

Contact, an edition of The United Methodist Reporter

Two Sections, Section A • 039000 • Volume 159, Number 24 • October 12, 2012



- 30 years for Addiction Ministries, 4A
- Church welcomes special children, 8A

Church hosts prayer service after student's suicide

By SAMANTHA VICENT
The Tulsa World

About 150 Stillwater residents attended a prayer service hosted by Highland Park United Methodist Church on Sept. 24, after a junior-high student committed suicide at school that day.

Pastor Derrek Belase started the evening with prayers for those affected by the shooting

that left eighth-grader Cade Poulos, 13, dead in a hallway at Stillwater Junior High School.

"We're here so that tradition and Christian Scriptures might speak a word of hope to us," Rev. Belase said. "It is important to listen to how God may be speaking to us on this day."

Belase said he did not know Poulos or his family but emphasized that everyone should look out for each other.

"Somehow we are all connected," he said. "There are ways to help one another — to reach out when you know a person may need some help." Belase also called for God to bring solace to Poulos' family.

"We struggle to understand the tragedy of violence whenever it strikes, and now in the aftermath of such a tragic day on the campus

See Stillwater, 2A

Highland Park Church also shared three UMCOR resources on spiritual/emotional care. "Should I seek professional counseling for my child or teenager?" was one title. Handouts were available at the service, and the links were posted on the church's website.

Marcia McFee holds aloft a candle as worship opens Sept. 24 at the Bishop's Gathering. Nancy McCullough folds her hands in prayer.

Photo by
Holly McCray



Caring for kids connects cultures

By HOLLY McCRAY

On Sept. 27, a small group dreamed of big actions to make life better for Native American foster children in Oklahoma.

Meeting together were representatives of the United Methodist Circle of Care (COC), Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference (OIMC), and Department of Human Services (DHS).

At the United Methodist Ministry Center in Oklahoma City, they began a conversation on potential collaboration in the field of foster care. The participants were diverse, but their common purpose was clear.

They want to help kids.

Their desire congeals in a DHS statistic: 400 Native American children in Oklahoma County foster care, but only 56 Native American foster homes in the county, reported Larry Brown of DHS.

Intensifying their concerns is a mandated change in DHS policies, triggered by a legal case. Beginning Jan. 1, children younger than 2 cannot be housed in DHS emergency shelters for the homeless.

Brown said, "My job is to get more homes, more people to sign up [to provide foster care]."

Circle of Care already works beside DHS in that effort. COC recruits foster

See For Kids, 5A

Bishop's Gathering: Clergy sense Spirit as they study

By HOLLY McCRAY

The worship leader carried a candle into the center of hundreds of people. The crowd quietly turned toward that light, and a banquet room was transformed into an intimate, sacred setting for the Bishop's Gathering in late September.

More sensory worship intermingled with teaching and preaching for the 325 people, mostly clergy, who attended the two-day educational program hosted by Bishop Robert Hayes Jr. at the Reed Center in Midwest City.

A deep spiritual experience is Marcia McFee's goal when she designs a worship program. She created 22 of them for the 2012 General Conference.

Worship planning "is not about what you can afford, not about bells and whistles, not about checking a to-do list," she told the Oklahoma audience. "Break away from

surveys; worship is *not* about what you like and don't like."

She suggested leaders ask worshippers to talk about what touches their souls, "then build on that. Prepare to soar."

She considers these aspects: verbal, visual, and visceral. Worship planning is about "deepening and heightening what we already do," she said. "Cut the small talk."

Announcements can seem merely small talk. But McFee said they help people understand that worship happens outside the church. To make them concise, she advised, limit each to three sentences: what it is, how it connects to the church, where to get more information.

Advice on preaching came from Pastor Jim Jackson of Chapelwood UMC, Houston. Preach the Gospel and not religious rules, he declared.

"The Gospel will make you surrender your ministry; grace breaks in on you," he said.

"Great preaching today is the unconventional Word made flesh through the exposition of Scripture that helps the congregation see what is being communicated."

Rev. Jackson was asked: How do you grow the church in a difficult climate and culture? He responded with several points.

- Start worship services that fill a specific need, not simply duplicate services.

- Write down daily a few illustrations from your life or from laity, and weekly read a book related to a sermon topic.

- Use your personality and subjects about which you feel strongly.

- Whenever possible, preach without notes.

- Videotape what you do, then discuss with friends or trusted church leaders.



Photo by Cary Pirrong, OCU director of Alumni Relations

ROWING ON THE RIVER—The OCU Alumni Association welcomed retired clergy and their spouses as special guests Sept. 28 for “A Great Evening on the Oklahoma River,” during the OCU Head of the Oklahoma Regatta. Almost 30 Metro Retirees were expected in the alumni’s big tent at the Devon Boathouse, home for OCU’s rowing and canoe/kayak teams. Cheering the Stars on the river are, from left, Tony Zahn, Ginger and Wes Howl, Maggie Ball, and Elaine and Jim Gragg. The Metro Retirees are one branch of the Conference’s retired covenant family organization, whose president is Jo Ann McNaught.

Stillwater:

Continued from 1A

of Stillwater Junior High, there is no comprehending the loss and heartache we feel ... Questions of why and how have barely formed on our lips when we realize how inadequate and ill-timed they are,” he read from the liturgy.

“Bring peace to all those whose hearts are broken, especially the family of Cade and all of those affected by today’s tragedy,” responded the audience.

The pastor concluded the service by saying, “God created Cade, and God loved him until the very end. This morning, God welcomed him home.”

After the service, Landon Horner, an eighth-grader and friend of Poulos, said he was surprised by his death. Horner said the scene at Stillwater Junior High was “chaotic.” The school and church are located in the same neighborhood.

When asked what he would tell Poulos’ family, Horner said he would always remember the friend he once had. “A lot of people are praying for you,” he said. “My prayers are with you.”

(Printed with permission from the Tulsa World. This story has been edited for clarity and space from original reporting done by Samantha Vicent.)

Passages

■ Rev. Robert Edde, 92, of Oklahoma City died Sept. 21, 2012.

Bob was born Nov. 6, 1919, in Quinton. He was a military veteran. In 1942, he married Jeanne Conner.

He served as the Lawton District superintendent, 1978-1983. He pastored at OKC-Grace Church, Weatherford, Moore-First, Sapulpa, and Duncan-First. After retiring in 1985, he was Associate Minister at OKC-St. Luke’s, fulfilling that role until he was 80.

He received an honorary doctorate from Oklahoma City University.

Survivors include his wife; children Richard, Kay, and David; three grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.

Memorial service was Oct. 11 at St. Luke’s.

■ Mary Milner Sias of Oklahoma City died Sept. 21. She was the mother of Rev. Marla Lobo, pastor at OKC-Leland Clegg.

2012 Neustadt Lectures



Reading Scripture with the Rabbi

Rabbi Vered Harris

Reading through a Jewish Lens
1:00 p.m.

The Reading for the Day
3:00 p.m.

Reading through Art
7:00 p.m.

November 15,
2012

Bishop W. Angie
Smith Chapel

Oklahoma City
University

OCU is pleased to welcome Rabbi Vered Harris to present the Neustadt Lectures on Nov. 15. Rabbi Harris is the new spiritual leader of Temple B’nai Israel in Oklahoma City.

She is the fifth rabbi to lead the congregation in its 111-year history and began serving there July 1.

The theme of the OCU lecture series is “Reading Scripture with the Rabbi.” The first presentation will be at 1 p.m. in the chapel sanctuary. Harris will offer a brief introduction to studying, questioning, and dis-

cussing sacred text through a Jewish lens.

Lectures at 3 and 7 p.m. will be in Watson Lounge, in the chapel’s lower level. The afternoon lecture will engage conversation on the weekly Torah portion, under the title “The Reading for the Day.” The evening lecture, “Reading through Art,” will explore insights into ancient texts through artists’ depictions of biblical narratives. All lectures are free and open to the public.

Harris previously served for 12 years as the education rabbi at Congregation Beth Torah in Overland Park, Kan., where she developed award-winning programming. She earned her Master of Arts degree in Jewish Education from Rhea Hirsch School of Education and her rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati.

She lived in California, Israel, Germany, Ohio, and Kansas prior to settling in Oklahoma with her husband, Benjamin, and their three children.

Walter and Dolores Neustadt of Ardmore established the OCU lecture series in 1983 to strengthen understanding of the great contributions of the Judaic religious tradition to Western civilization and thought.

Fraternity creates box city

Sleeping in a room made of cardboard and duct tape is not reality for OCU students. But it was the experience for members of Delta Alpha Chi (DAX), the men’s Christian service fraternity, during the last week of September at OCU.

For the fifth consecutive year, the group sponsored Homeless Awareness Week. Members of DAX lived in these makeshift dwellings on the campus lawn. Some also chose to eat only when food was given to them.

DAX President Trey Witzel said, “While we can never fully understand the plight of the homeless, we were able to begin to grasp what it means to sleep outside and be dependent on others for food.”

The group also raised money for Skyline Urban Ministry and highlighted the work of Positive Tomorrows, a school for children who are homeless in Oklahoma City.

The Oklahoma United Methodist
Contact

1501 N.W. 24th
Oklahoma City, OK 73106

Phone: 405-530-2075

Fax: 405-530-2093

For subscription information,
contact 405-530-2075 or aballem@okumc.org.

Moving? Send change by mail or e-mail: aballem@okumc.org.

Robert E. Hayes Jr., bishop

Joseph Harris, director of communications

Holly McCray, editor

Nyla Wallin, administrative assistant/video coordinator

Alicia Galyon, Web ministry/graphics design

Amelia Ballew, The Media Center

Sign up for *Contact Digest*, a free electronic newsletter, at www.okumc.org.
Send news to editor@okumc.org. Next publication date: Nov. 2.



Oklahoma United
Methodist Communications



Strength for the journey: Ideas and thoughts from our bishop

What's in it for me?

"Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven."

(Matthew 5:14-16, *The Message Bible*)

By **BISHOP ROBERT HAYES JR.**

More than 50 years ago, President John Kennedy uttered these words in his inauguration speech: "My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." That single line changed the way that an entire generation viewed itself, the nation, and the world. Consequently, hundreds of thousands of people, young and old, began volunteering for the Peace Corps and other newly created social programs designed to make the world a better place.

I was a young teenager, and that speech confirmed my desire to give my life in service to others. Ministry was the path I chose.

However, a half-century since that speech, I'm seeing a troubling trend in society. It seems to me that many people

disregard, even totally abandon, the spirit of generosity and commitment that President Kennedy advocated. The prevailing attitude in much of society appears to be one of self-interest and greed. The question that dominates today is: "What's in it for me?"

As a follower of Christ, I have learned God loves those who expend themselves sacrificially to help others. Over and over, the lessons of the New Testament teach us that if we "lose" ourselves in compassionate concern for others, we find the significance in life for which we yearn.

Let me state it on a more basic level. In order to get, you must give; to reap, you must sow. If you are going to take something out, you must be willing to put in something. There are no shortcuts, no one-way streets that lead to what you desire most in life.

When you ask, "What's in it for me?," you also must ask yourself, "What am I willing to give?"

The antidote for selfishness is "What's in *me* for it?" In your church work, your marriage and other relationships, even in your prayer life, you must ask: What can I give or bring that will make my life and those around me better?

In mission to others you should search yourself to discover the gift, the light that God has given you that will shine so others may see God in you. Life is a gift for which you should be grateful, and in every area of living you need to be

guided by the question: What do I have that I can give that will make a difference?

Jesus dealt with life not only as a mystery and a gift to him, but also as a claim upon him. Life makes a claim upon you as well.

You have reaped the benefits of God's mercy and grace! The very least you can do is turn around and pass on to others the blessings that have come to you.

In a mountain village long ago, a wealthy patron was trying to decide what legacy to leave his village. Finally, he decided to build a church for the community. No one saw the complete plans for the church until it was finished.

When the people gathered for the unveiling of the new church, they were amazed at its beauty and splendor. However, someone noticed an oversight.

"Where are the lamps?" the observer asked. "How will the church be lighted since there are no windows?"

The patron pointed out a large number of brackets recessed in the walls. Then he gave each family a lamp, to bring with them when they came to worship.

He explained, "Every time you are here, the area where you are seated will be lighted. When you are not here, that area will be dark. This will remind you that if you do not come to church, some part of God's house will be dark."

Jesus said you are the light of the world, and he challenged you to let your light shine. However bright or dim, each light is important. When you do not let your faith be seen, a part of God's kingdom suffers in darkness.



Bishop Hayes



Clinic helps family overcome health challenges

Join Neighborhood Services Organization "Housing + Healthcare = Hope" Campaign

Mary and her daughter Sarah came into one of Neighborhood Services Organization's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Clinics for assistance. A clinic nutritionist did an iron check on Sarah and it was determined her iron was extremely low.

Sarah was soon hospitalized and received four blood transfusions to correct her iron deficiency. While she was in the hospital, doctors were concerned about potential tumors in Sarah's intestines. Thankfully the scans were clear, and she did not have further health complications. Sarah has since been diagnosed with iron deficiency anemia and is on iron drops to treat the condition.

Mary credits NSO's clinic nutritionist for alerting her to the situation and ultimately saving her daughter's life. NSO impacts the lives of people like Mary and Sarah every day through its mission of addressing healthcare and hous-

ing access for low-income and at-risk individuals and families in the Oklahoma City area.

NSO is deeply rooted and committed to the Oklahoma City community and hopes Oklahoma United Methodists will help continue the ministry of NSO by supporting the "Housing + Healthcare = Hope" capital campaign. Since moving out of their condemned facility in April 2012, NSO is working to raise the much-needed funds for a new building.

For information on how to give to the campaign, contact Stacey Ninness at 405-236-0452 or visit www.nsookc.org.

NSO manages two WIC Clinics in Oklahoma

City, serving more than 5,000 participants per month. WIC is a government program providing supplemental foods to low-income families with children under the age of five.



A healthy Sarah plays at the NSO WIC Clinic.

Addiction Ministries

Summer School on Chemical Dependency marks 30 years

By **BOYCE BOWDON**

Desperate for help, an Oklahoma businessman went to his pastor in the late 1960s.

"My wife was an alcoholic," said Jack Turner. "Nearly every week, Vicky was drunk, sometimes for three days at a time. I was worried about her and our three little boys — the oldest was just 8."

Turner said he knew he needed to talk to someone who cared and could point him toward help.

"I had high respect for my pastor," Turner added. "I made an appointment, went to his office, and told him my situation. Right away, I could tell he didn't know how to help me. I left his office very disappointed."

Turner looked elsewhere. His search led him to an upstairs room in an Oklahoma City business district, where a 12-step group had its meetings.

"A couple of guys were sitting at a table, drinking coffee," Turner remembered. "I told them I had a problem and needed help. They invited me to sit down with them. When I left those guys, I had an AA packet in my hand and hope in my heart."

Introduction to 12 steps

That visit gave Turner what he needed to introduce his wife to a 12-step program. She joined a group and, eventually, found sobriety.

Relieved that his wife was in recovery, Turner did not forget the trauma he and his family had experienced because

www.addictionministries.org

of her addiction. He also did not forget

his relatives and friends suffering because they could not stop drinking. He wanted to help them and others.

"I knew Christ calls us to heal the sick, and I knew alcoholics are sick. But I also knew many churches didn't want alcoholics around, and many ministers didn't know how to help them," Turner said.

"I had a passion for helping churches minister to alcoholics. I believed God was giving me that passion. So I asked God to lay out a trail for me to find opportunities for training."

God laid out that trail, Turner said, and it led him to several outstanding programs. One stood above the rest: Johnson Institute Summer School on Chemical Dependency, in Minnesota.



Photo by Boyce Bowdon

Pastor Tiffany Smith displays one of the resources she received at the 2012 Summer School on Chemical Dependency.

He enrolled in the intensive, two-week training and experiential school, designed to educate professionals in the diagnoses and treatment of chemical dependency. School leaders were professionals knowledgeable about addictions, who recognized the vital role spiritual care plays in healing.

Scholarships to train pastors

Convinced that Oklahoma ministers could find valuable help at Johnson Institute, Turner in 1978 provided scholarships for 16 pastors to attend the summer training.

In 1982, several ministers who had attended the training led the Oklahoma Conference in establishing the Summer School on Chemical Dependency, based on the Johnson Institute model.

"What those ministers began in 1982 was the beginning of our Oklahoma Conference Summer School on Chemical Dependency," said Annette Harper, who directs the school. "This year, we are celebrating our 30th anniversary."

Today the Summer School has gained international recognition for its excellence, Harper said.

"Georgia, Kansas, North Carolina, and several other Conferences have used our school as a model," she said. "Several

Conferences in other countries have sent representatives to our school and adapted it to meet their needs."

In 2011, two ministers from Norway attended the school. In their country in April 2012, they led a training event modeled after Oklahoma's school. The 25 participants came from Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Norway.

Graduates praise Summer School

Across the years, about 500 clergy and lay people have completed the Oklahoma Conference Summer School on Chemical Dependency, held on the Oklahoma City University campus.

Robert "Bob" Langston, a 1989 graduate, attended because he felt the pastoral care part of his ministry was lacking.

"Throughout my ministry, (the school) has enabled me to help individuals and families work through health issues and deal with other problems. I know the school helped me become a happier and better person, and I've seen it help countless other pastors and lay people."

Langston, a retired elder, serves on the staff of Ada-First UMC and preaches every Sunday at Allen UMC.

Tiffany Smith, pastor of the Grandfield-Randlett churches in southwest Oklahoma, is a graduate of the 2012 school. She said she is eager to share ideas and insights her congregations might use to prevent chemical dependency and to be more helpful to addicted persons and their families. She plans a sermon series. "All of us are addicted to something that can keep us from being our best," she said.

Richard Pierson, a 1990 graduate, said the Summer School helped him find his life's calling. After earning a master's degree in psychology and counseling, he became a licensed alcohol and drug counselor. He is now executive director of the Oklahoma State Board of Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors.

"To this day, the training I received at the Summer School was some of the best I have ever received," Pierson said.

Jack Turner — now semi-retired — said he is pleased to have been one of the many persons who contributed to the Summer School's development.

"God used my family's experiences," he said, "to lay out a trail for me to follow, and I'm so grateful it has led to our churches becoming more effective agents of God's healing."

(*United Methodist News Service, Aug. 13, 2012*)

OCU designs degree that tackles addictions

By **BOYCE BOWDON**

Oklahoma City University has taken a major step forward in the fight against one of the nation's most difficult problems. The university created a bachelor's degree program in addiction-prevention studies.

"Addictions occur all though our society," noted Peter Messiah, director of OCU's addiction-prevention efforts. "And, people are not only addicted to alcohol; thousands are addicted to other drugs, gambling, pornography, and a variety of substances and behaviors."

Courses in the OCU program focus on preventing addiction, Messiah said. He taught the first class during the Spring 2012 semester.

The bachelor's degree is not only for students who plan to become addiction-prevention spe-

cialists, Messiah said. It also is for students preparing for other vocations — such as ministry — where knowledge about addiction prevention can enhance their effectiveness.

Kelsey Cartwright, a nursing student, decided to take the course after shadowing medical personnel in a hospital.

"I was amazed to see so many patients with addictions and to see how addictions devastate families and friends," Kelsey said. "I have a passion for helping people, especially those with chemical dependency problems, and I believe what I have learned in this course will enable me to be more helpful to them."

United Methodist clergy couple Steve and Wanda Littrell said the class was very practical for them.

"One of our assignments was to

develop an addictions-prevention program for a specific age group," Steve Littrell explained. "Each student made a 30-minute presentation to the class."

He developed his addictions-prevention program for those 60 and older. Wanda Littrell designed her program for children in grades four through six.

At OCU this fall, five students are enrolled in the course, and two new classes will be added in Spring 2013, Messiah said.

UM clergyman Mark Davies, dean of OCU's Petree College of Arts and Sciences, said university trustees voted unanimously to create the new degree.

"The degree fits perfectly into our mission as a United Methodist university, which is to help persons fulfill themselves as much as they possibly can as children of God,"



Peter Messiah, left, and Mark Davies review plans for OCU's bachelor's degree in Addiction Prevention Studies.

Photo by Boyce Bowdon

Rev. Dr. Davies said. "We know when people fall into addictions it becomes far more difficult for them to experience quality lives and to have a positive impact on others."

Davies said Jack Turner, an Oklahoma businessman, contributed \$500,000 to provide initial funding for the addiction-prevention studies.

Messiah previously managed the safe-schools department of the large Houston (Texas) school district. An Oklahoma City native,

he is certified in drug-prevention counseling, anger resolution, and about 10 other areas. To help design the addiction-prevention program, OCU recruited an advisory board that includes leaders in addiction prevention and treatment.

Melanie Overton of the General Board of Higher Education & Ministry said her records indicate OCU is the only United Methodist university to offer a bachelor's degree in addiction prevention.

(*UMNS, May 30, 2012*)



Carol Madron and Darryl Owen show items saved from a 1996 church fire.

For kids:

Continued from 1A

parents, DHS trains and certifies them, and the COC Child Share program offers continuing support, explained Circle of Care President Don Batson.

“We may have a baby in a hospital bed for days or weeks, who doesn’t need to be there, because of a lack of foster housing,” Batson said. “As soon as we get foster parents trained, we’ve got a child for them.”

Placement for Native American children is especially challenging, the agency leaders concurred.

“There is distrust between Native American communities and traditional government support,” Batson said.

Mahogany Gains directs the Deborah Roth Group Home in Oklahoma City. She works closely with OIMC because a high percentage of the Roth residents are Native American. All are teens who lived in foster homes at least eight years before placement at Roth, she said.

Donna Pewo of Weatherford said, “To stay in the bloodlines, Native Americans try to hand down the children who can’t stay with their parents. A lot of times the relatives aren’t capable, and [the children] are tossed to someone else. Displacement and lack of routine is so hard for them.”

Rev. Pewo pastors OIMC churches at Clinton and El Reno and is a General Board of Global Ministries church and community worker. She ministers primarily with Cheyenne/Arapaho children.

“Church is a stable place, a place of refuge” for them, she said.

And more churches can be vital connections to meet the foster care challenge, the group agreed.

Batson described Child Share’s resources, from operating clothing and supply co-ops in several regions of the state, to hosting holiday parties and volunteering respite care. Oklahoma Conference churches undergird Child Share by organizing “diaper drives” and Undie Sundays, hosting family outings, and more, he said.

Jamie Howard of DHS said she has known about the program for 10 years. “Child Share really helps parents



Missionary Donna Pewo plays with children at Clinton. Photo by Paul Jeffrey, GBGM

Happy 100th birthday, South Coffeyville UMC

On Oct. 14, South Coffeyville United Methodist Church will celebrate 100 years in ministry. The centennial events begin at 10:45 a.m. Bartlesville District Superintendent George Warren will be a special guest.

Part of the century of history is the story of a fire, in 1996, and how God brought forth good from that destruction. Church historian Carol Madron, a member since age 5, described what happened.

Madron chaired the building committee as the church focused on recovery. Some altar items were saved from the flames — the brass cross, an aged Bible, offering plate — and pews as well as three blue windowpanes were salvaged.

Then insurance and volunteer labor enabled the congregation to build a new church and expand the property from one city lot to 12. Some work teams were from another denomination and from other states.

The project was completed free of debt. “We were just so blessed,” said Madron. “It modernized the church.”

Another piece that survived the fire is the church bell. As South Coffeyville moves into a new century of embodying Christ, the bell still rings out every Sunday in the town at the Kansas-Oklahoma border.

“We’re a praying church,” described Madron. Community residents regularly request prayers by the church for their families. Pastor is Darryl Owen.

South Coffeyville UMC sets across the street from a school. One-hundred years ago, the church launched in a school.

step into foster care,” she said.

“I think more people would step up with a little bit of help from outside sources,” Pewo said.

Circle of Care would like to partner with interested OIMC congregations, Batson said, to help recruit new Native American foster parents and churches’ support of them. The agency wants to help in ways a church views as most effective, he emphasized, not to tell a church what to do.

Certification as a foster parent takes time, he acknowledged. “But a church can open its arms immediately to help foster parents.”

The group pondered best practices to share the urgent call to aid at-risk Native American children. OIMC Conference Superintendent David Wilson noted cultural “nuances” between Native and non-Native people.

Rev. Wilson said OIMC is respected among Oklahoma tribes because numerous church members hold tribal leadership roles.

He suggested a Circle of Care awareness campaign directed into Native American communities. Another entry point could be a COC presentation at an OIMC continuing-education event, with attendees from multiple churches.

He also affirmed a suggestion that a Native American child helped by Circle of Care could give a testimony.

Batson said, “One foster parent in a church gets help. Another church member sees that and thinks, with the help, they could be a foster parent, and we grow new foster parents.”

Contact

Subscribe online!

Buying an individual subscription to the official newspaper of the Oklahoma Conference is now more convenient! Delivery is by U.S. mail.

(Specific church officers and clergy receive Conference-paid subscriptions through officer lists from charge conferences.)

\$15 1-year
17 issues per year

Order online:
www.okumc.org/subscriptions

Briefly

■ Dates shift for next Annual Conference

In 2013, the Oklahoma Annual Conference will begin Monday evening, May 27, and continue through Thursday, May 30.

The Africa University Choir will perform during the statewide meeting, which will emphasize missions.

■ Wesley arts festival in early November

On the first weekend of November, OKC-Wesley Church will present the Fourth Annual Ruth Haddon Memorial Arts Festival.

The benefit, hosted by the Wesley Explorers, features Oklahoma artists. Admission is free.

The event will be 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Nov. 3 and 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Nov. 4, in the fellowship hall of the church, at Classen and N.W. 25th Street.

For more information contact the church, 405-525-3521, or Festival Coordinator Gay Abarr, 405-745-7799.



Kenneth Collins teaches at Guymon.

■ Pastors from 3 states attend Panhandle program

A continuing education event recently drew 24 pastors from Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas to Guymon's Victory Memorial UMC.

The workshop, "Renewing Our Wesleyan Heritage," was led by Kenneth Collins, a professor at Asbury Theological Seminary and a prolific author of books featuring John Wesley.

"It is difficult without driving long distances for pastors to get quality continuing education in the Oklahoma and Texas Panhandles and western Kansas," said Gary Holdeman, senior pastor at Victory Memorial.

"The response to Dr. Collins was extremely positive and was a great start to what we hope to be a growing ministry to pastors," he said.

The church underwrote part of the event expenses as a ministry to pastors and laity. This reduced the cost for participants and also enabled the major presentation by Collins, an acclaimed Wesley scholar.

Rev. Holdeman wants to offer such workshops annually at Victory Memorial. The program was held Friday evening and all day Saturday, with Sunday options based on the speaker's calendar.

■ Time to check on Apportionments

As we move into the last quarter of the year, pastors and church treasurers are encouraged to review their churches' progress in 2012 Apportionment giving.

That information is easy to access on the Conference website. Go to http://www.okumc.org/ok_ytd_ch.asp and choose your church's name to see an up-to-date report of contributions received by the Conference Treasurer's Office.

"Every year, there are congregations that lose track of what they have paid and end up paying too much for one area and not enough for another," said Treasurer Brian Bakeman.

■ Lay-speaking classes at Cross Point

Ardmore District lay-speaking training is set for Nov. 16-17 at Cross Point Camp.

The basic course will be taught by Greg Tener and Sharri Hiller. The advanced course, taught by Brett Thomason, will be on preaching.

For information contact the district office, 580-223-2353, or Toni Hignight, 580-920-3941.

■ Mission meals feed kids in Belize

Children in Belize are benefitting from the meals assembled and packed by volunteers in the hands-on mission project carried out in Oklahoma City during the South Central Jurisdictional Conference in July.

The Stop Hunger Now organization has reported those nutritious, dehydrated meals were shipped to Kidz Kconnect 4 Jesus in Belize. A total of 142,560 meals and 4,500 bottles of children's chewable multivitamins were shipped from the Stop Hunger Now warehouse in Jackson, Miss., to Karen and David Rhodes, founders of Kidz Kconnect 4 Jesus.

"These meals and vitamins will serve needy children, in the Stann Creek area of southern Belize, who may not have anything else to eat all day. Thank you. We are sincerely grateful for your dedication and for sharing our vision of a world without hunger," wrote Matt Casteel, a Stop Hunger Now program manager.

■ New leaders selected

■ Christina Wolf has been elected to the General Commission on Archives & History as the jurisdiction's representative. She is archivist for Oklahoma United Methodists, caring for the Church's historical records housed in the library on the OCU campus.

■ D.A. Bennett, pastor of OKC-St. Andrew's, now chairs the Order of Elders in the Conference. Phil Greenwald, an associate pastor at OKC-St. Luke's, continues to chair the Order of Deacons, and Mike Mahaffey remains leader for the Fellowship of Local Pastors. Rev. Mahaffey is appointed to Fairview (at Slapout) and Catesby churches, Woodward District. He also is president of the National Fellowship.



Photo by Holly McCray

LEADING THE WAY—Bob Spinks, left, and Chuck Stewart prepare to open an Aug. 25 seminar sponsored by the Conference Board of Laity and held at Oklahoma City University. Dr. Spinks, an OCU professor, led the program on effective teamwork, based on his book "Strengths Based Leadership." Stewart is Conference lay leader. Most attendees were district and conference lay leaders and directors of Lay Servant Ministries (formerly called Lay Speaking Ministries), from both the Oklahoma and Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conferences.

■ Save the date

Youth Workers Gathering
April 26-27

OKC-Church of the Servant

www.youtheology.org/youthworkers2013
(a program of Saint Paul School of Theology)

Picture Yourself Home At The Ranch



Stillwater's Newest Senior Living Community

The Ranch will redefine everything you ever thought you knew about how retirement can be. Featuring elegantly appointed cottage and apartment homes, superior amenities and numerous social events, The Ranch will encourage an active, fulfilling and independent lifestyle. Our vision celebrates the beauty of Oklahoma ranchland, its people, passion and heritage.



THE RANCH
An Epworth Living Community

www.theranchliving.org

We are currently taking fully refundable deposits for priority reservations through the Pioneer Club. So don't delay! For more information call 405-743-2990 or 866-463-6726.



Mailing address: 601 S. Washington, #283, Stillwater, OK 74074

Disaster Response

Volunteers helping wildfire victims

When wildfires ignited in four Oklahoma counties this summer, United Methodists quickly offered church facilities as shelters and resource centers. The flames have been doused, but UMs continue to give aid, confirmed Richard Norman.

The Conference VIM coordinator of disaster response knows recovery requires a long-term effort.

"The story of the 603 families who lost their homes and virtually every possession they had is so very important for our churches to hear," Rev. Norman said.

Now United Methodists are collaborating with state agencies and other faith entities in the Recovery Phase. Specifically, disaster case management is the UM focus.

In Creek County, fire destroyed the homes of 357 families. A group of UMs are providing disaster case management for the Creek County Long Term Recovery Committee. Special training in mid-September helped equip them for the task.

At Mannford-First UMC, 19 people attended the training led by Christy Smith, a national consultant for UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), reported

Norman. Fourteen of them then signed up for certification as disaster case managers. The Mannford church is providing space for their work.

Velma Carriaga of Collinsville-First UMC was named supervisor. Pam Rowley of Mannford Church and Rose Unterschuetz, of Tulsa-New Haven UMC, are her assistants.

Norman said, "The national staff of UMCOR is very excited about OKVIM Disaster Response taking this step. Few annual conference Disaster Ministries in our denomination serve as disaster case management lead agencies.

"Oklahoma UMs are laying foundational groundwork for this very vital piece of Disaster Ministry, which gives families hope in potentially recovering from such a devastating event in their lives."

UMCOR's disaster case management is acclaimed for its effectiveness.

The federal government chose the agency to lead that area of recovery after



Richard Norman and Christy Smith, standing, and Velma Carriaga, seated

Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Oklahoma UMs also continue to extend help in the other counties affected by wildfires, Norman noted.

The Conference participates fully in Oklahoma Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (Oklahoma VOAD), an ongoing, coordinated effort to provide the most effective response when disasters strike.

(<http://www.okvim.org>)

Workshops explain clergy benefits

The annual Clergy Benefits Workshops will be held Nov. 8-9 at Camp Egan and Nov. 15-16 at Canyon Camp.

Participants choose between two courses:

■ Financial Focus: Designed for clergy looking to plan for the future

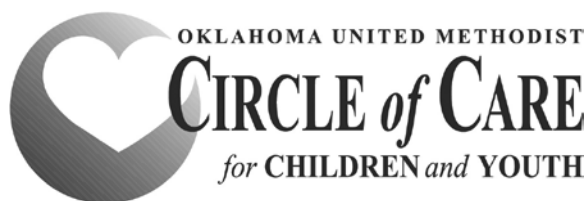
Topics for this course include: financial planning in our current economic state, clergy taxes, Social Security Disability, health insurance, and an extensive look at all the current plans offered by the General Board of Pension & Health Benefits (GBPHB).

■ Retirement Planning: Designed for clergy looking to retire soon

Topics in this course include: "From Start to Finish—How to Retire," clergy taxes, "Social Security Benefits—All You Need to Know," changes in health insurance coverage for retirees, "Creative Retirement—Discovering Your Dreams," and an extensive look at all the GBPHB plans.

The General Board plans include: the new Clergy Retirement Security Program for 2014, Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP), Pre-1982, United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP), Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP), and Housing Allowance Exclusion.

Choose which course works best for you and register online at www.okumc.org/pensions. You also may contact Stephen Mitchell, 405-530-2063, in the Conference Treasurer's Office.



Project 1000 Asks:

'Can We Do More? Can we support more at-risk children, youth, and families?'

More than 130 individuals, families, and groups have made the pledge to support Circle of Care \$1,000 per year for the next three years. That puts us more than 10 percent of the way to our goal!

What Can Project 1000 Do?

With your support, Circle of Care can change even more lives through our programs:

- *United Methodist Children's Home
- *United Methodist Boys Ranch
- *Independent Living Program
- *Pearl's Hope
- *Child SHARE
- *Holsinger Home

For only \$19.23 per week, you can invest in the future. You can help a child, a family. You can become one of the 1000. Won't you join us?

Will You Join the Growing Ranks of the

1000

Anonymous (x13)

Kay Adair

Bill & Karen Anderson

Donald & Cheryl Baker

Randy & Eddisu Barker

Don and Lynn Batson

David & Janet Battles

Enloe & Wanda Baumert

David & Laura Beal

Wesley Fellowship -

Boston Ave. UMC Tulsa

Clara Brown

Spencer & Mary Brown Jr.

Trav & Kara Brown

Mary Butler

Ivan Bys

Michael & Leanne Chaffin

UMW - Claremore FUMC

Ralph & Midge Coffman

Randall & Kathryn Coit

Lloyd Cole Jr.

Edgar & Betty Collins

Mike & Mary Collins

Robert & Debbie Craine

CC & Anna Marie Crooch Estate

John & Jamie Crooch

Michael & Janet Crooch

Philip & Lisa Crow

Curtis & Patricia Crowe

Anna Cypert

Bobby & Shirley Darnell

Marsha Davis

Nancy Decker

John Dixon

William & Donna Dodson

Robert & Brenda Duran

Gregory & Mary Ann Edwards

Barbara Eskridge

Don & Wanda Fischer

Jo Fowler

David & Cindy Frieze

Mike & Elaine Frizzell

Jerry & Jane Gamble

Robert & Prudy Gorrell

Jim and Elaine Gragg

Bud & Jane Griffy

UMW - Grove FUMC

Earl & Marlene Haggard

George & Jo Hall

Marie Hancock

Rudolph & Madeline Hargrave

Ralph & Linda Harker

Valerie Hatley

Bob & Dee Hayes Jr.

John & Anne Heaton

Billy & Ann Hebblethwaite

Jono & Jenny Helmerich

Highland Park UMC

Jim & Mary Nell Holder

Ross & Jane Hutchinson

Robert & Ann Ivester

Mr. & Mrs. Ivan Keatley

Keith Kennedy

Steve & Suzan Knight

Brian & Julie LaPat

Greg & Anita LaPat

Centenary UMC Lawton

Robert Lee

Ed & Melba Livermore

Ralph & Elaine Lockstone

Mr. & Mrs. Hal Long

Joe Lucas & Kay McSpadden

Bryan & Vicki Mannering

Emery & Lisa Mason

Dwight Maulding

Irma McCaskill

Dick & Lavonn McKnight

Bob & Doris McKown

Burrel & Jo Ann McNaught

Billy & Lora Meade

Lou & Pat Meadors

Paul & Ann Milburn

Larry & Sandy Mocha

Kirt Moelling

Mary Moelling

Mike & Christy Mordy

David & Laura Morrison

Jim & Laura Mosteller

Jim Neel & Jan King

Stan Nichols

Thrift Store-Nicoma Park UMC

Chuck & DeeAnn Nordean

Clark Nutting

Pathfinder SS Class -Grace UMC (OKC)

St. Andrew's UMC (OKC)

UMW - Okmulgee UMC

UMM - Okmulgee UMC

Dee & Barbie Paige

Bob & Peggy Peters

Lenert & Bobbie Pfeiler

Allan Rau

Donald & Valerie Reeves

Anna Richardson

John & Helen Riley

Margaret Ritter

Joe & Judy Robinson

Joe & Shirley Rolston

Gary & Sharon Roth

Gale & Martha Sadler

Mike Self & Shannon Nakvinda

Stanley & Sherry Selvidge

Logan & Donna Sharpe

UMM - Wesley UMC Shawnee

UMW - Wesley UMC Shawnee

Arden & Rita Ruth Smith

Bill & Martha Smith

Craig Stinson & Krista Jones

Carolyn Taylor

Andrew Tevington

Ken & June Tucker

J.M. & Patricia Vanderwiele Jr.

Jim & Vickie Wagner

Bob & Kathleen West

David & Suzan Wolf

Bill & Lissa Wright

Donald & Barbara Wright

Earnestine Wright

Steve & Ann Zenthofer

Circle of Care Staff:

*OKC/Communications/

Pearl's Hope Team

*UM Boys Ranch

*UM Children's Home

*Independent Living

*Child SHARE

To make your pledge today, please call 405-530-2078 or visit our website at:

<http://www.circleofcare.org/1000.html>

Special Angels watch over these children

Christi Newendorp is the mother of Schuyler and Evan, two of the children who attend the Special Angels Ministry at Faith UMC in Tulsa.

God answered her prayers with this program, she concludes. Her sons have special needs.

"I asked a lot of tough questions in my private moments. I really wanted our family to fit in at a church," she writes. "I wanted my boys to have the social and learning opportunities church provides. I wanted them to feel loved and accepted, when the world so often is not loving or accepting."

She continues, "I wanted to be able to give back, maybe to help other families going through what we were going through. My husband Eric wanted to share his music talents and to concentrate with me on giving to others. It's what Jesus calls us to do.

"Often special-needs parents are so consumed with their responsibilities they aren't able to fit in to a church family."

The Newendorps have found a good fit at Faith Church.

Christi was part of the core group that launched Special Angels Ministry in 2008. A



Stephanie and Olivia play at Tulsa-Faith UMC.

Petree Grant from the Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation provided seed money. Others in the group were youth minister Heather Scherer and children's ministers Beth Gibson and Laura Eldridge.

"I believe it takes a true administrative team effort and call to this ministry to see it succeed, and Faith had those individuals," Christi says.

The church believes children with special needs are important, acknowledges their needs, and does something about it, said Jean Stout,

director of Special Angels.

"Our ministry is designed to make Sunday School and worship available to all families, with the understanding that some students need additional help in the classroom or sanctuary," Stout said.

Current attendance is about seven children and up to four youths.

"This ministry is successful because of the caring volunteers," Stout said. They number about two dozen.

A Special Angel is an adult or high-school teen trained to assist children with special needs to integrate in the church's total educational program. Each Special Angel wears a dark blue shirt embroidered with the ministry's logo so the children will recognize that person is there to help them.

The volunteers usually serve once a month; they also assist during events such as Vacation Bible School.

A Special Angels Room, with an assigned volunteer, is always open in the Children's Wing. When a student isn't comfortable in a class or worship, a Special Angel can accompany the child to the room.

Opportunities

Youth Minister: Part-time. Del City-Sunny Lane UMC, Larry Bauman, lbaumac@sunnylaneumc.com.

Director of Children's Ministry: Part-time. First UMC, John Curtis, 400 W. 7th Ave., Stillwater, OK 74074, 405-372-5854.

Music Minister: Part-time. Wesley UMC of El Reno, Barry Bennett, 101 S. Barker, El Reno, OK 73036, wesleyelreno@sbcglobal.net.

Music Intern: Part-time. OKC-St. Andrew's UMC, 405-692-4242 (x102), gpass@saokc.org.

Youth Director: Part-time. **Music Director:** Part-time. Harrah UMC, Randy Little, 405-454-3159.

Director of Children and Youth Ministries: Henryetta UMC, 918-652-4452.

Intern for High School Group: Part-time. Norman-McFarlin UMC, Scott Meier, smeier@mcfarlinumc.org, 405-819-4363.

Master Teacher for Class of 1-year-olds: Full-time. OKC-May Ave. UMC, mayave@sbcglobal.net, 405-946-2633.

Administrative Assistant: Putnam City UMC, bob@beesley.org.

Children's Ministry Coordinator: Part-time. Midwest City-St. Matthew UMC, Ron Perceful, 405-732-6831, revronp@stmatthew.org.

CREATE YOUR PLAN

Creating your will or estate plan is now easier than ever before. The Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation has resources available to churches, individuals and families for creating an estate plan and tithing your will. Fill out the form below for more information or contact the Foundation at 800-259-6863 or www.okumf.org.



HAVE YOU CREATED A PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE?

Mr. /Mrs. /Miss _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

- Please send me copy of your *Christian Guide to Planning Your Will & Trust*.
- Please send me your eNewsletter with estate and financial planning news.
- I would like to talk with a planned giving officer about including my church or a ministry in my will or trust.

The Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation

4201 Classen Blvd., OKC, OK 73118 • 800-259-6863 • www.okumf.org