



Districts cherish the moments

They're official now. The United Methodist churches in central Oklahoma formally organized Feb. 21 as Heartland and Crossroads Districts. The people packed OKC-Wesley Church, celebrating those new structures and also the ministry of Bishop Robert Hayes. They vowed, "God, we accept your call to be missional," and the departing hymn was "Lead on, O King Eternal." Top left: District Administrators Stacey



PHOTOS BY HUGH SCOTT JR.

Sprayberry, left, and Jill Perrin harmonize. Above: Bishop Hayes serves Communion. Among those also leading were Superintendents Greg Tener

and Rockford Johnson, District Lay Leaders Leon Wilson and Vicki Trussell, and Jeremy Basset and Marla Lobo, Wesley's pastors.



A stunning parade of banners and signs from churches and campus ministries opened the Cimarron District Conference & Celebration on Feb. 28 at Woodward-First UMC. Far right: Colin Wilson, 12, carries the banner for rural Chapel Hill UMC,

near Elk City. A ministry fair and fellowship preceded the program, which featured the 125 voices of a district-wide choir and Bishop Hayes preaching on "The Point of No Return." The overflow crowd required extra seating beyond the glass walls

of First Church's sanctuary. Congregational singing included "This Is a Day of New Beginnings." Among leaders were Superintendent Charlie Graves, District Lay Leader Carla Garrison, and First Church Pastor Shannon Davis.



PHOTOS BY HOLLY MCCRAY

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Wichitas welcome new DA

Andrea Dollarhite started work as the new Wichitas District administrator on Feb. 15 at the Lawton office.

She brings to the post skills in accounting and business management.

She also was the drum major for Oklahoma State University's marching band in 2006.



Andrea Dollarhite

"I grew up in the church participating in the praise band on trombone and competing in Bible Drill," Andrea said.

A Jenks High School graduate, she majored in Instrumental Music Education at OSU. She performed in Japan with the OSU Wind Ensemble.

"In 2007, I felt God push me to become active in the United Methodist Church in Stillwater," she said. "I joined and soon

began working with the youth and young adults at the church." That's where she met clergyman Brandon Dollarhite.

In 2009, the couple married at Arnett UMC, which he was pastoring. Andrea worked in the 4-H program for the OSU Extension Office, and they helped establish the Arnett Arts Alliance.

They moved to Hobart in 2012. Andrea participated in First UMC's bell choir and Relay for Life team and taught the youth.

In May 2015, Andrea graduated from Cameron University with a bachelor's degree in accounting, and she has begun the Master of Business Administration program there.

She was business manager for the Wesley Foundation at Cameron University and worked in finance for two nonprofits prior to her new post.

The Dollarhites have two children. Rev. Dr. Dollarhite is appointed as campus minister of the Wesley Foundation at Cameron.

Appointments

Tim Ford, from the Wesley Foundation at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, to Durant-First associate pastor/Wesley Foundation at SEOSU, effective March 1.

David Jones, from Manitou to Manitou/Tipton, effective March 1.

Lynn Rudd, from Elmer/Tipton to Elmer, effective March 1.

Max Whipple, new, to Morning Star UMC, effective March 1.

Tasha Hollopeter, new, to Chelsea-Epworth UMC, effective Feb. 15.

Employment

Executive Director: Criminal Justice & Mercy Ministries (CJAMM). Full-time. Ministers to those incarcerated and re-entering society and to their families. Send letter of interest, resume, and five personal references to: Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries, Attn: Search Committee, 1501 NW 24th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73106-3635.

Site director for Cross Point Camp: Oklahoma Conference Camp & Retreat Ministries. Full-time. Job description available at www.okcamps.org under the "About Us/Jobs" tab. Send resume or inquiry to campjobs@okumc.org

Caretaker: Tulsa District campground at Fort Gibson Lake. Full-time, lake home, utilities paid. Busiest months are March-early November. Call or email David Hargrove,

918-852-8481, dahargrove4230@gmail.com

Two part-time jobs: Yukon-Church of the Good Shepherd. **Director for Children's Day Out/after-school programs** and 20-hour **Church Secretary**. Send resume to Michael Burkett at Michael@umcgs.org

Two part-time positions: OKC-Nichols Hills UMC. **Director of Children's Ministry and Nursery Attendant**. Send resume to Trevor Smith at revtrevor@gmail.com or 1212 Bedford Drive, Nichols Hills, OK 73116.

Minister of Music: Cordell-First UMC. Part-time. Call 580-832-3343 or email resume to cordell1umc@cableone.net

Worship Arts Director: Shawnee-Wesley UMC. Part-time. Send resume to wesleychurchoffice@sbcglobal.net

OCU World House strives to achieve Dr. King's vision

"We have inherited a big house, a great world house in which we have to live together." These words from Martin Luther King Jr. inspire the mission of the World House Institute for Social and Ecological Responsibility at Oklahoma City University.

OCU's World House seeks to cultivate a systemic transformation for a more peaceful, just, and sustainable world, guided by the *Social Principles* of The United Methodist Church.

Mark Davies created the institute as a means of focusing the work of several programs at OCU, striving for a common purpose. Rev. Dr. Davies, a UM clergyman, is the institute's director and the Wimberly Professor of Social and Ecological Ethics at OCU.

Since 2003, OCU has recognized the importance of incorporating service learning in its curriculum to connect classroom work with enhancing the life of the broader community. These classes now are coordinated through the Vivian Wimberly Center for Ethics and Servant Leadership, which also sponsors the World House Scholars Program.

As many as 10 first-year students and five sophomores are selected each year to join this learning cohort focused on issues of peace, justice, and ecological sustainability.

Also OCU's Owen Wimberly Center for Continuing Education in Religion hosts a number of learning events for clergy and laity. This includes the Neustadt Lectures, dedicated to Jewish studies, and the Willson Lectures, which cover a variety of topics.

Additionally, the World House Institute promotes interfaith service and cooperation through a variety of programs. OCU has been working with Interfaith Youth Core to learn and implement best practices from other universities. This has led to the start of a Better



Embracing the **UNITED METHODIST** tradition of scholarship and service



From left: Wendy Zierler, who presented the recent Neustadt Lectures, with OCU students Morgan Mitchell, Olivia Coil, and Melaina Riley. The annual lectures are part of the World House Institute.

Together student group this spring. The institute also hosts the Oklahoma Interfaith Power and Light Program, whose mission is to help religious communities promote renewable energy, conservation, and energy efficiency.

The World House Institute seeks to realize the vision Dr. King cast in the same speech that included the words opening this article: "... black and white, Easterners and Westerners, Gentiles and Jews, Catholics and Protestants, Muslim and Hindu, a family unduly separated in ideas, culture, and interests who, because we can never again live without each other, must learn, somehow, in this one big world, to live with each other."

World Religion Expo set for April 3

The World Religion Expo is Sunday, April 3, from 2 to 5 p.m. at OCU. It will be held on the first floor of the Gold Star Building on campus.

The public is welcome; churches' youth and adult groups from across the state especially are invited.

The free expo offers a wonderful opportunity in one place for people to learn about a variety of faith traditions.

Participants will tour stations that involve them in learning experiences about Protestants as well as Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i, Buddhist, Dao, and other faith groups.

Every year is different. Several stations include foods that connect to religion or culture.

The expo is a good way to learn about the beliefs, worship traditions, and other interesting facts of each faith community. Students and other visitors are encouraged to ask questions.

Past activities have included opportunities to participate in Buddhist meditation, Tai Chi, dance, etc.

The World Religion Expo is sponsored by both "Introduction to Biblical Literature" and "Introduction to World Religion" classes, as a service-learning component for OCU students taking those courses.

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Strength for the journey: A collection of ideas and thoughts from our bishop

What happened next?

“Now on that same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about 7 miles from Jerusalem. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.”

(Luke 24:13, 15-16 NRSV)

BY BISHOP ROBERT HAYES JR.

Of many experiences throughout the course of my life, certain ones linger in memory, refusing to be forgotten no matter how long ago they happened. Such is the case for an encounter I had with my son Ryan when he was only 7 years old.

It happened at the end of a long day at church on an Easter Sunday. We had begun with joyous sunrise



Bishop Hayes

anthems that proclaimed the resurrection of our Lord and continued all morning as hundreds of people, clad in their Easter Sunday best, filed in and out of church. The last event was an afternoon children’s program, where speeches rehearsed for weeks were performed before proud parents, snapping picture after picture.

On the way home from church, I could tell my young son was deeply thoughtful and somewhat puzzled. I asked, “What are you thinking about?”

“Daddy, what happened after Easter?”

Taken by surprise, I asked him to explain.

“Well,” Ryan said, “all day long we’ve been saying that Jesus is risen. What happened after that?”

I sensed he was really perplexed — and so was I upon hearing his question. I told him that, over a period of 40 days, Jesus was seen by many people, and then he returned to heaven to be with God.

“What happened after that?” he asked again.

And, doing what most parents do to avoid a child’s steady barrage of questioning, I answered, “Well, son, you’ll just have to find out for yourself!”

I remember that conversation as though it happened yesterday. Only now have I realized that answer applies to all of us.

The only way to know what happened after the resurrection is to encounter the risen Lord for yourself.

Jesus rose! And for one glorious day each year we celebrate and acknowledge that triumph over death. But after Easter Sunday, some people are guilty of re-burying Jesus in the graveyard of their disbelief, doubts, and fears.

I pray that you are like other people, those who know the resurrection means that God is not content to let life end in a graveyard, that God always has the last word, and that love is the everlasting victor!

Traveling on the road to Emmaus following the crucifixion, the story seemed to have ended at the cross for two discouraged followers of Jesus. They were disillusioned and heartbroken. And yet, while they were discussing the events of that fateful weekend, Jesus himself drew near.

But they failed to recognize him.

Jesus draws near to us even this day, but so often people fail to see him, know him, and be in fellowship with him because they have confined him to a single day, a once-a-year event.

No! The story of the resurrection did not end on the day the women went to the tomb and found it empty.

It did not end when the two Emmaus travelers later recognized Jesus after he had broken bread with them and then vanished from their sight.

The story did not end when Jesus stood among his disciples in a room behind locked doors, saying, “Peace be with you.”

Nor did it end when Jesus was taken from their sight, ascending to heaven.

The resurrection story continues each and every time we recognize that Easter affirms we can have new life, eternal life! We can be renewed if we want to be; we can live in the power of the resurrection even now.

Jesus rose. Now what happens? That single act assures us of the promise that through the power of the Holy Spirit we can be drawn into a deeper relationship with God and ever-more-satisfying relationships with each other. We are reminded that death itself is merely an incident as we pass into a perfect expression of the life God already has given us.

The southern tip of Africa was called the Cape of Storms long ago, because the waters are so turbulent and unsettled. Sailors in the Middle Ages dreaded being routed around that cape, truly expecting to die. Then Vasco da Gama of Portugal successfully sailed around the tip of Africa on his way to India and returned home to tell of his adventure.

King John II was so moved by his testimony that in 1488 he changed the Cape of Storms name to the Cape of Good Hope.

Down through human history, the grave long seemed a cape of storms because death had the last word. But then Jesus burst forth from the tomb. He arose from the grave, and to all believers it has become a cape of good hope.

That’s what happened after Easter and, I tell you truthfully, it still happens every day!



CONNECTING FOR A CAUSE — From left, Charles Neff of Oklahoma City University greets missionaries Lisa and Jamie Williams of Corozal Town, Belize, Central America, on Feb. 22 at the United Methodist Ministry Center. During Winter Break, Rev. Dr. Neff led a group of OCU students in mission service, including helping build a high school, in an area of Belize where the Williamses are assigned. From Kentucky, the couple served two years as Individual Volunteers in Mission in Belize before entering missionary service with the General Board of Global Ministries in 2013. Jamie is a pastor and lay leadership specialist; Lisa coordinates volunteers. Among the Oklahoma churches supporting the Williamses are Lost Creek UMC and OKC-Chapel Hill.

Counting on support

Giving to missions shows increase

Missionaries and mission projects received outstanding financial support in 2015 from Oklahoma Conference United Methodists, according to Karen Distefano of Bartlesville.

She is the Conference’s secretary of global ministries.

Tops in the jurisdiction

Oklahomans gave \$191,289 to missionaries in 2015.

That total far surpassed missionary funding from any other annual conference in the South Central Jurisdiction, according to year-end statistics from Distefano.

Overall jurisdictional giving was \$626,344. Oklahomans contributed 30.5 percent of that amount.

Central Texas Conference gave \$124,025, the second highest amount.

Meet the General Conference’s leader in planning

Judi Kenaston of the West Virginia Conference chairs the commission that plans the General Conference, the denomination’s top legislative body, which will meet May 10-20 in Portland, Ore.

It’s a volunteer role.

“I have prayed for General Conference every day, from the moment I was asked to chair the commission” in 2008, said the lifelong United Methodist.

She said she enjoys the worship and fellowship as well as the paperwork and processes of the global meeting.

GC2016 will be her fourth time at the

The Advance

At the denomination level, the Advance enables voluntary, designated giving to mission projects and missionaries who serve through the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM).

In 2015, Oklahoma’s churches, individuals, and groups gave an impressive amount through the Advance: \$743,799.

That is a significant increase when compared to the Conference’s total of \$593,752 Advance support in 2014, Distefano reported.

“Thank you for your dedication to supporting our missionaries around the world!” she declared.

To contact her, email okcsgm@gmail.com. Find a list of some Oklahoma-related mission personnel on page 39 of the latest Conference *Journal*.

meeting, which has become a family affair. Her husband will be a marshal, and their son, who is a Global Mission Fellow, is a reserve lay delegate. Kenaston is full-time secretary for the West Virginia Conference.

The GC commission has implemented major technology changes for 2016, including tablets, to improve communication across many languages.

“We began to use the headsets and to do simultaneous interpretation. It makes a huge difference. As they speak I see what they’re saying, see their facial expression.” (United Methodist News Service)



New People New Places

Grants totaling \$670,740 were awarded by the NPNP Team to 22 projects, from among 44 applicants, especially designed to help the Church reach more, younger, and more diverse people in Oklahoma. This is the second round of awards, and they will be approved at the 2016 Annual Conference.



PHOTOS BY CHRIS SCHUTZ

FOOD TRUCK ROLLS OUT — Lenny Kaplan serves a meal from the new mobile food kitchen operated by the Ice Angels ministry, which is led by Kaplan and his wife, Mary, lower right. A \$44,600 grant from New People New Places in 2015 provided for the concession trailer, a van, and generator. The Kaplans make rounds to several Oklahoma City locations to offer food, clothing, and other necessities to underprivileged people. These photos were taken at SW Sixth and Shartel. Lenny Kaplan draws on previous experience as a hotel chef to make the meals. Skyline Urban Ministries provides food, and OKC-Mosaic UMC is the Ice Angels' home base. The couple started out several years ago by offering bottles of cold water to street people one hot summer day. One of the recipients dubbed them the Ice Angels.

1 CAL'S SERVICE STATION Calumet & Red Rock Churches \$28,314

Low-income children and unchurched families are showing up by the dozens to participate in an after-school program called Cal's Service Station, a shared ministry by neighboring Calumet and Red Rock Churches. The program is based at Calumet UMC and has grown from 5 to 55, now reaching almost half of the elementary population of Calumet Public Schools. The youngsters so closely identify "Cal's Church" as their church home that the 2015 Vacation Bible School had a record attendance of 83, and 31 children were sent to youth camps. (In 2010, Calumet's population was 543. Worship attendance is 37 at Calumet UMC and 58 at Red Rock UMC).

2 COMMUNITY DINNER Miami-First UMC \$2,950

Unconnected residents of Miami, Okla., find true community, a path to discipleship, an evening meal shared with church members, and a worship service that has grown to 75 in average attendance. A total of 15 people have professed their faith in Christ through this ministry, and five people have been baptized. Several participants have joined Disciple Bible Study, Sunday School, or the youth group.

3 PROJECT DIRT Tahlequah-First UMC \$12,764

Young adults in Tahlequah find a unique place of worship that is truly inclusive of all people. Participants are led on an intentional journey of "Discipling, Impacting, Reconciling, and Transforming" (DIRT) by way of a model of theological reflection and action.

4 "COME & SEE" EVANGELISM PROGRAM Edmond-Connect UMC \$45,000

Four-hundred people in northeast Edmond will become deeply committed disciples of Jesus Christ through an outreach of one of the newest churches planted in the Oklahoma Conference. Already, 50 new people have professed their faith in Christ through this new church. But the big influx will come as a new building comes to life. This initiative will invite 250,000 people to church, with the expectation of 1,500 new visitors and 400 new United Methodists. Most importantly, these new people will be on a specific faith journey intended to produce not members only but disciples of Jesus Christ.

5 FAMILY FOUNDATIONS Lawton-Community UMC \$14,224

Foster families and adoptive families in the Lawton area will find a church home that specifically supports their interests and needs through this new church plant. The church's partnership with the Circle of Care's Child Share program offers long-term support for the ongoing needs of these families.

6 WEDNESDAY CHILDREN/YOUTH/ADULT MEAL & WORSHIP

Vian UMC
\$10,000

Any person, any age, in the community of Vian (population 1,466) can find a new home and soon become a leader at Vian UMC through a new Wednesday evening meal, worship, and a curriculum-based discipleship program. In partnership with the local school, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and other town leaders, the Wednesday evening worship has grown to 90 in attendance, and Sunday morning worship has grown from an average of 25 to 70 worshippers.

7 OUTSTANDING WEDNESDAYS OKC-Southern Hills UMC \$24,400

Children ages 3-15, from nearby schools, find a new church home through a Wednesday after-school program that engages them and their families in year-round activities that center on art and community outreach events.

8 MINISTRY & DISCIPLESHIP INTERNSHIP PROGRAM The Wesley Foundation at OSU, Stillwater \$25,000

As young adults grow in their faith through our Wesley Foundations, small stipends for internships offer a chance for these young disciples to experience leadership and supervision while continuing their education at Oklahoma State University. This model is already working in other places, and will provide a new platform for leadership at OSU.

9 THE FLOW@QUAIL SPRINGS OKC-Quail Springs UMC \$78,000

People in north Oklahoma City who wish to belong to a truly multicultural community of faith find it on the Quail Springs campus. This new "church within a church" features small discipleship groups and hands-on mission opportunities.

10 YMCA SUMMER PROGRAM Edmond-Acts 2 UMC \$4,356

Lower-income and non-religious people in the Edmond area will find welcome in a new church home through a summer program offered jointly by the YMCA and Acts 2 United Methodist Church. This hospitable faith community offers a specific plan for anyone who would like to know more about what it means to become a radical follower of Christ.

11 MCFARLIN IN MOTION: MOBILE FOOD PANTRY Norman-McFarlin Memorial UMC \$41,751

In underserved neighborhoods with high-needs elementary schools in Norman, children and their families are introduced to a church that wants to reach toward them, build rapport and trust, and invite them into the life of this vibrant church.

12 CAMPS PROGRAM DIRECTOR Oklahoma Conference Camps & Retreats \$112,421

Many young people who have never had a chance to go to church camp will be introduced to a life of faith when our new Mobile Day Camps come to their towns. In every district, a host church will welcome young people from up to eight neighboring towns, as well as its own, for a week-long day camp where children from a variety of racial-ethnic backgrounds can experience some first steps in knowing and following Jesus.

13 PROJECT FLAME Hominy-First UMC \$7,500

Residents of Hominy beyond the reach of The United Methodist Church will find a monthly breakfast including prayer, Scripture, and encouragement.

14 WESLEY INTERNSHIP (YEAR 2) The Wesley Foundation at OU, Norman \$25,000

Following their graduation from college, seven young adults completed their first year of leading and being supervised in various areas of ministry during the first cycle of this internship program.

15 GOING OUT, INVITING IN (YEAR 2) Stroud UMC \$31,050

New people moving into Stroud (population 2,710) do not have to find the church; the church finds them as the result of various community initiatives. In the first months of this ministry, four new families already had affiliated with the church.

16 RECOVERING MINISTRIES (YEAR 2) OKC-Chapel Hill UMC \$19,000

Women and men coming out of prison or drug rehabilitation programs receive one-on-one mentoring in forming personal relationships with Jesus and overcoming addictive behaviors and a defeated lifestyle.

17 WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S OUTREACH (YEAR 2) OU Chinese Fellowship, Norman \$10,000

Spouses and children of Chinese students at the University of Oklahoma — many recently converted to Christianity — receive assistance with childcare, medical care, and tutoring in English, in addition to worship and discipleship.

18 BAR CHURCH (YEAR 2) Tulsa-St. Paul's UMC \$9,760

Young adults who try Bar Church's monthly gathering in Tulsa will find a non-threatening yet well-grounded introduction to faith, life, and service. This grant helps train the group's leader in the denomination's latest and best learning on how to reach people who are questioning but are unlikely to go to a church to pursue that conversation.

19 INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY MULTIPURPOSE BUILDING (YEAR 2) Edmond Chinese International UMC \$100,000

Chinese and other international students, many in the United States for the first time, and many with no prior experience of Christianity, find a welcome at this young, energetic, welcoming church. Edmond Chinese International UMC has a well-defined plan for making disciples of Jesus Christ. The church is operating at maximum capacity in its current facility — and bursting at the seams. There simply is not enough room! Young adults and children of varied nationalities are eagerly welcoming the opportunity to become disciples of Jesus Christ.

20 RUNNER GIRLS (YEAR 2) Valliant & Wright City Churches \$3,250

Girls and now boys, ages 9-18, in these small southeastern Oklahoma towns grow mentally, socially, and spiritually by running with their mentors. The pastor,

Tahlequah digs DIRT

Seeds of ideas for young-adult disciples are sprouting in the DIRT at Tahlequah-First UMC. Church leaders didn't wait on a potential *New People New Places* grant before they planted new ministries of "Discipling, Impacting, Reconciling, and Transforming" for people ages 18 to 35.

They did apply for a grant, "but we said to ourselves this is important for us to do whether we get the grant or not," said Senior Pastor James Graham. The project began in August. The DIRT project draws on biblical imagery of God creating and planting.

"We're like a lot of congregations in that we don't have a lot of young adults in our congregation. We understand we have to be reaching them," said Rev. Graham. In Tahlequah, 35 percent of the population is younger than 30.

The church partners with the Wesley Foundation at Northeastern State University. Campus minister Shana Dry also is associate pastor at First Church.

- On Monday evenings, 15-20 young adults attend **DIRT Talk** and share a simple meal at the Wesley Foundation. Rev. Dry leads.

The "free-flowing conversation" has ranged from current events to Adam Hamilton's book "When Christians Get It Wrong," Graham said.

- **DIRT Church** on Thursday evenings is casual and young-adult oriented but open to all, in the courtyard at First UMC. The teaching time is often interactive, Graham said. Up to 30 people participate.

- Young adults engage in mission through **DIRT Movers**.

"The goal is to move people from conversation and



From left, Lauren and Jason Teter, with Cole and Courtney Martin, prepared 70 take-out meals to feed the hungry on New Year's Day. The four DIRT Movers worked with the Tahlequah Area Coalition for the Homeless.

spiritual growth to service and impacting our world in a positive way," Graham said.

They have cooked and served meals to the hungry and have packed cleaning supplies for flood victims, among mission projects.

- A Sunday School class recently began for that age group.

Graham gleaned insights on church revitalization at the 2015 Large-Church Initiative, held in Georgia. "It's not a cookie-cutter approach; context is everything," he said.

The NPNP grant of almost \$13,000 will help promote the ministries.

The program has a Facebook page: [facebook.com/tqdir](https://www.facebook.com/tqdir)

—Holly McCray

Calumet/Red Rock offer safe space for kids

BY CHRIS SCHUTZ

Cal's Service Station, a children's ministry offered by the combined Calumet and Red Rock United Methodist Churches, plans to expand its services through a 2016 award from the New People New Places program.

Cal's offers after-school activities in a safe environment for children in pre-K through fifth grade in the greater Calumet community, which includes Red Rock, said Tiffany Nagel, pastor of both churches since 2013.

Cal's kids meet each Wednesday at Calumet UMC for an after-school snack, singing, prayer time, arts and crafts, Christian education, storytelling, games, and group activities.

On the first Wednesday of the month, Cal's has a special event. Those have included a carnival with bounce house and snow-cone truck, exotic animals, a magician, a "mad scientist," sign language instruction, drama and

theater workshop, an appearance by a race car driver with the vehicle, a visit by Santa Claus, and a Native American speaker, singer, and dancer.

As many as 76 children have participated.

One of the program's significant costs is food, especially protein, Rev. Nagel said. Some of the children don't get much protein daily, she said.

The NPNP grant will allow the churches to expand the program and help pay for curriculum material and crafts.

Getting the award is "an incredible blessing and an honor," Nagel said. The money will help the churches perform "the work that God has set before us."

Nagel said the churches plan to spread use of the money over the next three years. Leaders hope to use some of it to build a play area.

Cal's Service Station has become a success because of the "faithful service of the men and women who show up every week to support these kids," Nagel said. They are examples of "laity changing lives."

also a runner, has created a small book that teaches church members how to mentor young disciples one-on-one. This program began in Wright City (population 754; worship attendance 14) and now has 31 Runner Girls. It has expanded to Valliant (population 751; worship attendance 28), where 84 new girls and boys are now active in the program.

21 KINGS AND QUEENS MINISTRY (YEAR 2) OKC-St. Mark's UMC, Bethany \$16,000

Children younger than 18 who have been diagnosed

with physical or cognitive/intellectual challenges grow as disciples of Jesus Christ through the Kings and Queens Ministry at St. Mark's UMC.

22 SPOT 31 (YEAR 2) Tulsa-St. Matthew's UMC \$50,000

Dozens of at-risk children in a Tulsa neighborhood spontaneously began showing up at the church after school. Church leaders responded by offering a program where the young people not only can be safe but also are invited to know and to follow Jesus as His disciples.

Josephine Deere, left, and Linda Draper meet on a windy March day at the site for their new offices. The Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference center is moving to 602 SW 35th, Oklahoma City. Deere leads interpretation and programs, and Draper is administrative assistant.



PHOTO BY CHRIS SCHUTZ

OIMC relocating headquarters

Headquarters for the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference (OIMC) soon will open at a new location, 602 SW 35th St. in Oklahoma City.

Final interior renovations were under way on the building in early March.

A dedication and open house will be scheduled in the future, according to the latest issue of *The Advocate*, OIMC's bimonthly newspaper.

The building for a time housed a Circle of Care co-op and once was a Shalom

Zone facility of the Oklahoma Conference.

The *Advocate* article reported that urban Shalom Zones were birthed by the 1992 General Conference: "By spreading Shalom Zones far and wide, The United Methodist Church could work through community partnerships to become indeed 'the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in' (Isaiah 58:12). It is fitting that our conference office be housed in a facility that was dedicated for such a purpose."

The office building shares

property with Angie Smith Memorial United Methodist Church of the OIMC, which also relocated. Pastor is Jonathan Clour.

The church facility was formerly OKC-South Lee UMC, of the Oklahoma Conference, which closed in December 2014.

These new purposes for the property show how collaborations between the two annual conferences "take care of God's kingdom," said Heartland District Superintendent Greg Tener.

"We are one Church with

many mission sites."

The district has deeded the property to OIMC, he explained.

In the 1990s, Volunteers In Mission built the structure that now will house the offices, according to David Wilson, OIMC Conference Superintendent. In the reconfigured space will be a conference room, three offices, and a separate reception area. Another feature is a bigger parking lot.

The OIMC headquarters is moving from 3020 S. Harvey Ave. in Oklahoma City

New president at Saint Paul

Nancy Howell began duties March 2 as acting president of United Methodist-related Saint Paul School of Theology, with campuses at Oklahoma City University and Church of the Resurrection in greater Kansas City, Mo.

The seminary's Board of Trustees named her to replace H. Sharon Howell, who retired due to medical issues. (The women are not related.)

Nancy Howell brings multiple years of experience serving in administration. Dr. Howell has taught as professor of Theology and Philosophy of Religion for 12 years and led the way at Saint Paul for hybrid teaching, combining online and classroom instruction. She holds the Oubri A. Poppele Chair in Health and Welfare Ministries.

Restore Hope earns honor

Restore Hope Ministries in Tulsa is a finalist for a \$10,000 award and the title of the state's top nonprofit.

The Oklahoma Nonprofit Excellence (ONE) Awards are presented annually by the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits. From more than 18,000 organizations, 24 finalists are chosen.

Jeff Jaynes, executive director of the United Methodist-related aid agency, said Restore Hope has learned "a great deal" from the center through its Standards of Excellence and more.

Each finalist will receive \$5,000, and one overall winner, to be announced April 9, will receive \$10,000.

OCU law school renovations cited

Oklahoma City University's School of Law was selected to receive the 2016 State Historic Preservation Officer's Citation of Merit.

The award will be presented June 2 at the Statewide Preservation Conference in Enid.

The United Methodist-related university purchased the former Central High School building in 2012 and renovated it in time for classes in Fall 2014. The work also preserved a small museum space that features two large, restored murals by Oklahoma artist Olinka Hrdy.

The building was designed by architect Solomon Andrew Layton, who also designed the state Capitol and the Skirvin Hilton Hotel.

Step on it

Trinity UMC gains top award for wellness

BY CHRIS SCHUTZ

Members of Trinity United Methodist Church in far eastern Oklahoma are taking steps to improve their health, and on the way the church received top honors from the state's Certified Healthy Oklahoma program.

The program gives recognition to organizations that encourage healthy behavior. It can also bring discounts on the cost of health insurance, said Debbie Ware, director of wellness for the Oklahoma Conference.

Trinity was among several United Methodist churches in Oklahoma that were recognized at the program's awards luncheon March 2 in Norman.

Christina Clark leads Trinity's efforts to encourage healthy

living. She is the wife of Pastor Craig Clark.

Trinity's program includes free workout classes for women, basketball for youths, and blood drives. The church also operates a food pantry that offers healthy options to 40-50 families.

The women's workouts serve a dual purpose – the women also socialize when they come to class.

The church's program helps solve a problem common in rural areas: lack of access to gyms, Christina said. "It's a burden on families."

Christina said she is a self-taught fitness instructor who also leads workouts for seniors. She also periodically cooks a healthy community dinner that is served at the church.

Scripture related to health and

food is often a part of the event.

Activities at the church are "free to the community," Christina said. Purpose is to "get people in the church and see the wonderful things that we provide."

Trinity UMC is located between Muldrow and Roland, 8 miles from Fort Smith, Ark.

Certified Healthy Oklahoma recognizes the efforts of congregations, businesses, communities, schools, restaurants, campuses, and early childhood programs, according to the awards luncheon pamphlet.

At the luncheon, Trinity received a top ranking of "Excellence" for its efforts. Next came two United Methodist congregations that received "merit" awards: Tahlequah-First and OKC-St. Luke's. "Basic"

honors went to Wagoner-First and Skyline Urban Ministry.

The Oklahoma Conference, in the business category of awards, received "basic" recognition for its efforts, Ware said. The Conference holds annual health screenings to check things such as blood pressure, body mass index, and cholesterol and blood glucose levels.

Of particular concern is the health of clergy, who often "don't take care of themselves well enough," Ware said.

Living in a healthy way is "really important."

A Conference goal is to sustain its health insurance plan for clergy and their dependents. "We realize that our health is going to affect our medical insurance costs," Ware said.

X-ray vision

Project repurposes films for fabric

United Methodist women in Zimbabwe are using discarded X-ray films to create cloth used in products they can sell to generate income.

In a craft workshop, the Chitungwiza-Marondera District women's union taught others how to make the cloth. The women also learned skills including smocking, basket beading, and making patchwork bedcovers for cots.

"We were taught how to create unique cloth prints using expired X-ray pictures and tree leaves and branches," said Emilia Mafuratidze.

Using white poly-cotton fabric, the 26 women from 13 churches designed attractive prints using stencils cut from X-ray films.

"We can tell a story in a series of pictures, or just draw the pictures we want to use for designing the fabric," Mafuratidze said.

Grass also can be used for the background patterns. The women can sew skirts, aprons, bedcovers, curtains, and tablecloths from the fabric.

One of the workshop coordinators, Rezeni Muchingami, said the training will

enable women to sustain their families.

Ideally, she said, women should form groups of up to 10 people to pool their resources and buy the fabric, paint, and other materials required to start a small business.

"The printed skirts which were taught at this workshop can be sold for \$10, while the cot covers can fetch up to \$20. We traveled and assessed the costs of producing these items and whether there is a market for them," Muchingami said.

She said the products could be sold in bulk to shops that specialize in traditional African wear.

Lizzy Kaseke, 55, was grateful for the opportunity to learn beading and patchwork. "The patchwork cot covers will make a unique present, especially for my grandchildren," she said. "We learned not to throw away pieces of fabric."

District Superintendent Portia Kanoyangwa said she was impressed with the work produced.

"I was amazed by the participation of elderly women. They have gained skills which will help them to earn a living," she said. (United Methodist News Service, March 4)

The global church

HEALTHY OUTLOOK— Health-centered missions of the Church served more than 2 million people in 36 countries last year.

The General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) and project partners achieved outcomes: 1.3 million people received mosquito nets, and more than 67,248 successfully were treated for malaria; 66,000 pregnant women were screened for HIV; 8,170 young people were educated on substance abuse; and 671 community health workers were trained to serve thousands of people without access to health care. (GBGM Global Health Newsletter, January 2016)

TEEN DATING— A new United Methodist resource to help high school teenagers learn about developing healthy dating relationships is now available from Young People's Ministries, a unit of Discipleship Ministries, based in Nashville, Tenn.

The two-hour module is titled "Teen Dating: Making Smart Choices, Respecting Yourself." For more information and to order the downloadable module, go to <http://bit.ly/1O34E8v> (UMNS, March 1)

WORDS FOR LIFE— The free 30-minute podcast "Get Your Spirit in Shape" is offered monthly from United Methodist Communications. It features leaders, authors, and others who offer spiritual nutrition and exercises for everyday lives and busy families. View it on YouTube or subscribe via iTunes or RSS. (UMNS, March 3)

FOUR BISHOPS— The Rio Texas Conference embraced a creative episcopal plan after the resignation Dec. 31 of Bishop James Dorff.

A team of four bishops is providing leadership until episcopal appointments for the next quadrennium are made in July at the South Central Jurisdictional Conference. They are Bishop Robert Schnase, Missouri Conference; Bishop Janice Riggle Huie, Texas Conference, serving as the bishop of record for Rio Texas; Bishop Michael Lowry, Central Texas Conference; and Bishop Joel Martinez, retired.

Rio Texas' offices are in San Antonio. (Rio Texas website, Jan. 19)

HISTORY IN PICTURES— The United Methodist Commission on Archives and History, housed in New Jersey, has finished posting online its photo albums about the denomination's ministry outside the U.S. between 1900 and 1950. The final total is 33,675 pages from 178 albums, all now accessible to the public. (UMNS, Feb. 29)

WATER CRISIS— Two months before the water crisis in Flint, Mich., made international headlines, the Crossroads District of the Detroit Conference hired Peter Plum as an emergency water crisis coordinator.

"The pastors in Flint got together last fall, convinced it was time to offer people whatever relief was possible," Plum said. Since then, filtration has been his priority. (UMNS, Jan. 29)

Friends of Children Banquet



LOCATIONS
OKC: Quail Creek Country Club
TULSA: Mayo Hotel

FRIDAY 6:00PM, APRIL 22

Join as supporters and advocates across the state are united in heart for this very special evening. You can learn more and RSVP at

circleofcare.org/focb



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Better Stories - ARISE

Many of our local churches are constantly seeking how to attract younger families and how to raise more money. ARISE will get your leaders and members thinking, talking, and praying about the future of the church.

WE LOVE YOU BECAUSE HE LOVES YOU

Rev. Tish Malloy is the district superintendent of the Northern Prairie District in Oklahoma. She attended a previous ARISE gathering, and here is a bit of what she learned:

It has helped our churches do some-

thing to think strategically about how they would want to reach out to their community. I get to hear them tell me about how much they have become more aware of their own community, and the importance of reaching out in their community to share the gospel in meaningful ways...

But more than that even, just simply reaching out to people because we're Christians, and to let people in the local schools, and the local government folks, and those who support us with emergency services, and our neighbors all around us to simply know we are the Church of Jesus Christ —

and we love you because He loves you. That has been an extraordinary outcome for several of the congregations in my district.

Senior Pastors and key laity (influencers) are invited to attend and carry the ARISE message back to your church. We will then work with your leaders in a supporting role to make the most of this opportunity to reach God's people.

For more information about ARISE, please contact Mike Wiley at 800-259-6863 or mwiley@okumf.org.

TO HEAR THE WHOLE STORY...

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Save the date

■ Cimarron District Campus Ministries' Golf Tournament

April 23
Boiling Springs
Golf Course, Woodward
Contact:

Brice Gibson, 580-334-3951
Cindy Robertson-Riedel, 580-554-3032

■ Fire on the Water motorcycle retreat

May 13-15
Fin & Feather Resort, Gore

Sponsors include:

United Methodist
Motorcycle Association

Music by: Once Lost
and Wildwood Church

Benefit ride to fund camp
scholarships for kids

www.UnitedMethodistMA.com

■ Bible journaling workshop for women

April 2
Tulsa-First UMC, Thomas Hall
Led by Amber Bolton of
[@biblejournaling](https://twitter.com/biblejournaling)
www.fumctulsa.org

■ Five-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation

Nov. 6-11
Canyon Camp
www.okumc.org/SpiritualFormationAcademy
(A program of The Upper Room)

Registration now open for Annual Conference

SIGN UP ONLINE — Registration now is open for the 2016 Annual Conference, set for May 30-June 2 in Oklahoma City.

Go to www.okumc.org/annual_conference to sign up. That's the central information hub for all Annual Conference-related topics, from housing and tickets for special meals — including the Area Night celebration of Bishop Robert and Dee Hayes' leadership — to downloading the digital Pre-Conference Workbook when it's available.

SMILE, CLERGY! — Photos of all clergy will be taken at the Freede Center during Annual Conference sessions at Oklahoma City University.

The location will make access more convenient during the business meetings May 31-June 2.

At the Freede Center, the portrait sittings

GABLE — Rev. John Gable, 95, of Oklahoma City died Feb. 17, 2016.

He was pastoring Bridgeport and Lookeba churches at the time of his death.

His ministry began in 1974 and also included Beggs, Catoosa, Fletcher, Canton, Shidler, Nicoma Park, and Cashion.

Among survivors is daughter Sharon Smith.

Service was Feb. 23 at the Salvation Army Citadel, Oklahoma City.

will be upstairs, in the space previously used for displays and book sales. (Those will be housed at the Kramer School of Nursing.)

The Lifetouch company has been selected to produce the pictorial Oklahoma Conference clergy directory.

Sign up online now for a specific appointment time. Click the link at www.okumc.org/annual_conference.

OFFERING — The Annual Conference Offering will go toward creating an endowed scholarship at Africa University, in Zimbabwe, in the names of Robert and Dee Hayes.

This scholarship is being established in recognition of their devotion to worldwide missions and their love for Africa University. The minimum amount needed to endow the scholarship is \$130,000.

Passages

MILLER — Rev. George Dean Miller, 84, of Oklahoma City died Feb. 18, 2016.

He directed the Council on Ministries, 1976-1982. He pastored at Marshall, Boswell/Soper, Moore-First, Spiro, Chandler, Buffalo, Goodwell, Harrah, Elk City, and Durant.

Among survivors are son Bruce Miller and daughter Cindy Nelson.

Service was Feb. 27 at OKC-Quail Springs. Tribute gifts to: Whiz Kids of Quail Springs.

DISTRICT MEETINGS — Here is the schedule of pre-conference meetings to discuss proposals for the 2015 Annual Conference.

- April 10 — Northern Prairie District — Perry UMC, 3 p.m.
- April 17 — Cimarron District — Woodward-First UMC, 4 p.m.
- April 21 — Crossroads and Heartland Districts — OKC-St Luke's, 7 p.m.
- April 23 — Lake Country District — Coalgate UMC, 3 p.m.
- April 24 — Wichita District — Anadarko-First, 3 p.m.
- May 1 — Council Oak and Green Country Districts — Claremore-First UMC, 3 p.m.

• Pamela J. Bushyhead, 56, of Miami, Okla., died March 7. She was the mother of Rev. Matt Franks, pastor at Locust Grove.

• Donald Graves, 95, of Enid died March 4. He was the father of Cimarron District Superintendent Charlie Graves.

• Donald Keith Reid, 88, of Claremore died Feb. 24. He was the father of Rev. Daniel Reid, pastor at Cameron and Spiro.