed the local group. In May, 1978, Jim Snead, national director of UM Men, came from Nashville to present the group with their charter.

They soon began operating a remote line with the "Upper Room Prayer Line," a min-

istry still coordinated by Russ.

"Russ is our treasurer and leads devotions at our monthly meetings," says Ray Kissingner, president of UM Men. He is also the church's head usher, a van attendant, a participant in Sunday school and Bible study, and leader of a monthly "Prayer Drive-Thru" event.

**The Rev. Dr. Scott Pickering
Pastor inducted into
John Wesley Society**

NEWNAN, Ga.—

In October, Scott Pickering, pastor of Cornerstone UMC and a member of the General Commission on UM Men board of directors, became a fellow in the John Wesley Society.

A graduate of Georgia Southern University (B.S.) and Candler School of Theology (Th.M.), Scott received a doctor of ministry degree from Wesley Theological Seminary in 2015.



The Rev. Dr. Scott Pickering

The Eagle Scout has taught PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) classes at the four churches he served prior to his 2017 appointment to Cornerstone UMC.

Scott served as shows director for 11 National Order of the Arrow Conferences and he attended four National Boy Scout Jamborees.

He received the Gold Congressional Medal during a 1998 ceremony in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.

BSA expands programs to include girls

IRVING, Texas—

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Board of Directors unanimously approved to welcoming girls into its Cub Scout program and to deliver a program that will allow girls to advance to the rank of Eagle.

"This decision is true to the BSA's mission and core values outlined in the Scout Oath and Law," said Michael Surbaugh, the BSA's Chief Scout Executive. "The values of scouting – trustworthy, loyal, helpful, kind, brave and reverent, for

example – are important for both young men and women."

He noted Hispanic and Asian communities prefer to participate in activities as a family. Recent surveys of parents not involved with scouting showed high interest in getting their daughters signed up for programs like Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts.

"The BSA's record of producing leaders with high character and integrity is amazing," said Randall Stephenson, BSA's national board chairman. "I've seen nothing that develops leadership skills and discipline like this organization. It is time to make these outstanding leadership development programs available to girls."

Starting in 2018, families can choose to sign up their sons and daughters for Cub Scouts. Existing packs may choose to establish

a new girl pack, establish a pack that consists of girl dens and boy dens or remain an all-boy pack. Cub Scout dens will be single-gender — all boys or all girls.

BSA will also deliver a program for older girls, which is projected to be available in 2019; that program will enable them to earn the Eagle Scout rank. This unique approach allows the organization to maintain the integrity of the single gender model while also meeting the needs of today's families.



BSA has offered co-ed programs since 1971 through Exploring and the Venturing program. The STEM Scout pilot program is also available for both boys and girls.

Both Girl Scouts of the USA and Boy Scouts of America are affiliate organizations

of the General Commission on UM Men (GCUMM).

The UMC is in the business of making disciples, said Gil Hanke top staff executive of the commission. "The move enhances the opportunities of churches to reach more families through an expanded scouting program. We will continue our support for both Girl Scouts and Boys Scouts.

Local churches may make their own decisions as to how to implement the BSA suggested Cub Scout pack program organization. The commission hopes the UMC will be included in decisions related to BSA plans

for 2019.

Amanda Vogt, a member of the GCUMM and a leader of the Venturing program, said, "I am a girl. I am a Gold Award (Girl Scout's highest honor), Silver Award (Venturing's highest honor, now called the Summit Award), and TRUST Award (Venturing's religious award) recipient. Over my 13 years as a Girl Scout, and eight years as a youth Venturer, I learned so many skills and had great adventures as a youth. Those two youth agencies shaped me in ways that you can't begin to imagine.

However, I can vividly remember watching my friends go off on Cub Scout outings and later earn their Eagle Scout rank, and I thoroughly missed getting to do those things just because I was a girl. I couldn't be more excited that now my Goddaughter can be in both Girl Scouting and Boy Scouting. To see her build a Pinewood Derby car and earn badges in both programs, has always been a dream of mine. Now that dream is going to become a reality in 2018. I can't wait for her to one day become a Gold Award, Summit Award, and Eagle Scout recipient."

Idaho Scout leader attends BSA Jamboree

GLEN JEAN, W. Va.—

Scout leaders serving at the UM exhibit area during the 2017 National BSA Jamboree met hundreds of Scout leaders, and exhibit staff encouraged visitors to tell them how they became involved in scouting.

Kenny Beeson, a Scout leader from Nampa, Idaho, brought 18 Scouts from the Ore-Ida (Oregon-Idaho) Council.

"I started my scouting career when my oldest son became a Cub Scout at a local grade school," Kenny told the exhibit staff.

"I served as den leader, and I was named cubmaster the following year and started working with the district council in training and recruiting."

During the 2013 liturgical season of Lent, leaders of First UMC challenged members to find ways to increase their involvement in the Nampa community.

Kenny took that challenge seriously.

"I found out that our church did have a chartered Scout unit over 15 years ago," he said. "I then started to work with the district executive to discuss how we could rekindle the charter and begin to recruit boys for scouting again."

"I took this to our church leadership committee for approval to move forward, and they were excited to support the effort."

Kenny worked with the church council and the BSA council, and in 2016, he launched a recruiting effort. Fourteen boys signed up for a Cub Scout pack, and Kenny became the charter organization representative.

"I am also currently a scoutmaster for another local troop in which my two sons are involved," said Kenny. That troop is not related to First UMC, but he is working on the possibility of forming a troop that is chartered by the church as members of the Cub Scout pack become interested in moving up in scouting.

"I am excited and grateful to have this opportunity to bring scouting to families that may not otherwise get a chance," said Kenny.



Kenny Beeson takes a break by his tent at the National Jamboree.



Go HOME in July

Scouters and clergy from across the U.S. will gather at HOmE (Heaven on Earth) at Philmont Scout Ranch, July 15-22, to share ideas and information on scouting as a ministry in the UMC.

"The conference is all about the ways that scouting and the UMC can and should work together to benefit both organizations and the youth and adults we serve," said 2018 Conference Director Cliff Coan.

The weeklong conference is designed for local church, district and conference scouting coordinators, Scout leaders, clergy, and youth leaders. Sessions will focus on the role of scouting ministry specialists, and how scouting can increase church membership.

The group will learn about award programs, youth protection, membership growth, the Strength for Service devotional book ministry, and common features of scouting and UM groups. Participants will discover the many ways scouting can make an impact on their youth groups and build an environment of servant leaders in local congregations.

"We try to deal with everything from 'big picture' stuff — like policy — to 'nuts-and-

bolts' things like 'how do kids earn religious emblems,'" said Coan.

Course content varies somewhat from year to year," said former course director Susan Lawyer, "because it draws a variety of new participants and staff who bring to the table their ministry and scouting experiences. I know the charters and scouting units will be blessed by the knowledge and new contacts that each participant takes home."

"As chair of the Religious Relations Committee for the Greater St Louis Council, I found the program content to be very helpful," said Jim Marchbank. "The material was interesting and I came away with several ideas that I was able incorporate immediately. I also found some of the informal conversations among the participants in between the sessions to be very valuable. An added bonus was the opportunity to meet and learn from individuals who have and continue to be successful in their respective positions."

Both new and experienced United Methodist scouters will find the conference valuable.

"I attended my first one last year and thought it was great," said the Rev. Doug

Walker, pastor of First UMC in Pendleton and Ingalls, Ind. “The interaction from other scouters and the presentations by the staff and special speakers was very informative.”

“I picked up several ideas and many connections that will help us in the North Georgia Conference,” said Chris Karabinos. “For example, having not heard of a Bishop’s Dinner before, I see us holding one in the spring of 2018 as a tool to recruit new units. I also established connections with a lot of experienced scouters and committed UMs who see scouting as a ministry and who can help connect us to other scouting resources around the country.”

Attendees will be housed at the Philmont Training Center at the edge of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains about an hour away from Taos, N.M. The high-adventure base hosts more than 20,000 Scouts each year in its backpacking adventure expeditions through

more than 200 square miles of territory — the largest youth camp in the world.

Participants will want to bring their families.

“Philmont is smart enough to know that if the Scouter’s family has a good time, the Scouter is likely to get to come back,” said Coan, “so the family programs at the Training Center are top-notch.”

Activities for families include hikes, fishing, horseback rides, air rifles, archery, crafts, cooking, games and hiking the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. In addition, the new National Scouting Museum should be opened by July.

For more information, visit www.scouting-umc.org and <http://bit.ly/UMCScoutersFB>, our Facebook Group page. To sign up, visit <http://bit.ly/ScoutingMinistryUMC>.

Photo captures a Cub Scout’s aspirations

By Bryan Wendell

Not all Cub Scouts attend Eagle Scout courts of honor, but maybe more should.

You may agree with that sentiment when you hear the story of Robert.

Robert is a Cub Scout in a pack that meets at Harrison (Tenn.) UMC, the same place as a Boy Scout troop.

Robert joined his parents at an Eagle Scout court of honor there.

The keynote speaker referenced a plaque at the church that contains the names of Scouts who attained the rank of Eagle. He said the plaque contains the names of men who became great fathers, husbands, and leaders.

Becoming an Eagle Scout helped them get there.

After the ceremony, Robert asked if he could read the names.

Because of close multigenerational ties between the church and its pack and troop, several names on the plaque had meaning to Robert.

“His mom snapped this pic,” writes Kevin Martin, who sent me the photo. “The Cub looking up at the Eagle plaque aspirationally, with the Eagle program on the table, makes for a moving image.”



This article is adapted from blog. scoutingmagazine.org.

Former deputy sheriff is 50-year scouting veteran

WILLIAMSPORT Pa.—

In 1967, 11-year-old Donald L. Cohick Jr. joined Troop 14 at St. John’s UMC in Williamsport. In 1974, the Eagle Scout was awarded the Veryl Prouty Award for earning 37 merit badges, the most of any Scout in the troop.

Except for the three years Don spent in the military, he has spent his entire scouting career with St. John’s, a total of 47 years with the same Boy Scout troop and Cub Scout pack.

Even during his 1974 to 1976 Army career, Don served as assistant scoutmaster for a troop at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, and associate adviser for an Explorer Post in El Paso, Texas. In 1974 and 1975 he led the El Paso Post on a 120-mile canoe trip in Arkansas.

After his 1977 release from active duty, Don returned home and rejoined Troop 14 as assistant scoutmaster, a position he held for 18 years.

After receiving Wood badge training and attending training events at the Philmont Scout Ranch, Don served on the district and council training staff.

In 1997, while serving as deputy sheriff of Lycoming County, Don assumed the position of scoutmaster of Troop 14. He held the position until 2006 when he became the troop’s chartered organization representative (COR). He returned to the scoutmaster post from 2008 to 2010 before returning to his role as COR, a position he continues to hold.

Under his leadership as St. John’s UMC, 52 young men have attained the rank of Eagle and five of them have joined Don as recipients of Silver Palms.

During his service with Troop 14, Don has led Scouts on the Gettysburg Historic Trail, The Valley Forge Historic Trail, the Washington DC Historic Trail, the 60-mile Loyalsock Trail, the 50-mile Tiadaghton Trail, and the 40-mile Black Forest Trail. He has also led a 120-mile wilderness backpacking trek out of the Philmont Scout Ranch in

New Mexico.

Don has received the Silver Beaver Award (1989), the highest award giving by a Scout Council, a Scoutmaster Award of Merit (2000), presented by the National Eagle Scout Association and

Cross and Flame (1996) and Silver Torch (2017) Awards, presented by the UMC. The U.S. Army honored him with the Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal in 1998, and he was named the Lycoming County Volunteer of the Year in 2003.

He has attended seven national Boy Scout Jamborees at Fort A.P. Hill, Va., and the 2017 jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia. He called his experience working in the UMC display in the God and Country section of the 2017 event as the “most fulfilling Jamboree experience so far.”

“I’ve been in scouting for 50 years, and I can’t imagine not continuing to somehow staying involved,” said the scouting ministry specialist. Scouting has molded me into the person I am today.”



Don Cohick



A 1974 photo of Eagle Scout Don Cohick, the recipient of 37 merit badges

Scouting Awards

Daniel Hurt

Scout repaints lines on parking lot

SPRING, Texas—

Daniel Hurt noted the lines on the parking lot of Cypress Trails UMC were nearly obliterated. He asked the church if this would be a good Eagle Scout project. Of course, the church agreed.

Thanks to Daniel and members of Troop 1565, the lines and handicap areas are now clearly marked and Daniel has achieved the rank of Eagle.



Daniel Hurt is congratulated by the Rev. Luis Ramirez, pastor of Cypress Trails UMC, and his wife, Heather.

Benjamin Ayers and Kaleb Smith

Scouts builds fire pit, memorial walkway

ROSEWOOD HEIGHTS, Ill.—

For their Eagle projects, Ben Ayers and Kaleb Smith provided St. Paul UMC with a place to roast marshmallows and a better way to reach the church pavilion.

Ben built a stone fire pit near the outdoor amphitheater and Kaleb build a memorial brick walkway.

“It was a great feeling to do something for the church. If not for them



Ben stands next to the fire pit he built for St. Paul UMC.

I may never had the opportunity to reach this day,” said Ben, who began his scouting career as a Cub Scout in third grade.

Kaleb said he first thought of his Eagle Scout project as a Cub Scout when he saw a woman being pushed through the grass in a wheelchair to the pavilion. Church members, Scout families, and community residents purchased memorial bricks and benches, and those purchases provided the full amount needed for a prayer walkway and landscaping. “It turned out even better than I imagined when I started,” said Kaleb.



Kaleb stands at the entrance to the prayer walk

Gabriel Hawthorne

Eagle Scout honored

DECATUR, Ga.—

Gabriel Hawthorne, a member of Scout Troop 3411, became the first Eagle Scout at Kelley Chapel UMC. The recipient of 26 merit badges, Gabriel served as patrol leader and assistant scoutmaster. His Eagle Scout project provided outdoor furniture for the church.



Gabriel Hawthorne, a freshman at Georgia State University in Atlanta, is majoring in computer science.

Aaron Taminger

Creates garden to feed the homeless

NEWPORT NEWS, Va.—

Aaron Taminger, a junior at Virginia Tech University, works with BSA Troop 11 whenever he is home from the Blacksburg campus. He also visits the vegetable garden he created for his Eagle Scout project in 2014. That garden at Chestnut Memorial UMC continues to feed the homeless.

During the summer months, Aaron goes on camping trips with the troop and mission trips with the church. “He loves to give back to his church and scouting,” said Tim Ewing, scouting ministry coordinator for Chestnut Memorial UMC.

Tim gave Aaron a Good Samaritan Award.

Brian Sixbey

Pastor receives Cross and Flame Award

HAMPTON, Va.—

The York River District UM Scouting Committee presented the Rev. Brian Sixbey, pastor of First UMC of Fox Hill, with a Cross and Flame Award for his contributions to scouting ministry.

An Eagle Scout, Brian leads a Venturing crew and teaches PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities for Youth) classes for five scouting units that meet in the church.

Brian’s dad was a scoutmaster, so it’s not surprising he became active in scouting.



The Rev. Brian Sixbey with his wife, Shan; son, Caedmon; and daughter, Catriona.

Rick Bragga

Veteran Scout leader receives Cross and Flame Award

GLENN ALLEN, Va.—

Shady Grove UMC presented Rick Bragga with a Cross and Flame Award.

The Distinguished Eagle Scout serves as a board member for BSA Heart of Virginia



From left: Bill Chaffin, Virginia Conference coordinator of scouting ministry; Rick Bragga; and the Rev. Christy McLain, pastor of Shady Grove UMC.

Council and chairs the National Scouting Museum Committee.

Rick has served as a staff member and a faculty member at the

Philmont Scout Ranch and the National and World Scout Jamborees.

He is a recipient of the Silver Beaver, Silver Antelope and Silver Buffalo Awards.

While serving as president of a consulting company, Rick teaches Sunday school, leads worship, helps with the church capital campaign, and sings in the church choir.

He is married with one adult daughter.

John Rink

Activity area honors veteran Scout leader

SALISBURY, N.C. —

Boy Scout Troop 448 dedicated an outside activity area in honor of John Rink, an Eagle Scout affiliated with the troop for 65 years. A brick and granite sign marks the activity area and it contains a time capsule with items provided by Scouts and leaders. The Navy veteran also served 30 years as chair of the Board of Trustees of Coburn UMC.

Jack Kepley, 93, is scoutmaster emeritus of Troop 448. He began his 80-year scouting career with Coburn UMC and served as scoutmaster for 41 years. He now serves as treasurer of Coburn UM Men.



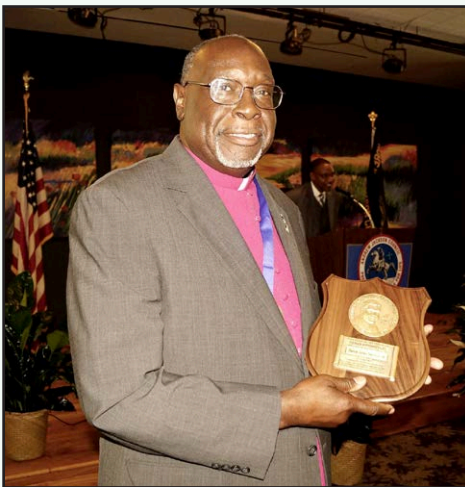
John Rink

**Bishop James Swanson
BSA council honors bishop**

JACKSON, Miss.—

The Andrew Jackson BSA Council presented Bishop James Swanson, president of the General Commission on UM Men, with the Whitney Young Service Award during a September dinner at Jackson State University.

The award recognizes outstanding service in providing scouting opportunities to youth from low-income backgrounds.



Bishop James Swanson holds an award named after Whitney Young (1921-1971), a civil rights leader and former director of the National Urban League.

**Tom and Kathryn Callahan
Church honors 30-year volunteers**

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.—

UM Men of St. Andrews UMC presented Tom and Kathryn Callahan with the Cross and Flame award. Combined they have more than 30 years of scouting leadership. Tom, an Eagle Scout, has served as scoutmaster of Troop 417, St. Andrew's, for six years, having previously served as cubmaster of Pack 417. He led the troop on several Appalachian Trail expeditions, and he served as a supervisor on the 2014 Maine High Adventure trip. Eleven Scouts achieved the rank of Eagle during his tenure as scoutmaster.

Kathryn, started her adult scouting experience with her daughter's Girl Scout Troop, while also serving as a den leader, and later as chair of Pack 417 Committee. For the past seven years, she chaired the Advancement Committee and accompanied the troop to several summer camps. She also served as a Committee member of Venture Crew 12 in Virginia Beach.

Kathryn and Tom are the proud parents of Lauren, a Girl Scout Gold and Venture Bronze recipient; Davis, an Eagle Scout; and Mitchel, a soon-to-be Eagle.

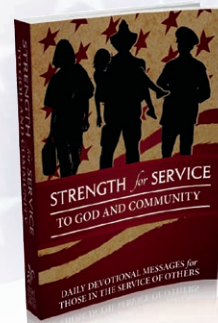


Tom and Kathryn Callahan



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