

**Imagine No Malaria**



**Tween Believers ... 5A**



**Interim President at MCH ... 5A**

## What is your church doing for World Malaria Day April 25?

The United Methodist Church launches World Malaria Day April 25 with a call to local churches to be in prayer and action for ending this fully preventable disease that kills a child every 30 seconds in Africa.

All our churches are encouraged to participate in the Imagine No Malaria 2010 Annual Conference offering and many will want to participate in a sleep out event April 24, in which individuals (most youth) are planning to sleep out overnight under imitation or makeshift bed nets. Today, as a result of the Nothing But Nets collaborative effort of the United Methodist Church and multiple partners, many lives are being saved.

The Central Texas Conference raised \$135,276 in 2007 when Nothing But Nets was the Annual Conference offering.

With Imagine No Malaria — the next step after the incredible success of Nothing But Nets — the United Methodist Church joins the United Nations Foundation and our global malaria community partners, in raising \$75 million to eliminate death and suffering from malaria by 2015.

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# 2010 Annual Conference promises to be a pivotal point for new perspectives

It's a new day for the Central Texas Conference as Bishop Mike Lowry convenes the 144th Annual Conference session June 6-9 in Fort Worth.

Many aspects of the Annual Conference will be different this year, but "Energizing & Equipping Local Churches to Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World" continues to drive the role of the conference in providing resources and leadership that enable local churches to excel in their mission to make disciples.

Making disciples embraces the mission of The United Methodist Church and holds accountable the conference and local churches in their vital roles.

The first thing members will notice is the conference's effort to be more environmentally friendly and, as an act of good stewardship, to reduce the traditional printing and mailing costs. All the information related to the 2010 Annual Conference is accessible to all online at [www.ctcumc.org](http://www.ctcumc.org). All details concerning registration, hotels, special group-related meals, childcare and even the *2010 Preliminary Report* are being posted as they become available. You may view and download the information by clicking on the 2010 Annual



**Bishop Mike Lowry**  
Presiding Bishop



**Rev. Jessica Moffatt-Seay**  
Preacher



**Dr. John McKellar**  
Study Leader



**Ethan Gregory**  
Youth Address

Conference photo banner in the lower right side of the conference website.

Worship services will be hosted by First United Methodist Church in downtown Fort Worth. Business sessions will be at the Will Rogers Memorial Center, just west of downtown.

Members attending the Annual Conference will need to be prepared for the City of Fort Worth's new policy of charging \$5 per day for parking in the lots that serve the Will Rogers complex and several nearby museums. There may be

opportunities for multiple-day passes. If that becomes possible, an announcement will be made in *E-Link*, the conference's weekly electronic newsletter, and at the seven district conferences in May.

### **Preaching at Worship**

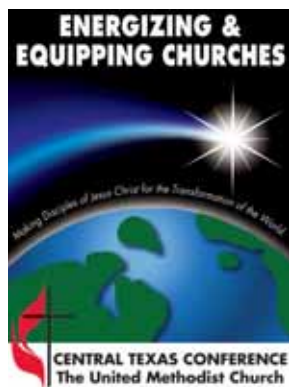
Rev. Jessica Moffatt-Seay, senior pastor at First United Methodist Church of Ardmore, Okla., returns to the Central Texas Conference as the featured preacher for the opening worship at 7 p.m. Sunday, the joint clergy/laity memorial worship service at 10 a.m. Monday,

and the ordination service at 7 p.m. Tuesday. All worship will be at First UMC, Fort Worth.

Many will recall Rev. Moffatt-Seay's dynamic leadership style and compelling messages about our great commission to make disciples during the Bible studies she lead at the 2005 Central Texas Annual Conference.

You won't want to miss this opportunity, so, for the first time, all three Annual Conference worship services will be streamed online live. So even if you can't be in the

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## the Central Link

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# The Wilderness Way

BY BISHOP MICHAEL LOWRY

**34.** Wilderness Way #34 picks up on theme of rethinking theology in the wilderness of our time. Previously, I noted the contribution of the emergent church movement in challenging us to think beyond the ossified poles of much current debate. As I stated, the emergent thought does offer a hopeful new beginning. Yet, in the final analysis, I think it has some serious theological holes that need to be filled.

First, some background. Scot McKnight has written an excellent, more detailed article entitled the *Five Streams of the Emerging Church*. It is worth the time to read. (<http://christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/february/11.35.html>) In that article he quotes a definition of the emerging church from Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger in their book, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures*.

“Emerging churches are communities that practice the way of Jesus within postmodern cultures. This definition encompasses nine practices. Emerging churches (1) identify with the life of Jesus, (2) transform the secular realm, and (3) live highly communal lives. Because of these three activities, they (4) welcome the stranger, (5) serve with generosity, (6) participate as producers, (7) create as created being, (8) lead as a body, and (9) take part in spiritual activities.”

There is a significant shift in emphasis from orthodoxy (right belief) to orthopraxy (right practice or living). Writes McKnight: “The contention is that how a person lives is more important than what he or she believes.

Many will immediately claim that we need both or that orthopraxy flows from orthodoxy. Most in the emerging movement agree we need both ... but the focus is shifted.” The beauty of a third way of theological thinking (whether emergent or otherwise) is that it attempts to move us past our tired fortresses. The danger is that too much may be either given away or merely shunted to the side as inconvenient. The missional emphasis of much third-way thinking is refreshing and on target. All too much, right thinking has led to horribly wrong practicing of the faith.

Still, the core issues of truth, meaning and purpose are not truly solved. Phyllis Tickle in *The Great Emergence* grasps the central question of authority in theology. She notes the fact that there is still a real lack of

emergence (pun intended) over the authority issue. Classic orthodoxy rested authority with the Great Church (Holy Spirit-led councils and scripture working together through tradition). Reformation theology places authority firmly on the grounds of scripture (*Sola Scriptura!*). Unfortunately, the vast splintering of the protestant movement has amply demonstrated that mere reference to scripture does not truly solve the debate over authority.

All of this sounds so abstract until one realizes how deeply such theology impacts what we are about in the Christian Church (and the United Methodist branch of that vast tree of faith). All roads don't lead to Jerusalem. Some don't even lead to Rome. Where we are headed in this wilderness way is still a pertinent question bounded and defined by foundational issues of truth and practice, belief and engagement.

The way out, or at least through, the wilderness, I believe, lies in the recovery of what Detrich Bonhoeffer called Christ the Center. Functionally, ultimately, the authority must lie with Christ — God incarnate. A vague theism will not do. The claims of gospel as explicated in the marvelous overture of John's gospel must once again be fully grasped.

One of the great Christian thinkers today is a man named Dallas Willard. He wrote *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God and Renovation of the Heart* among other works. He is a professor at the UCLA School of Philosophy. Students who take philosophy courses from him are intrigued and sometimes surprised to find a philosophy professor who is a deeply committed Christian. When they would ask why, Dr. Willard replied, “Can you think of anyone better to follow?”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Story replayed by Rev. Ben Disney, Arborlawn United Methodist Church, Fort Worth, Texas; January 3, 2010.



## World Malaria Day April 25 | Continued from page 1A

The United Methodist Church is encouraging our churches to participate in this special initiative and in the April 24-25 events as part of a unified action for World Malaria Day. Directions and ideas for local church and youth groups are available online at [www.ImagineNoMalaria.com](http://www.ImagineNoMalaria.com).

Members of St. Stephen United Methodist Church in Arlington will engage in four events as part of the UMC's global effort to “Change the World” on April 24-25. On April 24, church members will work with children and families at Wimbish Elementary School planting and weeding in the school's community garden.

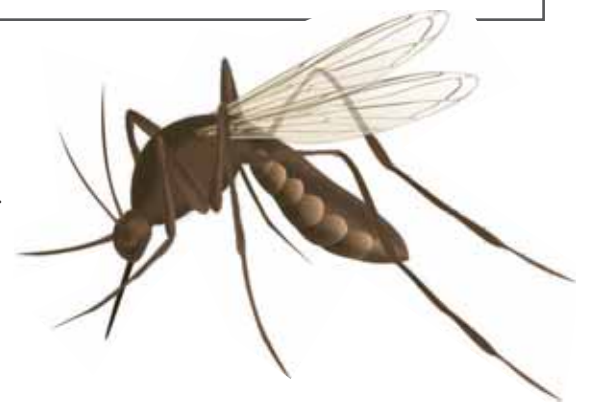
As part of the “Imagine No Malaria” campaign, they will walk the neighborhood with flyers educating people about what households can do this summer to minimize the mosquito population, thus reducing the threat of West Nile Virus in the community. And there's more. That afternoon, church members will serve ice cream to families attending baseball games at Miracle Field, a park across from the church that was designed for children and youth with special needs. United Methodist Women in the church will attend the Benefit for Missions event to learn more about UMW missions. For more details on their activities, visit [www.ststephenmethodist.org](http://www.ststephenmethodist.org).

[www.ststephenmethodist.org](http://www.ststephenmethodist.org).

What is your congregation or youth department planning to do?

If you would like to share your activities with others, please send a description to Carolyn Stephens, conference director of communication, at [Carolyn@ctcumc.org](mailto:Carolyn@ctcumc.org) and register your activity with the United Methodist Church at <http://rethinkchurch.org/changetheworld>.

For Imagine No Malaria information and downloadable resources, please visit [www.ImagineNoMalaria.org](http://www.ImagineNoMalaria.org) and click on “ACT” for resources.



Check out what others are doing on INM's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/umcImagineNoMalaria>.

## FAITH IN ACTION

# Tween Believers at Crowley UMC broadcast messages to the people of the Ivory Coast

Bonjour! The Tween Believers Sunday School Class from First United Methodist Church in Crowley has recorded a greeting to the people of Cote D'Ivoire (former Ivory Coast) to be played on their new United Methodist radio station named The Voice of Hope.

The tweens first learned about the station in February 2010 and decided they wanted to send a message to the listeners. Allison Davis, the granddaughter of the tween class teacher, translated the message into French. She then made 4x6 cards with the message written in French on the front of the card and in English phonetically pronounced in French on the back of the card.

One Sunday she came to class to help the students learn how to pronounce all the words.

For several weeks, part of Sunday School was spent practicing the message in French. On Sunday, March 21, the group recorded their message and the teacher phoned it in to the U.S. link to Voice of Hope.



Voice of Hope came from the 2004 General Conference initiative to strengthen communications in Africa. United Methodist Communications' website tells that "Radio is an effective way of providing information to people in regions that are technologically under-served." The radios that are provided to people who live beyond areas where electricity is available

work on a hand-crank generator system.

United Methodists are encouraged to support this Radio Methos station financially to help with the \$70,000 cost of one year of broadcasting. The station, which began its first broadcast on Dec. 24, 2009, is now on the air from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. The signal covers Abidjan, the commercial capital of

Cote d'Ivoire, and towns around the city with a total population estimated at three million people.

Programming includes Sunday services, preaching, music, news and educational teaching. Other areas of the broadcasts include topics that range from health to legal aid and marriage counseling. One interesting part of Radio Methos is that not only are Christians listening to the broadcasts, but people who do not share the Christian faith are also listening.

The Tween Believers, who are responsible for the KIDZ 2 KIDZ mission ministry at Crowley UMC eagerly learned their message and encourage others to participate in this special mission opportunity. In thinking about what to say, the unanimous thought was to tell the people of West Africa that God loves them. The words recorded in English were: "Hello! How are you, the people of the Ivory Coast? God loves you. We are the Tween Believers from Crowley, Texas — ages 10 to 12. Good bye!"

## Tim Brown named interim president at MCH

The Methodist Children's Home Board of Directors has named Tim Brown, a veteran childcare administrator, as interim president of the agency whose main campuses are in Waco.

He will serve in this role while the board begins its search for a new president to succeed Bobby Gilliam who retired March 31 due to health problems.

The announcement was made by Dr. Clayton Oliphint, chairperson of the board and senior pastor at First United Methodist Church in Richardson. "I know Tim welcomes this new challenge and he will provide strong leadership as we build on the momentum gained during Bobby's seven years of outstanding service as president," Oliphint said.

"Tim is widely respected at Methodist Children's Home and throughout the childcare profession. As a board, we are grateful for his commitment and loyalty to Methodist Children's Home for nearly three decades."

Brown has held various leadership roles during 26 years of service at MCH, most recently

as vice president for community services. He left MCH in 1991 to serve as president and chief executive officer of the Lee and Beulah Moor Children's Home in El Paso, a position he held until he returned to MCH in 2000 as an administrator of residential care.

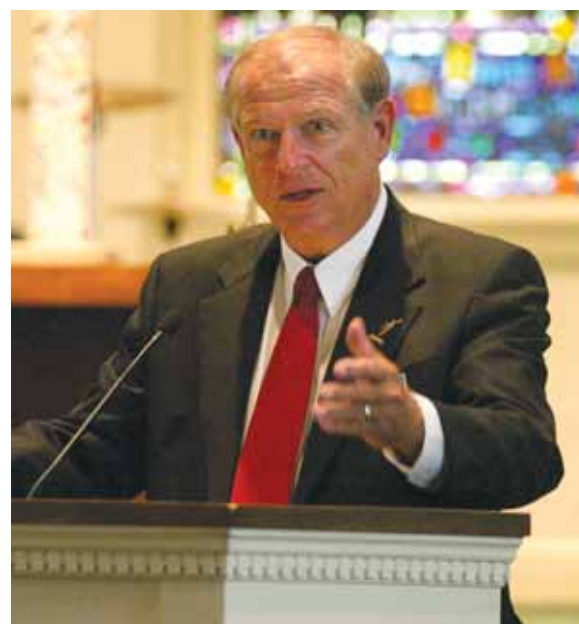
As vice president for community services, Brown has directed the home's foster care and family preservation services across Texas and New Mexico. MCH has outreach offices or programs serving 14 cities and surrounding areas in these two states.

Brown has been a strong advocate of services to children in Waco and throughout the state. He has served on the Baylor University Social Work Advisory Board, the McLennan Community College Curriculum Advisory Boards for Child Care and Mental Health, and the Texas Association of Licensed Children's Services, among others. He has been a member of the Child Fatality Review Teams of El Paso County and McLennan County for the past 15 years.

"I believe that individuals and agencies who work with at-risk

children and families have a great privilege and a great responsibility," Brown said. "We must be diligent in our daily efforts to establish and maintain trusting relationships with children who experience tragic hardships in life and who are challenged by the resulting pain and defeats of those experiences. We have the responsibility to help these children discover the power of hope in their lives."

A resident of Crawford, Brown earned degrees from Baylor University and Tarleton State University. He and his wife, Susan, have three children — Remi, Matt and K.C.



Tim Brown, a veteran childcare administrator, has been named interim president of the Methodist Children's Home in Waco. He follows Bobby Gilliam who retired March 31 due to health problems.

Oliphint said the MCH Board of Directors will soon begin the search process for the agency's 10th president. He said a timetable has not been set for the process.



## Conference Calendar

- April**
- 17: CTCYM Leadership Training at First UMC, Glen Rose
  - 17: Student Leadership Team meeting at United Christian Fellowship, Hill College, Hillsboro
  - 18: Interfaith Worship Service of Help, Hope & Healing for Crime Victims, their families, friends and the community at 4005 Campus Drive, Fort Worth 76119
  - 19: Board of Ministry meeting at Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center
  - 20-21: Professional credentialing interviews for ministry candidates at Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center
  - 21-25: 2010 National Rally for Central Texas Sojourners, Chapter 16 at River Country Campground, Gladsden, Ala.
  - 21-23: New resident orientation retreat at Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center
  - 24: 2nd Annual Spring Praise Band Festival at Richland Hills UMC
  - 24: Conference Faithfully Fit Forever Leader Training at Christ UMC, Fort Worth
  - 25: Conference-wide UMMVIM Team Leader Training at Alliance UMC
  - 26: Waxahachie District dCOM meeting at Waxahachie First UMC
  - 27: Diamond Hill Partners meeting at Conference Center
  - 27: Temple District clergy and spouse meeting at Troy UMC

For the latest updates on the conference and youth calendars, visit regularly [www.ctcumc.org](http://www.ctcumc.org)

# NEWS BRIEFS

## Mother's Day and Wesleyan Homes Benefit Fund coincide on May 9

Mother's day is the time when many congregations faithfully receive the special Wesleyan Homes Benevolent Fund offering. "Today, we need your help to grow the number of congregations who tell this compelling story of the compassionate assistance to senior adults in financial need," states Rev. Dan Bonner, vice president for development at Wesleyan Homes.

"Every nickel of every gift goes directly to supplement a senior's living at the new Georgetown campus, Wesleyan at Eststrella with 124 apartments for independent living and coming in late 2010 60 apartments for assisted living. All are eligible for need-based Benevolent Fund support.

Pastors will be receiving special bulletin inserts and sermon illustrators for use in worship on Mother's Day. For more information, contact Bonner at [dbonner@wesleyanhomes.org](mailto:dbonner@wesleyanhomes.org) or 512-876-9145.

## Conference update on Haiti relief

Rev. Laraine Waughtal, conference Disaster Response Task Force chair, reports that the situation in Haiti continues to be a difficult struggle. Because so much of the population is living outdoors due to the loss of homes and the continued fear of aftershocks, new problems are developing like high risk to newborns due to the unsanitary birthing and living conditions.

The task force is asking for contributions of Birthing Kits, which cost about \$8 each to assemble, and Layette Kits, which cost about \$35 each to assemble. Both are desperately needed.

The Birthing Kits provide safe and sanitary ways for women to delivery babies who do not have access to medical care. The Layette Kits contain the items that are first needed for the newborns such as receiving blanket, cloth diapers, newborn outfits and more.

For church groups assembling these kits, please do not forget to include your \$1 for the shipping of each kit. Where possible, have your church gather the individual dollars and write one check. The content list for each kit can be accessed at <http://sagerbrown.org/>. Please pack your kits in boxes and mark on the outside the count for each type of kit.

Austin Avenue United Methodist Church in Waco has agreed to be the collection point to the south and all kits should be taken there by April 29. Bethel United Methodist Church in Weatherford will be the northern collection point. They request that kits be brought to them Saturday, May 1, between 9 a.m. and noon.

The conference has a team going to Sager Brown and will be taking these kits directly to the depot. "Let's have another great response from the conference like we did with our Health Kits," states Waughtal. Questions? Please contact Jennifer Bellamy at 817-877-5222 or 800-460-8622 or Laraine Waughtal at 940-564-6494.

## Installation and Retirement

The installation service for Rev. Carol Woods as the new Brownwood District superintendent is 5 p.m. Sunday, April 18, at First United Methodist Church in Brownwood (2500 11th St., Brownwood). A welcome reception with refreshments will follow the installation service.

The retirement celebration honoring Rev. Connally Dugger's 47 years in ministry along with his wife, Carlene, is from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 24, at First United Methodist Church in Arlington (313 N. Center St., Arlington 76011). The program begins at 2 p.m. Cards and notes of remembrance are welcome.

## Pivotal point for new perspectives | Continued from page 1A

sanctuary of First UMC Fort Worth, you can experience the inspiration of Annual Conference worship as it is happening. More details on how to access the live streaming will be posted closer to Annual Conference time.

Rev. Moffatt-Seay comes from a long line of Methodist pastors — four generations to be exact — and grew up in Tulsa at Boston Avenue United Methodist Church. She earned her various degrees at Southern Methodist University, the University of Tulsa, and Candler School of Theology at Emory University.

Upon graduation from Candler, she completed the graduate degree program of the Chateau de Bossey in Geneva, Switzerland, and then worked with the World Council of Churches in the area of International Church Relations, addressing intercultural issues of race, violence and poverty. She brings those same skills to her hometown as a mayoral appointee to serve on the Tulsa Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women, organized to address issues of poverty, health and legislation. She has been named as one of Ten Outstanding Young Tulsans.

Following a discernment style of leadership, her training is helping diverse churches, committees and task groups reach consensus as they accomplish their purpose. Her additional expertise is in the

area of local church urban and community ministries. She helped First United Methodist Church of Tulsa launch diverse "hands-on" ministries beyond the walls of the church, deploying more than 1,000 members into the community in more than 30 types of new ministries.

To learn more about Rev. Moffatt-Seay, check an online story at <http://www.umc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content3.aspx?c=IwL4KnN1LtH&b=5259669>. This will give you a glimpse of what she has to say about leadership: "I believe leadership is about relationships. Leading relationally means listening to people. It is about creating an atmosphere where even the softest voice is heard and taken seriously."

### Study Program

Leading the study moments at Annual Conference will be one of our own. Dr. John McKellar, host pastor for the 2009 Annual Conference at White's Chapel United Methodist Church in Southlake, will lead Annual Conference members in a follow-up to the "Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations" book that Bishop Robert Schnase wrote and taught at the CTC 2009 Fall Leadership Summit with more than 1,200 local church participants from across the conference.

In "Five Practices of Fruitful Living," Bishop Schnase's latest book which is currently on the presses, he

moves the discussion of Christian practices from the congregational level to the personal practices of discipleship.

"The fruitful, God-related life develops with intentional and repeated attention to five essential practices that are critical for our growth in Christ," writes Bishop Schnase. "These practices open our heart — to God, to others, to a life that matters, a life rich with meaning, relationship, and contribution. They help us flourish."

With a free copy of "Five Practices of Fruitful Living" for all members at Annual Conference, Rev. McKellar will bring to life the five critical practices — gracious hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking mission and service, and extravagant generosity.

### Youth Address

Another first this year will be an address by conference Student Leadership Team President Ethan Gregory of Mineral Wells. Such an address was introduced and well received at the 2008 General Conference in Fort Worth, and illustrated the need for all United Methodists to hear more about the ideas and concerns of our student members — the future leaders for our Annual Conference and the denomination.

## LEADER TRAINING

### Faithfully Fit Forever can lead to a healthier "us"

The Central Texas Conference Health & Wellness Task Force will sponsor Faithfully Fit Forever Leader Training from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 24, at Christ United Methodist Church (3301 Sycamore School Rd., Fort Worth 76123).

This is a program that many churches will want to initiate for the benefit of their congregation so the cost — which includes 16 weeks of programming, a training manual, educational materials/references, devotional resources and exercise leadership video — is being kept as manageable as possible.

The cost for one person from a church is \$75. To add more from the same church, the cost is \$15 for the second and third persons. For more than that, the costs increases to \$75.

Faithfully Fit Forever (FFF) is a non-profit, cooperative community

health program created by MeritCare Hospital Parish Nursing & Cardiac Rehab staff. It attempts to eliminate the barriers that keep people from participating in exercise and health enhancing behaviors.

It is a non-denominational-faith community based exercise, devotional and health education program that focuses on the body, mind and spirit connection. The program may benefit the physical and psychological well being of church members. There are currently over 650 faith community leaders (nurses, pastors, teachers and others interested in promoting health) who have completed this training workshop.

To date, over 150 places of worship in eight states have implemented FFF programs. It started in 2003 in Kansas at Winfield First United Methodist Church. Follow-up survey results

indicate this program is improving the health and wellness of participants.

Participants — geared toward women and men over 55 and anyone who has not been participating in regular physical activity — enjoy the safe, familiar and supportive environment that their place of worship has to offer. A significant number report weight loss and lower blood pressure as well as improved endurance, strength, balance and flexibility.

The program involves 40 minutes of exercise, 10 minutes of health education and 10 minutes of devotions. A side benefit in the fellowship it creates.

For more information, check the conference website at [www.ctcumc.org](http://www.ctcumc.org) (Ministries/Health & Wellness) or contact Janet Wood (817-877-5222 | [Janet@ctcumc.org](mailto:Janet@ctcumc.org)) or Mona Bailey (817-577-0440 | [billmona\\_1@charter.net](mailto:billmona_1@charter.net)).