



UMM MEN

The magazine of United Methodist Men

**Ministry to
and with
the elderly**



A letter from the General Secretary

I hope as you read this issue, you join me in thanking God for all those who continue to touch our lives.

Last issue we looked at millennials; this issue we consider ministries with older adults.

I know that sometimes we are led into a closer relationship with Christ by our sons and daughters and sometimes by our parents and grandparents. Let us celebrate the wisdom that comes to us from all we encounter on this journey with Christ.

I remember with great joy my grandfather who, as a local pastor in the Kansas East Conference, saw God's hand and a sermon in every experience of his life. His prayers were conversations with his best and closest friend and touched on everything from world peace to personal concerns about his health.

As many of you know my home church is in Nacogdoches, Texas. One of the saints of that church who has

now gone on to glory was Inez. As is the case with many small towns, the county courthouse is a gathering place for important events. When Inez turned 75, the county clerk planned a special celebration for her. She asked a deputy to go to Inez's house and bring her to the courthouse. Inez was surprised by the officer who told her she was under arrest for "impersonating a young person."

Inez agreed to go with the deputy, but only after one of her famous cakes finished baking in the oven.

About 15 years later, Inez was at the courthouse when another person was given a birthday party. She asked his age and he said softly, "I'm 72-years old." Inez looked at him and said boldly, "Oh, to be 72 again!"

We all know persons who are guilty of "impersonating a young person" and this issue celebrates their wisdom and all our joy of life.

Gil Hanke



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



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UM Men

Winter 2015

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At last—
—a topic
I know
something
about—aging.

At age 80, I
am now qualified
to discuss the issue.

Over half (56 percent) of the respondents to a Pew Research Center on aging said that they would not want medical treatments that would enable them to live to 120.

When asked about the ideal length of their lives, most respondents (69 percent) chose an age between 79 and 100. The average life expectancy in the United States is 78.7 years.

I am now above average.

How long you want to live usually corresponds to how old you are, your health conditions, and your attitude toward life.

I want 20 more years of life, but only if I can continue to find meaningful work and ministry

- only if I can enjoy good health
- only if I have a functioning mind
- only if I have an active life style, and
- only if I am surrounded by close friends and family.

Take away any one of these “only ifs” and 20 additional years becomes a burden rather than a blessing.

The keys

The key to longevity is simple: Don’t die.

The keys to a fulfilling life can be found in the great commandment “to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself.”

My life is enriched by being a member of a suburban church, a caring Sunday school class, meaningful and fulfilling work, and involvement with an inner-city church that cares for the poor, the homeless and those addicted to drugs. They are all my brothers and sisters in the faith.

My life is also enhanced by participation in Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries. I am constantly amazed at the devotion of faithful people who take God’s word to those behind prison walls.

I support and am supported by colleagues at the Commission on UM Men and a network of committed Christian men and women.

I am also blessed by afternoons at the “Y,” friendly competition, and biking friends who keep me on the road even when I don’t feel like riding.

My richest treasure is my wife who is better at repairing broken faucets than I am and who encourages me when I am despondent and who slashes my ego when it needs slashing.

Two adult children, six grandchildren, and three step-grandchildren provide countless opportunities to be proud and to laugh.

Sure, I want 20 more years, but if my visa to planet Earth expires before that time, I will be grateful for this eight-decade encounter.

Rich Peck

Older men make great mentors

By William B. Randolph

Every phase of my life has offered mentors who helped me along my way—most of the mentors have been men in the last third of their lives.

I immediately appreciated the counsel of some of these men, but sometimes it took time for me to appreciate how important the advice of others has been to my development.

In all cases, these relationships seemed to arrive almost by accident. They certainly were not of my choosing and seemed to be a product of necessity.

The necessity wasn't mine; it was theirs.

These mentors needed to share insights they had collected over their lifetimes. They also knew how to share them.

Mentoring is a way of establishing purpose and meaning for older adults who have collected wisdom and experience to share with those who will follow. In this manner, older adults become the link between generations.

Mentoring is responsible for much of the treasure we have in the modern church.

Mentoring in the early church

We Protestants are a people of the book, meaning we have been formed by the Bible. The early transmittal of the sacred was primarily through people of faith sharing remembrances, interpretations, and stories from one generation to the next. This transmission was remarkable in its consistency.

The traditions and identity of the church grew as succeeding generations received the faith from prior generations.

The early church even had a formal sharing or mentoring program for those who were being converted to Christianity called the "Catechumenate". New candidates for baptism went through an intensive preparation, but they did not go through it alone. They were assigned mentors who shared their own faith journeys and served as companions to the Catechumen during the preparation process.

Search for identity

Older men make ideal mentors as



they have been forced to form new identities in retirement. They are no longer defined by their professional positions or careers. Now, they are defined only by their character and spirit. For that reason, they make ideal mentors for youth who are forming their own sense of identity and for other adults who are preparing for retirement.

Moreover, in retirement, men often leave behind communities of work which may lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Participation in UMM organizations provides retired employees with a replacement community and a way to connect to the larger community.

Attracting Boomers

Service projects led by UMM can be especially attractive to Baby Boomers who are retiring in large numbers and are frequently under- or un-churched.

Leading edge Boomers, who never lost their activist orientation, often find fulfillment through UMM service projects.

Writing in *The Happiness Project*, Gretchen Reuben says a survey found “service to others” was the common denominator among “happy” people. Service was the most frequently mentioned activity cited by those who classified themselves as happy.

Boomers who participate in service projects may later become interested in other forms of church involvement.

Record remembrances

A simple yet profound project to begin within UMM is to record the remembrances of the older generations.

These stories provide a legacy and frequently enable mentoring relationships to develop. Because older men often have had experiences that younger men have not yet had, this cross-generational sharing encourages the building of relationships which might not otherwise happen.

Two-way mentoring

The mentoring process can work both ways—younger men often have skills with new technology and can tutor older generations to try them. Ultimately, the relationships which develop lead to a greater sense of belonging to the church and God.

I was involved with UMM through joint activities and projects as a youth long before I joined UMM as an adult.

Our summer volleyball and basketball leagues were sponsored by UMM. They coached and taught me not just about the game but about life, faith, and spirituality.

Later, some of my best moments of young adulthood, were spent coaching other youth in activities sponsored by UMM. They were rewarding experiences not only because of the relationships which resulted, but they were also a way of returning the help I received.

As a pastor, I emphasized UMM participation precisely because of my own involvement with church mentors as a youth. Some UMM groups include youth members in their units.

Two UMM events

Two of my most enjoyable UMM memories were of a Haunted Trail for youth each fall and Car & Driver Clinics for teen drivers each spring.

The Haunted Trail provided constructive entertainment in a rural community and the car clinic promoted pledges for teens not to drink and drive.

Both events provided opportunities for adults and youth to work together. One of the youth who participated in the car clinic brought his dad into the church, and later named his first child after one of the men whom he got to know through UMM.

Compassionate ministry

Generally, men do not live as long as women, but this is not always the case.

Mr. Y's wife had Alzheimer's which had progressed to the stage where further home care was difficult. One of the several retired UMM members would then stay with Mrs. Y, while another retired member accompanied Mr. Y on shopping trips and other errands.

When Mrs. Y was moved to a memory impairment unit in a skilled care facility, UMM members transported Mr. Y to see her.

After his wife passed, UMM friends shared in the husband's grief and sadness. "It was not so much what these men did for me, as it was that they were with me every step of the way," said Mr. Y.

UMM was my pastoral ally in providing care for Mr. Y, but the men also provided care for other parishioners dealing with adult children's suicide, job loss, divorce, and the care for aging parents.

Disciple making


UMM is not just about sponsoring fundraising activities and providing building maintenance. Its most crucial role is disciple-making and faith formation.

When UMM takes its community building role seriously, its activities become portals for future church membership. This is particularly important with unchurched and under-churched Boom-

ers. Many men of that generation would not think of accepting an invitation to come to Sunday worship, but they are frequently interested in playing in a golf tournament.

Such a UMM activity can lead to other church program participation and membership. These men's first and most lasting encounter with Jesus Christ and the church could be through UMM.

Now more than any time in the past, UMM has something to offer:

- A supportive community to overcome loneliness and isolation
- An opportunity to find new purpose and meaning in life by being in service to others
- An opportunity for faith formation and growth, and
- A place of memory, legacy, and relationship. 



Dr. William B. Randolph, is the staff executive of the Office on Aging and Older Adult Ministry at the General Board of Discipleship.

Aging in poverty ministry grants available

The Committee on Older Adult Ministries of the General Board of Discipleship offers an opportunity for your congregation to receive up to \$4,000 for ministries to older people in poverty. The proposed program must provide services such as food distribution, health care, economic education, or spiritual-enrichment experiences. This is the second year the committee is providing funds. For information and application form, visit the website of the Nashville-based board (www.gbod.org).

Is your church ageist?

By Richard H. Gentzler, Jr.

Imagine you are part of a worship planning team. You have been given responsibility for planning the worship service on a regular basis. Instead of using traditional hymns from *The United Methodist Hymnal*, you decide to make changes and sing only contemporary, praise songs. After a few Sundays, you learn that some adults are complaining that the church is no longer singing any of the beloved, familiar hymns. As you hear the complaints, you check to confirm your impression. And, if you are like many people, you nod approvingly at your foresight when you realize that the people complaining have white hair.

There is, of course, some basis in fact for the impression you formed. However, the ease with which such incidents confirm people's expectations of older worshipers and the equal ease with which they ignore counter instances (older adults who enjoy singing contemporary, praise songs or young people who don't) reflect that set of attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes known as ageism.

Ageism is defined as prejudice or discrimination against older people. In reality, we have not moved very far in overcoming the prejudice against older people since the 1960s when the term "ageism" was first coined by Dr. Robert Butler, the first director of the National Institute on Aging.

Ageism is widespread

Ageism—and its personal impact—is a reality experienced by almost every older adult, although many people are socialized not to recognize it. Based on a deeply ingrained, negative stereotypes of old people, ageism is used to rationalize discrimination and to confuse our

discussions about rights and privilege.

Unfortunately, ageism is prevalent in religious circles. We hear words such as, "The church is dying because we have so many old people in the church." "If old people would just get out of the way." "If older adults just accepted change." "Either older adults should get with the program, or they should leave the church."

Stereotypes

Negative images of older adults are often reflected by the stereotypical oldersters who are the butt of greeting cards and popular jokes. Like "racism" and "sexism," ageism demeans and devalues people. It is manifested in our society's worship of youth and our anxiety over wrinkles. It diminishes the church's witness and mission. Bishop Kenneth L. Carder said, "It hurts to be rejected on the basis of age as surely as it hurts to be rejected because of gender or race or any other unavoidable trait."

With ageism, the interests of one age cohort are pitted against another. Instead of synergizing people at various stages of the life course, ageism separates and divides people. Yet, in the Scriptures we read, "Young men and women alike, old and young together! Let them praise the name of the Lord," (Psalm 148:12-13a).

How we age often depends on the way we internalize society's images of the old. When older adults see little interest directed to them by the church, they gradually lose their sense of value and worth, which dampens and diminishes their faith development.


Ageism prevents people of all ages from seeing that potentials are as bountiful as problems among older adults.

It is important for congregations to recognize they are blessed to have many older members.

Examples of ageist behaviors in churches:

- When older adult ministry is planned without the involvement of older adults, that's ageism.
- When a church believes that the only way it can be innovative and growing is to have older adults step aside, that's ageism.
- When a church fails to make its facilities accessible, that's ageism.
- When a church hires staff for other age-group ministries or provides them a budget but ignores ministry with older adults, that's ageism.
- When church leaders believe they know what's best for older adults

without consulting them, that's ageism.

- When church leaders regularly ignore issues of aging and older adult concerns in their sermons, hymn selections, and prayers, that's ageism.
- When church leaders focus solely on young families and ignore older members who have supported the church over a period of many years, that's ageism. 



Dr. Richard Gentzler is the former director of the Office on Aging and Older Adult Ministries. This article was published in Center Sage©, fall 2006—reprinted

AGEISM IN AMERICA

The number of Americans 60 and older is growing, but the elderly still battle “old geezer” stereotypes. People assume seniors have memory or physical impairments due to their age, and they are replaced in workplaces by younger persons.

The same people who would not allow jokes that make fun of a racial group frequently pass on jokes that poke fun at the elderly.

Ageism also seeps into health care. Health professionals frequently view elderly people as set in their ways and unable to change their behavior. Mental health problems—such as cognitive impairment or psychological disorders caused at least in part by complex pharmacological treatments—often go unrecognized and untreated in this growing demographic.

Ageism is standard fare in the media. Doris Roberts, the actress who portrays the mother and grandmother in “Everybody Loves Raymond,” said, “My peers and I are portrayed as dependent, helpless, unproductive and demanding rather than deserving. In reality, the majority of seniors are self-sufficient, middle-class consumers with more assets than most young people, and the time and talent to offer society.”

The value media and society place on youth might explain the exploding number of cosmetic surgeries among older adults.

Walking by the tombstones

By the Rev. Jennifer Wilson

Maturity awards us time for contemplative moments. I fully understand that such contemplation is a discipline that requires courage.

As a new year begins, I am inspired to examine my life and evaluate past leadership decisions.

As I consider decisions and sacrifices I made during my own seasons of leadership, I look for tombstones. They identify where earlier dreams, ideology, belief and surety died along the way.

All of these smaller deaths are preparation for my ultimate death and resurrection when I take my final breath here on earth and my first breath in heaven.

The resurrection promise of Jesus Christ is that when something dies it comes back in a way no one expects or imagines.

Dying is not easy

Mature Christians will recognize that if we choose to follow Jesus, it will lead to certain death.

Jesus said to everyone, "All who want to come after me must say 'no' to themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23 CEB).

Dying in Christ is not easy. It costs us everything. Not many have the courage and fortitude actually to go through it.

The Apostle Paul reminds us that he lost everything for the sake of Jesus Christ.

"But, I do this one thing: I forget about the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me," says

Paul. "The goal I pursue is the prize of God's upward call in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13b-14 CEB).

Paul embraced the power to live in a renewed righteousness of knowing Christ alone. The full knowledge of Christ is to be-

come familiar with his death so that we can also reach the goal of the resurrection of the dead.

Servant leadership

As I review some of my decisions as a leader in the United Methodist Church, I recall remarks made last summer at the Willow Creek Global Leadership Summit in Barrington, Ill.

Jeffrey Immelt, chief executive officer of General Electric, said, "Leadership is an intense journey into yourself. It's how much you are willing to learn and how much you are willing to give."

Later that day, the founder of The Table Group, Patrick Lencioni, said, "I am kind of tired of hearing about servant leadership. Do you want to know why? Because I don't believe there is any other kind."



HUMOR

The secret to longevity

Seeking ways to extend his life, Joshua sought the advice of three elderly men on a park bench.

"What is the secret to your long life?" he asked.

"Well, I always got eight hours of sleep, drank eight glasses of water a day, and ate plenty of vegetables," said the first man.

"How old are you," asked Joshua.

"I'm 96," he said.

The second man said, "I stayed away from booze, women and gambling and I was in church every Sunday."

"Great advice," said Joshua. "And how old are you?"

"I'm 92," he said proudly.

The third man appeared to be the oldest of the three.

"Tell me your secret," said Joshua.

"Well, I never worried about what I ate; I spent my days in the tavern and the gambling casino. I enjoyed the company of hundreds of women, and I never attended a church service."

"And how old are you?" asked a surprised Joshua.

"Thirty six."



Journey into myself

After hearing these two leadership giants speak, I merged the two impactful statements into one of my own: "Servant leadership is an intense journey into myself."

Jesus united leadership with servanthood and initiated a new servant-leader model.

Matthew and Mark record his all too familiar words:

"And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:27-28 NKJV).

Jesus issued a challenge to his followers to integrate his type of servant leadership into their whole lives.

As a Christ follower, I am called to learn how to accept servant leadership as an intense journey into myself. How much am I willing to learn and how much am I willing to give? But, servant leadership is also a question of how much I am willing to sacrifice.

Are you sure?


Leaders know the greatest struggle is internal. Decisions have been made and must be made.

Someone will certainly ask, "Are you sure?"

I don't think God asks us to be sure. He asks us to follow.

There is always grace in moments of quiet reflection.

Sure, there are tombstones. Each one can be a reminder of intense struggle and final surrender.

We will never be sure, but it's time to walk past the tombstones and press on as servant leaders. 



The Rev. Dr. Jennifer Wilson is senior pastor of Wheatland-Salem United Methodist Church located on two campuses in Naperville, Ill., and Oswego, Ill. She is a member of the General Commission on UM Men.

Ask for help on the aging journey

By Missy Buchanan

The image of my 86 year-old father is etched in my mind.

I arrived for my daily visit at the senior living apartment where my parents lived some 20 miles away. After some lighthearted chit-chat about the grandkids, dad's demeanor suddenly turned more serious. He looked up with faded blue eyes and announced, "I need help."

I have often thought about how difficult it must have been for this independent, six-foot-five man to utter those three words to his youngest child. He had been a pillar in his local UM congregation, a can-do guy who served in World War II and built a successful business from the ground up. He had been a loving, fix-anything kind of father and grandfather. Yet on this particular morning, he voiced those three words with a humble spirit and more than a hint of grace.

Not wanting to wait on the maintenance staff at his senior residence, he asked if I would remove the globe from

the light fixture and change the light bulb. He no longer could safely balance on a small step ladder.

In that moment, I realized what a blessing it was to have an aging father who was willing to acknowledge the reality of his late years. I think my dad showed more strength in that instant than in all the years when he physically lifted and carried, pushed and pulled things in everyday situations.

Loss of identity

For many men, the journey through aging can bring an overwhelming loss of identity. After years in the workforce, there's suddenly no job title. No sense of accomplishment as a breadwinner. No more accolades for being a community leader. And then there's the typical decline of physical abilities. It's little wonder why a man's self-worth is threatened.

Both men and women share a sense of loss, but men often describe the emotions differently. In my role as a writer



and speaker on issues of aging and faith, I have the opportunity to meet with residents of many senior-living communities.


Chat with five elderly men

Not long ago, I pulled up a chair at a table of five men at a community in the northeast. These men had agreed to share their thoughts about aging with me. Three of the men were married and two had been recently widowed. All were over age 75.

One man said that the hardest thing for him about aging was being forced to admit that he could no longer do what he once did. Even though he exercised and maintained a healthy lifestyle, he felt like a failure the day he struggled to carry a sack of groceries up a flight of stairs. The other men nodded their heads in quiet agreement about having less stamina in late years.

The widowers talked openly about their struggle with loneliness and how

their wives had always taken the lead in nurturing friendships. A few minutes later, a man who had remained silent finally spoke up. "I think the greatest challenge in growing old is just admitting that I need help."

The room grew quiet as the men locked eyes with one another. The thin man with a balding head had hit a nerve among his aging peers. Could it be that when we acknowledge our need for the help of our gracious God and our faith community in this journey through aging, we will actually stand taller and stronger than ever before? 



Missy Buchanan is a writer and speaker on issues of aging and faith. Her newest book, Voices of Aging: Adult Children and Aging Parents Talk with God (Upper Room Books) will release in February.

United Methodist statement on aging

In a society that places primary emphasis upon youth, those growing old in years are frequently isolated from the mainstream of social existence. We support social policies that integrate the aging into the life of the total community, including sufficient incomes, increased and nondiscriminatory employment opportunities, educational and service opportunities, and adequate medical care and housing within existing communities. We urge social policies and programs, with emphasis on the unique concerns of older women and ethnic persons, that ensure to the aging the respect and dignity that is their right as senior members of the human community. Further, we urge increased consideration for adequate pension systems by employers, with provisions for the surviving spouse. (2012 UM Book of Discipline ¶162e)

Inspiration from an 88-year old

Paul Adams is an 88 year-old veteran of World War II now living in De Soto, Mo.

The former flight engineer and mechanic says he carried a copy of *Strength for Service to God and Country* during 20-hour trips on a patrol bomber that accompanied ships carrying troops across the Atlantic. He later gave copies of the updated book to two grandsons now serving in the military.

"Paul frequently sends me books and inspirational sayings just to help my day," says the Rev. Rich Peck, communications director for the General Commission on UM Men. "Yesterday, he sent me a quote from Maya Angelou: 'If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain.'"

The same mailing included, "Quit griping about your church, if it was perfect, you couldn't belong" and "Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisers."

Across the tracks

"My favorite story from Paul is how he met his wife," says Peck. "While he was on the train during his time with the Navy, he made eye contact with a woman out the window of a train on an adjacent track. She smiled, and he smiled. Neither train seemed to be in a hurry to depart, so Paul wrote his name and address on a piece of paper and held it to the window. To his surprise, she copied it down as his train pulled out of the station."

They started writing and continued until Paul was discharged from the Navy.

"I foolishly stopped writing for five years," says Paul. "I later wound up in St. Louis going to school in 1949 and



Paul Adams as World War II Navy flight engineer and mechanic.

I wrote to her at the same St. Joseph address. She still lived there and had not married, so we started to wear out the road between the cities."

Darlene and Paul married in 1950.

One month after Paul completed his studies in aerospace engineering at the Brayton School in St. Louis, he was designing hydraulics on the F-84F.

Paul worked at Douglas Aircraft in Tulsa, Okla., and in 1958, he moved to St. Louis to work at McDonnell Aircraft where he worked on the F4, F-15 and F-18. He left McDonnell in 1981 after the death of James McDonnell. Darlene died the same year.

Paul later married Alice, and he received a position with Lockheed-Martin where he worked on the space shuttle launch at Vandenberg Air Force Base until the Challenger disaster.

In 1986, he moved to Whittier Calif., to work with Northrop on the B-2

and A-12 until his retirement in 1989.

Paul and Alice now worship at St. Andrews UMC in De Soto.


Advice for UM Men

While Paul supports UM Men efforts to reach young people, he reminds us of the need to minister to and with seniors.

"Many seniors don't drive at night," says Paul. "A group in my church talked our busy pastor into having a Bible study class in the afternoon for seniors. She knows her Bible well, and we have lively discussions. It's a small group, and the pastor is patient with us. I kid her by telling her I am boning up for my final examination, which will happen to all of us sooner or later.

"There are also seniors who cannot leave their assisted-living centers or nursing homes. UM Men should assume responsibility for visiting these fine people and perhaps lead a Bible study group in the facility," he says.

Finally, Paul wants men to emphasize prayer.

"A man is never taller than when he is on his knees," says Paul. "Let's try that." 



Paul Adams

S.E.N.I.O.R.S.

The Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministries at the General Board of Discipleship suggests ministry to the elderly should have seven components:

Spiritual - Help older adults in their spiritual journey by conducting special Sunday afternoon worship services for the homebound and providing home Communion, and afternoon Bible studies.

Enrichment - Provide opportunities to discuss political concerns and the environment. Give information about health and finances along with ways to use new technology. The chance to travel can both educate and provide a sense of purpose.

Nutrition (Wellness) - Provide meals and exercise classes along with information about changes in health care, pensions and federal insurance programs. Some churches have a parish nurse on staff.

Intergenerational - Older adults should be invited to mentor children,

youth and young adults. Younger and older people can be teamed up to clean up the environment, visit the homebound, and engage in short-term mission projects,

Outreach - Churches may involve seniors in reaching out to non-churched older adults. Too often, our view of church growth is reaching out only to the under-35 crowd rather than to all ages.

Recreation - Attitude is an important index in prolonging life expectancy. Fellowship meals, golf and fishing outings, arts and crafts and senior theater are all ways to energize older adults for fun and play.

Service - There are countless opportunities available for older adults to be in service: giving care, preparing meals, providing transportation, monitoring medication, ushering, teaching Sunday school and singing on the choir.

Just get out of their way

By *Walter Albritton*

Mandatory retirement at age 70 ended my ministry under the appointment of a bishop. Having served 48 years I was “put out to pasture.”

It was a blessing of sorts since I could hardly walk. Both my knees were gone.

Orthopedic surgeon Jim Whatley had a solution. He replaced both my knees in the same operation. Though I did not have a leg to stand on the next morning, intensive therapy soon had me walking again.

Bored by retirement I jumped at the chance to assume responsibility for congregational care at a large church. With all my pastoral experience I figured ministry to seniors would be no sweat. Armed with my great wisdom and charm I would fire up the seniors and send them out to do good work. Boy, did I have a lot to learn!

Cookies from Susan

My education began as soon as I started visiting our homebound members. My first call was at Henry Greene's home. His dear wife having died recently, Henry was bewildered and lonely. As we sat in his den getting acquainted, Henry offered me a cookie. “Susan brought them this morning,” he said.

An hour later I was visiting with Mary. When she could no longer take care of herself, her children had put her in a nursing home. Mary was miserable; she missed being at home. As I quizzed her about her long career as a school teacher, she offered me a cookie. “Susan brought them,” she said.

Everywhere I went that week my host offered me one of Susan's cookies! Who in the world was Susan? I discov-

ered that Susan Brewer was a middle-aged woman who had been visiting the sick and homebound for several years. I invited Susan to come by the office so we could get acquainted. She did and brought me some cookies!

To my surprise I learned that Susan was not chair of the cookie committee. In fact she had no helpers. She shared with me that the Lord had put the needs of seniors on her heart. Since she had the time and energy she got a list of the homebound and began calling on them on her own, taking them cookies or sometimes flowers.

A visit with Henry

Then I met John Howard. He invited me to drink coffee with some men who met at the church on Wednesday at 6 a.m. There I met six or eight men, now retired, who cared about each other. They prayed together. They invited other retirees to join their fellowship.

Henry Greene was one of those men.

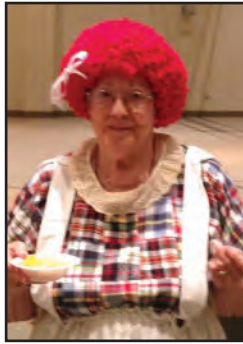
After Henry's daughter moved Henry to a nursing home 40 miles away, John called and invited me to go with the men to visit Henry. He was lonely; he missed being at home. So six of us climbed into Jim's van and made our way to Henry's new digs. Though Henry was near 90 and a bit unsteady on his feet, he could still walk so we took him out to lunch at a nearby restaurant.

As we laughed and shared together, while breaking bread, it dawned on me that these men were doing what Jesus expects his people to do: “love one another.” For a little while an old man had been rescued from the throbbing pain of loneliness. He was not forgotten. Life was good. The look on his face was

priceless; it was the smile of a man who was being energized by the love of his friends.

Dolls from Coralie

Coralie McDavid learned from a friend how to make Raggedy Ann dolls. In her 80s, Coralie had an idea. Invite the Girl Scouts to come over on Saturday mornings and make dolls. The girls loved making the dolls, especially when they learned the dolls were being given to children of abused mothers housed in the Sunshine Center.




Coralie McDavid

To date, the girls have made more than 1,000 Raggedy Ann dolls – some black, some white and some Asian. The girls keep turning out the dolls and children continue to be blessed – all because an old woman had a dream and opened her home so Jesus could use it on Saturday mornings.

Ministry with seniors

What did I learn about ministry to seniors? That I had it wrong! It is not ministry “to” seniors, it is ministry “with” seniors! I thought my role was to motivate and educate people about how to care for others. It was not that at all. Ministry to people is not about programs, committees, and funding. Susan, John and Coralie have no committee. What each has is a mission from God.

The Lord taught me that what he wanted me to do was get out of the way of his servants, come alongside them and get in their cheering section. Since receiving my “Master’s Degree” in senior ministry, I have been having more fun than a barrel of monkeys!

At 82, I look for people who are doing the Lord’s work. Then I get out of their way and start cheering for them. It is the most fun an old man ever had! 



The Rev. Walter Albritton is pastor of congregational care at St. James UMC in Montgomery, Ala.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR RETIRED MEN



- **United Methodist Volunteers In Mission (VIM), www.umcmision.org/Get-Involved/Volunteer-Opportunities/About-UMVIM**
- **United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), www.umcor.org**
- **Nomads On Mission Active in Divine Service (NOMADS), www.nomadsumc.org**

From dad to granddad

At a recent workshop, a dad asked, "What is my role now that my son is a father?"

Research has shown that a father's love for his children is a decisive factor in self-esteem, behavior and mental health, equal to a mother's love. In fact, according to Ronald Rohner, director of the Center for the Study of Parental Acceptance and Rejection at the University of Connecticut, the presence or absence of a father's love may have even greater impact.

With the attention focused on men and their importance in children's lives, we have witnessed a significant increase in the role fathers play—from being an active partner in their birth to involvement in decisions affecting their upbringing, to being regularly engaged in their development.

So what about grandpa?

The increasing focus on the importance of men in their children's lives is causing fathers to reflect on their role as grandfathers. For many, this is new territory. Some grandfathers may not have appreciated the impact of their role as a dad. Years earlier they may have felt left out of the parenting process, or they may have been shut out by the demands of their job. How do these men, 20 years hence, contribute to the development of their grandchildren in a meaningful way?

Proverbs 13:22, says, "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children." But what should that inheritance be?

Starting points

First, reassure your own son or daughter of your supporting role. It is not your intent to be the parent. It is

your wish to bond with your grandchildren and contribute to their growth. If necessary, ask permission.


Every child loves stories. You have a rich history to share with your grandchildren, seasoned with wisdom, humor and perspective.

You possess myriad experiences of success and failure, joy and sadness. You have the depth of experience to provide a panoramic view of life.

When you are with your grandchild, pay attention, listen closely and focus on being together. There is nothing better.

It's the quality of your time—not the quantity. To a young child, licking an ice cream cone alongside grandpa is a whole day wrapped in a few minutes.

Remember, you are relating to a new generation. Approaches, interests and language are different. Just enjoy the privilege of being part of their world.

Be conscious of your words and actions. You never cease being a role model to your children and your grandchildren. Deuteronomy 4:9, says, "Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them." 



Tom Tozer and Bill Black write a syndicated column on fatherhood and are authors of Dads2Dads:

Tools for Raising Teenagers. They are available for workshops. Contact them at tomandbill@Dads2Dadsllc.com

A wasted treasure

By Rich Peck



Every local church has an undiscovered treasure.

The treasure is in plain sight but few people understand its value.

The treasure is frequently referred to as ROMEO (retired old men eating out)

As is the case with most treasure, it is unrecognized in its unprocessed form. It's hard to realize there is gold or diamonds in piles of rocks or pearls in ordinary appearing oysters.

There are, however, a few churches that recognize the experience and wisdom that is wasting away flipping pancakes or playing golf.

These enlightened churches regard these persons, not as old men to be ignored or tolerated, but as "sages."

As is the case with diamonds, these men became sages because of the heat and pressures of life.

As is the case with pearls, these sages became valuable because they experienced major irritations that needed to be addressed.


Sadly, many younger men are scarcely aware that they worship with men who could help them cope with similar pressures and irritations. The

sages' experiences of brokenness and failure could be of infinite value to these younger men.

Younger men look to books, television programs, and the Internet. But an older man can serve as an instrument of God.

There are a variety of ways in which churches can process this treasure. It only requires a determination to provide the settings for younger men to understand the rich treasure sitting next to them.

Churches may provide opportunities for younger men to ask these former mechanics, architects, stone masons, editors, personnel officers, and business men to share some of their professional experiences. As they learn about these long careers, the younger men may also learn that these sages have also coped with some of the same temptations and frustrations they are experiencing.

These sages have learned that it's more important to be significant than it is to be successful. But as long as no one is asking, these treasures will remain undiscovered and unprocessed. 

LW Smith named chair of Strength for Service Board

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

L.W. Smith, a Vietnam veteran and the leading supporter of a historic book of daily devotions for the U.S. military, was elected chairman of the newly organized non-denominational Strength for Service Board of Directors, meeting Sept. 26-27 in Nashville.

Smith was the obvious choice to lead efforts to provide two books of daily devotions to members of the Armed Forces and first responders.

Early involvement

In 2001, the self-employed commercial property manager in Columbia, S.C., led an 18-month effort to raise \$180,000 to provide *Strength for Service to God and Country* to military reserve personnel across the southeast.

Smith, former president of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of UM Men, was named chair of a UM Men task force that printed and distributed 480,000 copies of the 72-year-old book. He also participated in the development

of *Strength for Service to God and Community*, a similar book of daily devotions for police officers, fire fighters, EMS workers, and other first responders.

Some 30,000 copies of the second book have been distributed to community servants by local churches, individuals, and Boy Scouts.



L.W. Smith

Non-denominational board

Noting that the original book was written by 365 leaders of churches of nearly every U.S. denomination and it was distributed by chaplains of various denominations, and noting that the second book is used by community

responders without regard to denominational affiliation, Smith advocated forming a 501(c)3 organization to provide greater opportunities for corporations, foundations and other denominations to assist in the ministry, without giving to a particular denomination.

The General Commission on UM Men agreed to turn the ministry over to the non-denominational board.




A nine-member board assumes responsibility for the continued publication of a 72-year-old book of daily devotions for the military and a similar book for police officers, fire fighters and other first responders.

That nine-member board adopted mission and vision statements, adopted bylaws, and established a \$250,000 budget for 2015. The board did not establish numerical goals for each book, but Smith made it clear the goal was to get the books into the hands of thousands of military troops and first responders by Sept. 11, 2016, the 15th anniversary of the attack upon the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

“God has blessed this ministry and I look forward to continuing my service to help make these devotionals available to all those who sacrifice to serve and protect us each day,” says Smith.

Other officers

- Vice President: Bobby Wharton, president and CEO of a Memphis, Tenn., company that provides emergency vehicles for fire and police departments.
- Treasurer: Ingram Howard, former president of Tennessee Conference UM Men and a retired banking official based in Nashville.
- Secretary: The Rev. Lydia Istomina, a United Methodist pastor from Russia now living in Shawnee, Kan., and completing a doctoral degree.
- Other board members: Steven A. Dix, an attorney from Murfreesboro, Tenn.; Robert Hurst, Nacogdoches, Texas, commander of a Homeland Security team that coordinated the aftermath of the 2003 Space Shuttle Columbia disaster; Kevin Jura, a public health and safety professional in Baltimore, Md.; and Doug Wright, president of an organization of commercial realtors in Tucson, Ariz.

Board members pledged a total of \$7,200 to the ministry and promised to find other advocates for the ministry. 

Daily devotions address post-traumatic-stress issues

By Jim Jeffery

Most of us are aware of post-traumatic stress in military combat veterans. It can be very severe with just a single deployment to a war zone.

Much less is written about post-traumatic stress in first responders.

Dr. Robin Klein, a psychologist and retired police lieutenant, says first responders can't go through a 20-30 year career without experiencing some degree of post-traumatic stress.

First responders see and experience things that no one should, but we frequently suppress emotional reactions. As heroic macho individuals we rarely admit to the pain we are experiencing.

Symptoms include sleep disturbances and/or nightmares, depression, irritability, and reduced libido.

Personal battles

Following a 32 year career in the California Fire Service, I have had several bouts with post-traumatic stress, but I recently found a book of daily devotions that helps me in the healing process.

Strength for Service to God and Community is a book of daily devotions for police officers, firefighters, healthcare workers and other first responders.

The book is patterned after *Strength for Service to God and Country*, a book of daily devotions written in 1942 for US troops in World War II and the Korean War, and updated a decade ago.



I read the devotions from the first book prior to the release of the second. The devotions in both books helped me deal with post-traumatic stress.

Responses to the book

The Rev. Dr. Daniel Tackett, director of the International Police and Fire Chaplains Association, said the book is an important tool for his chaplains. "Sometimes these highly trained people can draw a blank during high stress/trauma situations. . . The book is a tool to help the mind, soul, and spirit find peace."


Dan Ramsey, a 30-year veteran of the Houston Police Department and president of the National Association of Conference Presidents, gives his views:

"Reading this amazing book of devotions was as if the writer was in my shirt pocket. The good and bad we face on a daily basis take a toll on first responders. Facing stress, danger, and difficult situations, one becomes numb to tragedy. However, this does not mean that first responders do not need help in dealing with such stress."

This book is exactly the blessing that is needed. I wish I had had this book during my years with the Houston Police Department."

I also believe spiritual strength can help first responders deal with their emotions following stressful situations, thus helping to prevent post-traumatic stress at a later date.

Strength for Service to God and Community was distributed to first responders following the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., the bombing at the Boston Marathon, the fertilizer explosion in West, Texas; the mudslides in Washington state, and other major incidents.

For more information on the book, visit the website (www.strengthforservice.org). Purchase information is available on the website. 



Jim Jeffery is a Long Beach, Calif., resident, a 32-year veteran of the California Fire Department, and member of the Advisory Committee of Strength for Service Board of Directors.

Good advice

A lady called a wise, grandfatherly pastor. "Pastor, I was born blind, and I've been blind all my life," she said in a tearful voice.

"I don't mind so much being blind but I have some well-meaning friends who tell me that if I had more faith I could be healed."

"Tell me, do you carry one of those white canes?" the pastor asked.

"Yes I do," she replied.

"Then the next time someone says that, hit them over the head with the cane," he said. "Then tell them, 'If you had more faith that wouldn't hurt' "!

humor



Across the Nation

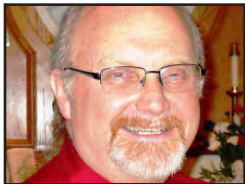
CULPEPER, Va.—

Golf tournament aids community ministry

Fifty-six golfers participated in a golf tournament to raise funds for Handy Hearts, a group of Culpeper UM Men who repair homes and construct handicap ramps.

The men also hold an annual barbecue dinner, sponsor a Wesley Building Brothers program, and mentor participants in the Youth Encouragement Sponsor (YES) program.

Johnnie Draughon, a men's ministry specialist, led an Understanding Men's Ministry seminar for the Charlottesville District at the church.



Johnnie Draughon, director of Virginia Conference Lay Servant Ministries.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—

Chaplain receives daily devotional books

Major Daryl R. Hamaker, chaplain of the 117th Air Refueling Wing, received *Strength for Service to God and Country* books to give to members in his unit.



*Larry Coppock (left), a staff member of the General Commission on UM Men, presents a copy of *Strength for Service to God and Country* to Chaplain Hamaker.*

COMPTON, Calif.—

Church conducts Men's Day Celebration

The Rev. Fredrick Johnson, pastor of First UMC, designated "Stand" as the theme of First UMC Men's Day celebration.



The Rev. Fredrick Johnson

"Men can do the right things in life and society," said Johnson.

"We don't have to be forced or jailed to do what is correct."

UM Men President Ernest Bolden invited men to "stand in concert with all UM Men throughout the world."

Robert Bartley encouraged men to mentor young people, and the men invited Vacation Bible School leaders to present certificates to children and teachers.



MILLPORT, Ala. —

Mississippi men cook for 'Manhood Camp'

The UM Men Cook Team of First UMC in Columbus, Miss., served smoked ribs and chicken to campers and leaders of a June weekend "Manhood Camp" at Timberlake Retreat, 15 miles from Columbus.

Sponsored by Father's Child Ministry, the camp is for boys, ages 14-18, from homes where a father is not present. Edward Yates, a former Mississippi State football standout, is the director of the ministry.

Speakers at the weekend retreat included former Mississippi State quarterback Tyson Lee and former MSU basketball player Tyrone Cunningham.

"Not only did we cook and serve the meals, but we also paid for it all which enabled Yates to offer additional scholarships for additional young men to attend," said Andy Tentoni, president of Mississippi Conference UM Men.



From left: Bill Whittle, Andy Tentoni, David Nelson, members of First UMC in Columbus, Miss., pause from cooking chores for a photo.

NORTH, S.C.—

Men give 150 devotional books to first responders

South Carolina men gave 150 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to Billy Robinson, a volunteer firefighter who serves as conference disaster coordinator.



Twelve members of the South Carolina UM Volunteers in Mission Early Response Team provide relief aid to tornado victims in Boaz, Ala. Billy Robinson, disaster coordinator, served as team leader.

“Thank you so very much for this and for all you do through your wonderful ministry of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” said Robinson. “These are wonderful devotional books that we can use at local fire departments.”

DRESHER, Pa.—

Eight teams compete in softball tournament

Eight UM teams competed in a July softball tournament sponsored by UM Men of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

The team from Bethany UMC of Wescosville, Pa. won the trophy.

The Rev. Walt Unterberger, pastor of Jarrettown UMC, led morning devotions prior to the games.

“The softball was first rate,” said Ross Brightwell, president of Conference UM Men. “Most importantly, the spirit of Christian fellowship permeated every player.”



Bethany UMC (yellow jerseys) takes first place with Jarrettown UMC team (red jerseys) taking second. Ross Brightwell (far left) served as tournament commissioner. Prior to the game, Ron Myers of Jefferson Hospital (right front) spoke to the players about cancer prevention.

BETHELEHEM, Ga.—

Men give \$10,000 to children’s home

Bethlehem First UM Men presented a \$10,000 check to the North Georgia UM Children’s Home while 11 church members participated in a volunteer day of service.

The money came from an unidentified donor who also gave \$10,000 to the Wesley Woods Foundation to help the needy at Lanier Gardens and Talmage Terrace in Athens.

FAYETTEVILLE, N.Y. —



Matthew Christenberry, treasurer of Bethlehem UM Men, presents a \$10,000 check to Lauri Ann Brooks, executive director of Talmage Terrace Lanier Gardens.

District provides van to transport veterans

Working with UM Men, the 77 congregations of the Crossroads District purchased a \$14,500 van to help veterans in Central New York get to appointments at the VA Medical Center in Syracuse and other nearby facilities.

On August 27, Mark Jones, president of Upper New York Conference UM Men, and Steve Ranous, president of Crossroads District UM Men, presented the check to representatives of Disabled American Veterans.

The fund-raising effort was coordinated by Scott Stumpf, a member of UM Men at Fayetteville UMC.



ATLANTA, Ga.—

Church supports four scouting units

St. James UMC sponsors a Boy Scout troop, a Girl Scout troop, a Cub Scout pack and a Venturing Crew.

Boy Scout Troop 370 received the Bishop's Award of Excellence for supporting several mission projects and for participating in God and Country studies under PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth).

Boy Scouts participated in a pre-school carnival, set up trees for a community Christmas tree sale, and they painted a church activities building.

Venture Crew 370 coordinated an effort to recycle electronic equipment at the church. Crew members removed and destroyed hard drives prior to delivering computers to a recycle company.

Cub Scouts play sports and build race cars and bird houses.

Girl Scouts engage in community-service projects, cultural exchanges, sports, and skill-building clinics. They also learn how to be good stewards of the environment.



Members of Troop 370 hike the Sangre de Cristo Mountains during a 2011 trip to Philmont Scout Ranch.

MONROE, Ala.—

UM Men give \$128,000 to children's home

For ten years, men of St. Paul's UMC have hosted "To-Do-At-The-Zoo" days. During that time they have donated a remarkable \$128,000 to the Louisiana Methodist Children's Home.



UM Men dish out food at To-Do-At-The-Zoo day

Each October since 2005, St. Paul's members and guests have toured the zoo before gathering at a pavilion for food and entertainment.

Dozens of booths feature a wide variety of foods prepared by UM Men members.



Inky the Clown entertains children at the Louisiana Purchase Gardens and Zoo.

ISTROUMA, La.—

"There's a spiritual awakening," says Lubbock

"I'm seeing evidence of a change that bodes well for our society if the church responds appropriately," said the Rev. Mark Lubbock, a deployed staff member of the General Commission on UM Men. "The trend is clear—men hunger for a

spiritual awakening and are responding to appropriately focused challenges.”

Lubbock made the remarks while serving as emcee for an Iron Sharpens Iron Conference at Istrouma Baptist Church. The pastor also serves as executive secretary of Gulf South Men, a coalition of men’s ministries in the south central region.



The Rev. Mark Lubbock delivers the benediction at the Iron Sharpens Iron Conference. Photo by Mark Hunter, courtesy of the Baton Rouge Advocate.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—

Hanke and agency heads meet with White House staff

In a two-way exchange lasting more than an hour, staff of the Obama administration and the heads of UM agencies discussed ways in which UM churches support initiatives to improve the lives of at-risk children, prevent sexual violence, and address global humanitarian concerns.

Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men, called attention to the mentoring work of the commission. He said boys who come from homes where fathers are absent find strong male leaders through scouting and the Amachi program of Big Brothers Big Sisters.

WESTERVILLE, Ohio—

Men collect Sunday school material for Third World countries

Men of West Ohio Conference are engaged in a year-round collection of gently used Bibles and Sunday school materials that are sent to “Love Packages.” In the first nine months of 2014, a total of 1,557 volunteers worked at the Butler, Ill.-based organization to send 920 tons of literature to: Belize, Ghana, India, Kenya, Liberia, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, and Zambia.

Leo Scholl, a men’s ministry specialist, is the project coordinator of the West Ohio effort.



Tim Holly of Xenia, Ohio, loads his pickup truck and trailer with used Christian books, CDs, DVDs, and other materials. Literature was collected in a parking lot of Otterbein University in Westerville, Ohio.

DAVIDSON, Md.—

Men give scholarships

Over the past 10 years, men of Davidsonville UMC have awarded 58 scholarships to college-bound church members.

The program began in 2004 with a single \$1,000 scholarship; it was awarded again in 2005.

The following year, the men sponsored four \$1,000 scholarships and established a scholarship committee to formalize the application and winner-selection process.

“The church is extremely fortunate in having such great kids here. It is pretty rare that we have someone applying who doesn’t have at least a 3.0 GPA.” said Bob Wilson, chairman of the Scholarship Committee. “And they all have strong ties to the church and the community.”

In 2014, there were 14 applicants and six scholarships of \$1,250 each were awarded.

**GUATEMALA CITY, Guatemala—
Scout leader joins mission team in Guatemala**

Paul Karstendiek, a scouting ministry specialist, helped build a family-life center in Guatemala City along with other members of Van Dyke UMC in Lutz, Fla.



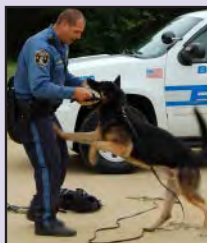
Paul Karstendiek joins with children in Guatemala City.

In October, the mission team, in cooperation with International Cooperating Ministries, visited 25 potential and completed building sites in the Central America nation.

**BRICK, N.J.—
Pets find new homes and special care**

St Paul’s UMC cares for animals through its “People & Paws Pet Ministry.”

The church aids pet adoptions, offers grief support for those who have lost a pet and provides information about the care of pets



A Brick police officer and his K-9 assistant demonstrate their partnership.

along with vet recommendations.

Bob Wilson, secretary for the church’s UM Men organization, is the director of the ministry.



The Rev. Alan Darby, pastor of St. Paul’s UMC, blesses a snake, one of 88 pets, prayed for during the church’s annual blessing of the animals and pet adoption day. Fifteen animals were adopted during the September event.

**SWANSBORO, N.C.—
Scouts travel the river**

Seven boys and four adults of Boy Scout Troop 3 took three canoes and five kayaks for an overnight September trip on the White Oak River. Sponsored by the UM Men of the Swansboro UMC, the troop traveled 13.5 miles.



Send news of your men’s organization to Rich Peck (rpeck@gcumm.org).

UM Men will compete for top honors

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Annual conferences, districts and local churches will participate in a competition that honors significant ministries to men and youth.

The General Commission on UM Men will honor the top five local churches that engage in ministries designed to transform the lives of men and youth. The Nashville-based agency will also honor one district and one annual conference that provide life-changing ministries to men and youth in their areas.

The top local church will receive a trophy and a wall plaque. The remaining four top churches, the top district and the top conference will receive certificates and will be featured in the summer 2015 issue of this magazine.

Deadline for all entries is Feb. 1.

Only churches with chartered units of UM Men may participate, but districts and annual conference may participate if at least one-fourth of their churches are chartered.

The top local church will be honored during the March 2015 meeting of Conference Presidents of UM Men.

To enter, make sure your unit is chartered, then simply send a description of the ministries supported by the church, district or conference to rpeck@gcumm.org. There is no form to fill out. Photos of the ministries may also be included in magazine articles.



GCUMM by the numbers in 2014

9 annual conferences engaged in Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries in five states**

12 people inducted into the John Wesley Society.*

20 annual conferences maintained or increased the number of EMS members (Every Man Shares in Evangelism, Mission and Spiritual Life).*

27 annual conferences maintained or increased the number of chartered organizations.*

28 Scout leaders participated in a summer leadership workshop at the Philmont Training Center.*

36 women honored with Susanna Wesley Awards of Excellence.*

38 men serve as men's ministry specialists.**

58 people receive Life

Membership Awards.*

69 newly chartered units of UM Men.*

135 nations from which people visited the GCUMM website.*

155 remote prayer lines operated for the Upper Room Living Prayer Center.*

266 men and women serve as scouting ministry specialists.**

578 legacy builders.*

2,902 life members of UM Men.**

6,300 UM youngsters earned PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth) Awards, tops among all denominations.*

6,500 Backpacking New Testaments presented to Scouts at the Philmont Scout

Ranch, the Northern Tier Base Camps, the Summit Reservation, and the Florida Sea Base.*

10,000 copies of the Scout edition of *Strength for Service to God and Community* printed for Scouts at the Latimer High Adventure Reservation.*

\$16,340 given by UM Men to the Upper Room Living Prayer Line.*

19,200 GCUMM.org website users.*

25,419 visits to the GCUMM.org website (72% new visitors).*

30,000 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* distributed, including free copies to first responders in disaster areas.**

76,004 page views on GCUMM website.*

\$85,310 given to support the Meals for Millions fund of the Society of St. Andrew.*

198,370 prayers received by the Upper Room Living Prayer Center.*

212,593 United Methodist Cub Scouts, highest of all denominations.***

365,565 United Methodists involved in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venturing, second highest of all denominations.***

485,000 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Country* distributed, primarily to members of the armed services.**

*Total in the first 10 months of 2014

**Accumulative total

***Totals for 2013

UMM leader trains 280 people in two countries

BOLINAO, Philippines—

More than 250 people gained understanding of how to “Lead like Jesus” through five workshops in the Philippines and California.

Jim Boesch, a deployed staff member of the General Commission on UM Men and a men’s ministry specialist based in Florida, began the eight-day training marathon August 15 at the 10th National Laity Congress in Bolinao.



Jim Boesch

He was accompanied by Dr. Manny Managuelod, former president of Philippines UM Men and a member of the board of directors of the Nashville-based commission.

During the three-day congress, Boesch stressed the importance of utilizing the tremendous resources evidenced by the 150 lay and servant ministers attending the event at the Rock Garden resort in the Pangasinan Province.

Boesch later challenged 60 men attending a Lead like Jesus Servant Leadership Encounter in Manila to take the learnings back to their local churches to fulfill the Great Commission.

He also led a Lead like Jesus workshop at the Philippine Christian University in Manila where he invited the 50 students from three Christian Formation classes to follow the



Students of the Philippine Christian University participate in a Lead like Jesus seminar.

servant-leadership characteristics modeled by Jesus. Dr. Managuelod serves as professor of one of the classes.

Boesch then traveled to Los Angeles, Calif., to facilitate two workshops sponsored by UM Men Western Jurisdiction President Larry Dozier.

On Friday, August 22, Boesch presented a Train-the-Trainer program process to a team of enthusiastic men and women from Hollypark United Methodist Church in Gardena, Calif.

On Saturday, he led a Lead like Jesus workshop for 22 people from numerous churches and annual conferences.

“Now is the time to apply the servant-leadership principles of Jesus to the challenges that exist in our homes, work and communities,” said Boesch. “Leading like Jesus takes us on a challenging transformational journey.” It’s a journey men and women on two continents are beginning.



Jim Boesch (center) and Manny Managuelod (right) join with other leaders of United Methodist Men in the Philippines.

UM Men Awards

The Rev. Debra Ball-Killbourne

Pastor aids flood victims

MINOT, N.D.—Men of Faith UMC presented the Rev. Debra Ball-Killbourne with the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence for helping rebuild the Minot community following a 2011 flood. She helped the church find a new home and inspired church members to continue their food pantry and soup kitchen during the flood.



The Rev. Debra Ball-Killbourne

Bill Buzza

Music teacher directs hand bell choir

AUBURN, Maine—Bill Buzza has directed the hand bell program of the UMC of Auburn since 1993. He started ringing as a member of a youth hand-bell choir at the Grant Memorial UMC in Presque Isle, Maine. He never stopped.



Bill Buzza

He teaches music at Edward Little High School in Auburn and has served as guest conductor at several music festivals and hand-bell conferences.

UM Men presented him with a Cross and Flame Award.

Kenita Gibbins

A female becomes a life member of UM Men

DENVER, Colo.—The Metropolitan District of Stout Hearted Men's Ministry presented Kenita Gibbins with a Life Membership Award. "Kenita has been faithful throughout the years as a confidante and friend," said Bob Phillips, district UM Men president. "Her

critiques have increased my leadership skills and the image of the district men's ministry."

The Rev. Victor R. Chatham

Pastor earns doctorate at age 65

LEAKESVILLE, Miss.—Leakesville UMC presented a Life Membership Award to their pastor, the Rev. Victor Chatham, who earned a doctoral degree at age 65.

He began an after-school tutorial program for neighborhood youth and provides Backpack Buddies for local families. The church also sponsors a Celebrate Recovery program for individuals with addiction problems and a Kairos Prison Ministry.



Leakesville UMC Lay Leader Stacy Eubanks presents Dr. Chatham with Life Membership Award.

Phil Fearington

Chief cook and cabbage slicer

MT. PLEASANT, N.C.—Men of Cold Springs UMC presented Phil Fearington with a Life Membership Award for helping with a monthly breakfast that serves up to 500 people and for making slaw out of 1,700 pounds of cabbage for an annual barbecue. He also helps build handicap ramps and repair roofs.

Mac Robinson and Murphy Thomas

Church gives life memberships to honorary charter members

CALEDONIA, Mo.—The UM Men organization of Caledonia Methodist Church was organized in 1952.

During an organizational meeting the Rev. John Wesley Thomas, pastor of the church, and John Robinson Sr., vice president of the newly formed organization, invited their sons—19-year-old Murphy Thomas and 13-year-old John McClure (Mac) Robinson Jr. to

become honorary members.

Sixty-seven years later the UM Men organization invited the two sons to return to receive Life Membership Awards.

Murphy is a former vice president of the Cape Farmington District UMM (now Gateway Regional) and Mac is the former president of UM Men of Belgrade UMC and Caledonia UM Men.

Mark Edmondson and Bill Huggins North Carolina men honored

GREENVILLE, N.C.—Mark Edmondson, president of North Carolina UM Men Ventures, and Bill Huggins, president of

Fairway District, were inducted as fellows in the John Wesley Society during the June, 2014, session of the North Carolina Annual Conference.

Charlie Gray, conference president presented the awards.



*Mark
Edmondson*



*Bill
Huggins*

Larry Price Jurisdictional president receives evangelism award

ALBANY, Ga.—The Foundation for Evangelism surprised Larry Price, president of Southeastern Jurisdiction UM Men, with the



Friends and family celebrate with Larry Price as he receives the Harry Denman Evangelism Award.

2014 Harry Denman Evangelism Award. The award was presented at Christ UMC by Allison Lindsey and Kelly Robertson on behalf of South Georgia Conference and the foundation.

The award expresses appreciation of Price's "exemplary leadership in the UMC and commitment to the Great Commission of Christ by helping persons experience God's transforming love through Jesus Christ."

The Denman Award is annually presented to one lay person and one clergy person in each annual conference.

The Rev. Oscar Carrasco Men honor superintendent

ELGIN, Ill.—UM Men of the Elgin District of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference honored their superintendent, the Rev. Oscar Carrasco, with a Life Membership Award.



*The Rev. Oscar
Carrasco*

The district covers 65 local churches, led by 72 elders, deacons, licensed local pastors and lay missionaries. The district includes two federated congregations, three Latino-Hispanic congregations, four new Latino-Hispanic new faith communities and six Korean congregations.

Vance Miller Former district president helps build college chapel

CARY, N.C.—Men of First UMC presented a Life Membership Award to Vance Miller, a lay speaker and former president of Raleigh District UM Men.

Miller helped raise funds to build the chapel at Louisburg College and replace windows of one of historic buildings at the same two-year UM school.

A former Sunday school superintendent and unit commissioner of a Boy Scout troop, he was instrumental in establishing a \$1,000 scholarship for a music student at a North Carolina UM university.

United Methodists seek to reverse Scout losses

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—The number of young people involved in Scouting declined from 2.85 million in 2012 to 2.49 million in 2013 (the last full year of reporting).

The number of youth involved in scouting programs within the UMC declined from 365,565 in 2012 to 349,614 in 2013.

The General Commission on UM Men is seeking ways to reverse the loss of nearly 16,000 young people.

“Churches with members who don’t look like their neighborhood can change that through scouting,” said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the commission.

“Scouting is down because the church is losing its identity as a servant of the community,” said Bishop James Swanson, president of the commission. “If we don’t see our role as serving the people of the community our numbers will continue to go down.”

The bishop said efforts to increase the number of young people in churches must begin with children. He called for a new emphasis on Cub and Daisy Scouts. “You can’t get youth without beginning with children,” he said.

Larry Coppock, commission staff executive for scouting, said efforts to help churches understand how scouting can expand their ministries is supported by 261 scouting ministry specialists, Bishop’s Dinners for Scouting, and “Faith in Scouting,” a six-minute film produced in cooperation with the Boy Scouts (http://youtu.be/4mjrJ_73shY).



The General Commission on UM Men discusses ways to encourage UM congregations to begin scouting ministries. Led by Phil Howard, chair of the Scouting Ministry Committee of the commission, the 20-member group also discussed relationships with Girl Scouts of the USA, Camp Fire, Big Brothers Big Sister, and 4-H.

Coppock said 6,300 UM young people received God and Country awards through the St. Louis-based Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY), the highest number of all denominations (<http://www.praypub.org/>).

United Methodists lead all denominations

with 212,503 Cub Scouts and is second with 129,503 Boy Scouts in 4,837 UM churches. Many of the 988 churches with Venturing crews use that co-educational program for their youth organization.

The 2014 meeting of the commission also agreed to continue to provide 6,500 “Backpacking New Testaments” to Scouts attending Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, Northern Tier High Adventure bases in Minnesota and Canada, the Summit in West Virginia, and the Florida Sea Base.

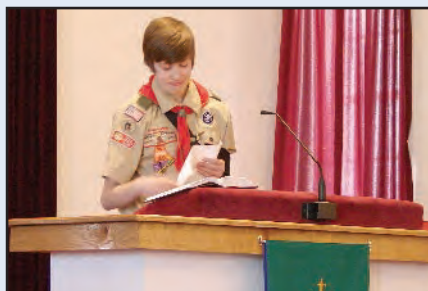
Twenty Ideas for Scout Sunday

You may celebrate Boy Scout Sunday on February 8 and Girl Scout Sunday on March 8 or you may combine the two into one Scout Sunday.

Most churches encourage Scouts to wear uniforms on Scout Sunday, but if you begin planning now the day will include more than a change in apparel.

Consider the following possibilities and begin planning now.

1. Encourage troop(s) to wear uniforms and sit together in the worship service.
2. Invite Scouts to serve as ushers and acolytes.
3. Have Scouts lead responsive readings and read the Scripture.
4. Have a display in the hallway about scouting.
5. Provide a table for young people to sign up for troops or packs.
6. Have a Saturday Night lock-in at the church; arrange a model campsite.
7. Put Scouts in charge of the refreshments.
8. Present a plaque with the names of church members who achieved the rank of Eagle.
9. Present Good Samaritan Awards to young people.
10. Present Cross and Flame Awards to adult leaders.
11. Invite a scouting ministry specialist to speak.
12. Ask people who have been involved in scouting in any form to stand.
13. If the troop has recently re-chartered, have the charter presented by



the scouting official to the pastor.

14. Present the troop with a Bishop's Award of Excellence.
15. Present a Shepherd Church Charter Recognition.
16. Present God and Country awards received from the Programs of Religious Activities with Youth.
17. Coordinate a "Scouting for Food" drive with Scout Sunday; invite church members to bring canned goods to church.
18. Conduct a work day after the service.
19. Honor Eagle Scouts with a copy of *Strength for Service to God and Community*.
20. Tell story of scouting ministry in church newsletter.

For more information, visit <http://www.gcumm.org/ministries/scouting>.



EMS veteran serves as scouting ministry specialist

BEECH ISLAND, S.C.—Joseph Chandler, a 34-year veteran in emergency services, an Eagle Scout, and a district Scout executive, now serves as a scouting ministry specialist.

Following his retirement from the Fire Department of the Savannah River Department of Energy and while seeking a way to serve and minister to others, Chandler accepted a position of executive of the Yamasee (S.C.) District of the Georgia-Carolina BSA Council, headquartered in Augusta, Ga.

Encourages churches

“I looked at the South Carolina counties I serve,” said Chandler. “In areas where no Scout troops exist, I contacted UMC churches to make them aware of the possibility of beginning a troop or a pack.” Noting that the UMC has the second highest number of Scout units nationwide, Chandler says churches of that denomination are one of the first places to look when seeking organizations to charter new units.

“In less than a month of starting to make contacts, I have one UMC that wants to start a unit and another pastor asking for information that can be reviewed by his church council,” says Chandler.

Through the ranks

The son of a Methodist minister, Chandler was brought up in the church and scouting. He began in Cub Scouts through Webelos and received the Arrow of Light award. As a Boy Scout he received the God and Country Award, the Order of the Arrow, Scout Life Guard, and he achieved the rank of Eagle. He has also served as junior assistant scoutmaster, assistant scoutmaster, scoutmaster, cubmaster and chaplain. “I held some of these positions only for short periods of time due to my work schedule in emergency services,” he says.

Well prepared

In addition to training in stress management, trauma care and emergency medical service, Chandler has received an Associate in



Joseph Chandler at an Order of the Arrow event

Science in Criminal Justice degree from the University of South Carolina, a Bachelor of Science in Multidisciplinary Studies from Liberty University, and a Bachelor of Theology and a Master of Arts in Biblical Studies degree from the American Bible College and Seminary, and a Doctorate in Practical Ministry in Chaplaincy from Master’s International School of Divinity.

A member of Capers Chapel UMC in Beech Island, S.C., Chandler is a candidate for the position of local pastor. “I have had the opportunity to preach on many occasions in the past and enjoy doing so,” said the Scout leader.

Life of service

“Being a pastor or a professional Scout executive are both great ways to serve others while serving God. God will direct our path and open the doors to where He desires us to be,” he says.

Chandler wants to thank churches that have scouting as part of their ministry and he encourages other UM congregations to look into having scouting as part of their ministry. “Wherever I serve, I plan to share scouting in any way I can because I know scouting makes a difference in a person’s life,” he concludes.

LaValley serves in scouting ministry post in Cote d'Ivoire

ABIDJAN, Cote d'Ivoire—

Ty LaValley, a scouting ministry specialist and a former paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division, is now serving as a missionary for the General Board of Global Ministries.

The scouting ministry position in Cote d'Ivoire is the first of its kind for the New York-based mission agency.

Following training in Quito, Ecuador, LaValley was deployed in November for a 3-4-year term as the scouting ministry coordinator utilizing the World Scouting Messenger of Peace program.

Following 14 years as director of spiritual formation for a local church and service as a district executive with the Georgia-Carolina BSA Council, LaValley is using scouting ministry to point young people to Christ. He is also suggesting ways in which the Cote d'Ivoire churches can use scouting in confirmation classes.

LaValley is well equipped to serve in the post.

He is the recipient of a Bachelor of Science degree from Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C., and a Certificate in Christian Education from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill. A former lay speaker and Sunday school teacher, he is a scouting ministry specialist with the General Commission on UM Men.

As a Scout executive he has led 600 volunteers in support of more than 2,000 youth in eight counties around Augusta. He received the Silver Torch Award from UM Men and the Heroism Award from BSA.

“For the first 31 years of my life, my worldview was defined by war; then, while serving on the NATO staff in Bosnia, I discovered how to wage peace,” says LaValley.



Ty LaValley

He says, he was crushed when his local church eliminated his position as director of spiritual formation. “Little did I know, in the pain of my loss, I would be led to become a professional scouter,” he says. “This proved to be an excellent training ground for this first-of-its-kind mission assignment.”

“Effective missions meets people where they are and assists them in gathering resources and developing ministries in such a way that their capacities are built up,” says LaValley. “Missions must be executed within the context of the

culture I am serving in.”

He is married to Cheryl, an elementary school teacher who will teach English and coordinate UM Volunteers-in-Mission teams in the west African nation.

The couple has two adult children: Joey-26, an anthropologist whose wife, Dr. Chrissina Burke, lectures at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, and Dana, 19, a music therapy major at Georgia College and State University in Milledgeville, Ga.



Ty LaValley Patch

God and Country class starts journey to ordination

By Christopher D. Owens

When working with young people, we never know the huge impact we may be making on a life.

Case in point: over 30 years ago, the Rev. Dr. Ken Lyons taught a God and Country class for local Cub Scouts.

A boy's mother signed him up for this class in the belief that some faith instruction might be a good thing.

This boy and his family were not churchgoers. In fact, at age 9, he had no idea how to read a Bible.

Lessons learned

Ken taught the youngster how to read the Bible along with some basics of the faith. He learned about Jesus, Christian love and faithfulness, and what it means to live as a Christian in his home, school and community.

That knowledge and skill received in the God and Country study helped shape his life.

Nine years later, this same boy—now an Eagle Scout—accepted a classmate's invitation to visit Mt. Zion UMC in Lothian, Md.

He accepted the invitation because he remembered how loved he was by Ken Lyons and his church.

The young man later gave his life to Christ and was baptized.

A year later, he answered God's call upon his life to enter the ordained ministry.

I am that young boy.

While I was not raised in a church and I was nominally Christian at best, God conveniently used things within my scouting experience to move me towards faith in Jesus.

The 12th point of the Scout Law states that a Scout is reverent. And there are pastors like Ken Lyons who take the time to mentor Scouts in the faith through the God and Country program.

Looking back at my strange road to faith in Jesus and the ordained ministry, I'm reminded that coming to faith and answering God's call is never contained in isolated moments. It truly is a long journey of steps forward and backwards, lessons learned—often the hard way, and the persistent, patient love of Christian mentors like pastors, youth workers, parents, and other adults.

God and Country is one of those pieces, and when I was an unchurched child, a pastor like Ken Lyons teaching God and Country was a highly impactful part of my journey.

Ordination

Ten years ago, I knelt before my bishop to be ordained as an elder in the UMC. One of the hands on my head belonged to the Rev. Ken Lyons. After all those years, he remembered me and agreed to be one of my ordination sponsors.

It all began with a God and Country program he taught to a Cub Scout eager to learn about the Christian faith.

The God and Country program is now managed by Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) and the Rev. Ken Lyons is a former president of that St. Louis-based organization.



The Rev. Christopher D. Owens is guide for the Annapolis-Southern Region of the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

Scouting Awards

Gene Wenzel

Church honors scout leader

MENA, Ark.—First UMC presented a Silver Torch to Gene for leading the church's Scout troop. He also enabled the church to receive the Bishop's Award of Excellence in Scouting.

"Gene has been a driving force in scouting through his life," said the Rev. Gary Harrison, pastor of First UMC. "He has served as scouting coordinator and a member of the Finance Committee, the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, the Board of Trustees and probably every other committee."

Bret Harvey

He built a well house for VFW post

BLOOMINGBURG, N.Y.—Mountain View UMC presented Bret with a Good Samaritan Award after he build a well house for the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Wurtsboro.

A structure that once protected spring water about 400 yards from the VFW post was severely damaged by Hurricane Sandy.

"My friends, fellow Scouts, my family and I

completed the project in about six weekends," said Bret. "I raised enough money to complete the project with quality products so the veterans will not have to worry about their water for at least 30 years."



Bret and fellow builders stand before the new well house.

Michael Sackett

Medical miracle sends newsletters to seniors

HOUSTON, Texas—St. Stephen's UMC presented Michael, a 15-year-old medical miracle, with a Good Samaritan Award.

The 9th grade Boy Scout was born with only two heart chambers instead of the normal four; he was not expected to live beyond his 3rd birthday. However, after three open-heart operations, he now lives as a normal teenager.



Michael Sackett

The church honored him for preparing and addressing the *Palm Leaf*, a letter for senior adults. He also serves as an acolyte and prepares bags of food and toiletries for the homeless.

"He's thinking about owning a business because he likes the idea of being his own boss," said his mother, Gloria Sackett. "He's also figuring out if God is calling him to be a pastor."

Eliana Giantonio

She cares for others while receiving treatments for blood disorder

PLEASANT VALLEY, Conn.—Eliana balances trips to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center for hematology treatments



Eliana Giantonio

with efforts to provide fish hats for other cancer patients.

She started Fish Hats for Hem/Onc after her doctor admired her knitted hat and suggested other children would love to have one.

After speaking to churches, libraries, and knitting stores, she was interviewed on the radio and television. That effort, combined with knitting classes, resulted in 70 fish hats for children receiving treatment for cancer.

Pleasant Valley UMC presented Eliana with a Good Samaritan Award for her care for other cancer patients, participation in a soup kitchen ministry, packaging care packages for the military, and community beautification efforts.

The Girl Scout Cadette also received a God and Me Award and a Bronze Award while participating in a choral team, the year-book club and the drama club.

Ashley Civelli ***Athlete and musician receives Good Samaritan Award***

TORRINGTON, Conn.—Ashley, 14, plays softball, soccer and swims and she is a member of the award-winning Forbes Elementary School Flyers Precision Jump Rope Team.

She still finds time to play clarinet in a middle school band and a jazz band. She also plays the piano.

The winner of three Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) Awards, she is a member of the National Junior Honor Society.

She received the bronze award as a junior Girl Scout for writing a Christmas pageant in 2009, and in 2014 she was selected to represent Torrington at a wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Matthew Civelli ***Baseball player receives three God and Country awards***

TORRINGTON, Conn.—Matthew, 12, has been playing baseball since age 3. He also plays

soccer and basketball and is a member of the award-winning Forbes Elementary School Flyers Precision Jump Rope Team.

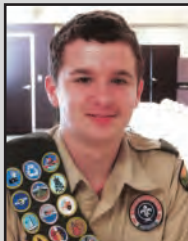
He has received three PRAY awards and all 20 Webelos activity pins. Becoming a Boy Scout in 2013, he has earned ten merit badges and serves as quartermaster. He participates in service projects including planting flowers and placing flags in cemeteries on Memorial Day and collecting food for food pantries.



Matthew Civelli

Bailey Hammett ***Scout nearly misses award ceremony***

LONGVIEW, Texas—Bailey almost didn't make it to an awards ceremony because he was busy mowing someone's yard. His mother tried to keep track of the number of hours he gave in service to others, but she couldn't keep up. "It's an impossible task," she said.



Bailey Hammett

Bob Cathcart ***Forty-year veteran scout honored***

SPRINGFIELD, Ohio—Bob Cathcart, chartered organization representative for Enon (Ohio) UMC, received the "Outstanding Eagle Scout Award" from the Tecumseh Council.



From left: Elwin Spray; Mike Walton, speaker; Bob Cathcart; Ed Deen, council commissioner; and Mike Crothers, area training chair.

A 40-year scouter, he served for five years as scoutmaster and now serves as advancement chair for the council.

The award was presented by Elwin Spray, a scouting ministry specialist and the recipient of the same award in 2013.

Charles Carpenter
Men honor conference scouting coordinator

CRIMORA, Va.—Crimora UMC presented a Cross and Flame Award to Charles Carpenter, scouting coordinator for Virginia Annual Conference. The church honored the 50-year Scout veteran on Feb. 2, Scout Sunday.

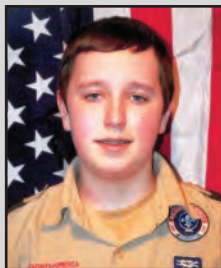


From left: Steve Hammond, Stonewall Jackson BSA Council; Charles Carpenter; Martin Shirilla, scouting coordinator for the Frederiksberg District; and Kemper Dadisman, scouting coordinator for the Harrisonburg District.

Spencer Jolley
Scout begins ministry to nursing home

WESTERVILLE, Ohio—In 2009, Cub Scout Spencer led an effort to provide Christmas gifts to 75 residents of Columbus Colony, a nursing home.

Spencer is now a four-star recipient of PRAY awards and a Boy Scout who has given



Spencer Jolley

70 hours of service to the Church of the Messiah and the Westerville community.

Cub Pack 966 continues to provide gifts to Colony residents.

Zachary Kruse
Scout raises 200 pounds of produce

GARNERVILLE, N.Y.—Zachary received a Good Samaritan Award from Carson Valley UMC on Palm Sunday.



He was recognized for planting various fruits and vegetables in a community garden, which resulted in 200 pounds of produce for the Carson Valley Food Closet.

From left: Zachary Kruse stands in his garden with Tom Dallaire, town manager of Garnerville; Ken Kruse, and Carol Sandmeier a member of the Gardnerville group that sponsors the public garden.

Emily Harrell
Venture Scout recycles 3 million plastic bottles

BUCKHANNON, W.Va.—Last January, 300,000 residents in the Kanawha Valley, W.Va., started using bottled water after a chemical leak contaminated their water supply. Emily, a member of Crew 68 chartered by Cross Lanes UMC, organized the first recycling center at Cross Lanes church parking lot. She collected 3 million plastic bottles at the church site for recycling.



The Rev. Dr. J.F. Lacaria, assistant to the bishop, and Bishop Steiner Ball present Emily Harrell with a Good Samaritan Award during a session of the West Virginia Annual Conference.

Barrett Heidtbrink *People hear the sermon*

KILLEEN, Texas—Members of First UMC can hear the sermon and sing the hymns thanks to Barrett who operates the sound booth and projector.

“He doesn’t boast about helping, he just sees a need and steps in to fill it,” says Sarah Stone, youth director.

The church presented Barrett with a Good Samaritan Award.



Barrett Heidtbrink operates projection and sound system

Christopher Railsback *Scout sees gratitude of people*

HOUSTON, Texas—Christopher says his service at the Manna Food Pantry showed him how grateful people are for “something as small as a bag of food.”

“If everyone could do things like this, one can only imagine how great society could become,” says Christopher.

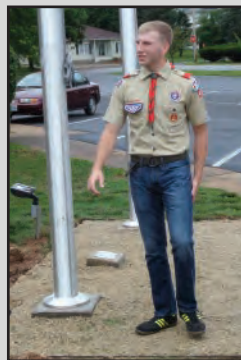
St. Matthews UMC presented him with a Good Samaritan Award.



Christopher Railsback

Zack Scruggs *Scout erects flag poles*

FARMINGTON, Mo.— For his Eagle Scout project, Zach organized and led members of the Boy Scout Troop 471 to erect poles for the American flag and the Christian flag in front of Memorial UMC.



Zack Scruggs

Patrick Cypert, Michael Hazzis, and Nathaniel Whitman *Three attain rank of Eagle*

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.—Patrick Cypert, Michael Hazzis, and Nathaniel Whitman became the 48th, 49th, and 50th Scouts to attain the rank of Eagle Scout in the 43-year history of Troop 417 chartered to St. Andrew’s UMC.

Patrick’s Eagle project consisted of constructing mounting steps and saddle racks for the Mounted Patrol Division of the Virginia Beach Police Department.

Michael supervised the restoration and painting of the two church storage sheds, and improvements to the grounds around the sheds.

Nathaniel enhanced the church courtyard with new landscaping, a flower bed and a fence to hide utility equipment.



From left: Patrick Cypert, Michael Hazzis, and Nathaniel Whitman

Sean McCarthy

Four Stars for an Eagle Scout

SHARPSBURG, Ga.—Sean McCarthy, 16, an Eagle Scout of a troop at Cokes Chapel UMC earned the Four Star Award from Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY).

A recipient of 87 merit badges and six Eagle Palms, Sean serves as junior assistant scoutmaster. He is the son of Jim McCarthy, assistant commissioner at the Flint River BSA Council.



Sean McCarthy

Abigail (Abi) Hoyle

Girl Scout harvests 1,000 pounds of sweet potatoes

LINCOLNTON, N.C.—Abi and Carrie Huffstetler planted 500 sweet potato slips

on the grounds of Crowell Memorial UMC. With the help of her parents, grandmother and Carrie, Abi harvested 1,000 pounds of sweet potatoes. The potatoes were finally delivered to Amy's House, part of the North Carolina Victim Assistance Network.

Abi received a gold award for the project, and Crowell Memorial UMC presented her with a Good Samaritan Award.



Family and friend prepare to deliver sweet potatoes to Amy's House. From left: Mary Hoyle, mother of Abigail; Carrol Heavner who temporarily stored the potatoes; Becky Hoyle, Abigail's grandmother; Abi and Carrie.

Let 'er crawl

During a fired-up sermon, the spirit impressed a great illustration on a local pastor. He said, "Our church needs to get back to the basics. We need to become like a babe, and learn to get up on our hands and knees and crawl like we've never CRAWLED before.

From the back of the sanctuary came a voice crying out, "**Let 'er CRAWL preacher, let 'er CRAWL.**"

The pastor continued, "Then we need to work on studying the word and strengthening ourselves to where we can STAND and be strong in our faith.

From the back, the voice replied, "**Let 'er STAND preacher, let 'er STAND.**"

Encouraged, the pastor said, "This church needs to then take one step at a time, putting one foot in front of the other until

we can WALK with the Lord the way we should."

"Let 'er WALK preacher, let 'er WALK."

By now the pastor was fully inspired by the encouraging brother in the back.

"The church needs to then get into a stride where we can RUN for God.

"You're each going to have to make a commitment to tithe, study the Word daily, pray daily, and assemble here every time the church doors are open.

"Then and only then, can this church RUN for the Lord."

After an exceptionally long and thoughtful pause the voice cried out from the back of the sanctuary with a somewhat disappointed tone, . . .

"Let 'er CRAWL Preacher, Let 'er CRAWL."

humor



Society of St. Andrew

GLEANNING AMERICA'S FIELDS FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

(Advance Special #801600)

Encourage your Men's Group to feed the hungry by getting involved in these two important programs

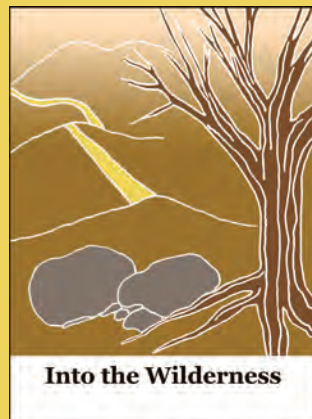
What has a bigger impact than a trio of 300-pound linebackers going after a quarterback? **YOU!** Participate in the **2015 Souper Bowl of Caring.**



Souper Bowl of Caring is a nationwide hunger-relief effort that takes place each year during the week leading up to the Super Bowl and on Super Bowl Sunday. Host a potato bar, have a sub sandwich sale, collect donations with giant soup pots, or have a team competition—seeing which Super Bowl team can generate the most donations. For more information, visit www.endhunger.org/souper_bowl.htm. Register your participation at www.tacklehunger.org and select “Society of St. Andrew” as your charity.

Into the Wilderness Daily Devotions for Lent

Into the Wilderness is the theme of the Society of St. Andrew's 2015 Lenten Devotions and Giving Program, featuring 47 all-new daily meditations written by pastors and laypeople from all walks of life, exploring God's presence in wilderness and temptation experiences in our lives. Lent begins on February 18, so pre-order your Lenten resources now, at www.endhunger.org/lent.htm. Materials will begin shipping in November. ➤



Please share with all of the men of the church.



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