



RETHINK Church ... 4A



Finally! New CTC map ... 8A



Congress on Evangelism ... 8A



SCJ's Mount Sequoyah to host Creation Conference

Caring for Creation Conference will be offered March 27-29 at Mount Sequoyah, the South Central Jurisdiction Conference & Retreat Center in Fayetteville, Ark.

Ray C. Anderson, founder and chairman of Interface, Inc., will be keynote speaker along with plenaries by Restoring Eden founder and executive director Peter Illyn and General Board of Church & Society's economic and environmental justice director John Hill.

There will be 12 workshops on topics that link consumer habits with our personal faith journeys. Visit www.mountsequoyah.org for details and registration guidelines.

Church Growth SHARES Month St. Luke UMC shares joys and celebrations while planting seeds for new church starts

By DR. J. ALLEN GOSS
DIRECTOR, CENTRAL TEXAS CONFERENCE CHURCH GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

I heard about people coming forward every Sunday and putting money in a jar. I heard about all of the money de-positing in the jar being designated for Church Growth & Development. I heard that it happened every Sunday, year around and all the proceeds were for new church starts.

I had to go see for myself.

I arrived at St. Luke United Methodist Church in Corsicana just as the service was beginning. Sure enough, there it was, right there on the communion rail, a jar with a handle on it, more like a mug than a jar. It was empty and clear; you could see right through it, but not for long.

Rev. Bruce Carpenter, pastor at St. Luke, made the announcement and then asked if any one wanted to share their celebrations and joys, things like anniversaries and birthdays and good reports from the doctor.

I didn't know how it would go,

but remember, they do this every Sunday. One by one they began to come. At one time there was actually a line of people waiting to "put their money in the jar" and share their celebrations and joys.

One man put in a \$20 bill, saying he had nothing smaller, so he included several celebrations and joys. It was quite exciting to see the jar fill as each joy was celebrated. The dollars will be counted and a check will be sent to Church Growth & Development for new church starts.

Since 1980, every church in the Central Texas Conference has been asked to promote Church Growth SHARES during the month of February by passing out the brochures about SHARES and the ministries they are enabling across the Conference.

Pastors are asked to invite persons to give over and above and beyond the local church, to help establish new churches in the right places with the right pastors at the right times.



I want to thank St. Luke UMC in Corsicana for promoting new church starts in a unique way every Sunday by asking folks to "put money in the jar" and share their celebrations and joys.

This is just one more good way to promote new church starts. There are many more good ways. If you have a unique way of promoting new church starts in

your congregation, let me know at allen@ctcumc.org. Maybe our next story can be about how your church does it. I look forward to hearing from you.

NOTE: See a group photograph of one of the Central Texas Conference's new churches starts on page 8A. New church starts are the denomination's assurance for the future.



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The Wilderness Way

BY BISHOP MICHAEL LOWRY

7. When I was a new pastor, an older veteran (who would later go on to be a district superintendent) explained appointment making to me this way. He said, "They (meaning the bishop and the cabinet) take the declension sheet and operate like a barber shop. They start at the top, fill an appointment and say 'Next!'"

He talked in terms of a career ladder and the system taking care of you if you paid your apportionments in full. Such a way of operating is "Egypt" thinking. It may have worked in the time of a static Christian culture (though that is doubtful). It certainly doesn't work today.

We need a *wilderness way* of making appointments. Recently, three of us (myself, Dr. Georgia Adamson and Rev. Don Scott) attended a Texas Methodist Foundation-sponsored training event on appointment making based on work by Bishop Janice Huie and Dr. Richard Burnham (a district superintendent in the Texas Annual Conference) entitled *From Reactive to Responsive: Appointment Making In a Season of Transformation*. Dr. Gil Rendle led the stimulating event which challenged us to think differently about how we make appointments in the wilderness.

Central Texas is unique. We cannot just adapt someone else's system. We can, however, learn from others' experimentation and work on our own version of wilderness way appointments. In Robert E. Quinn's phrase from *Deep Change*, we are building the bridge while we walk on it. Tentatively, learning as we go, we've adopted the following guidelines:

Our clients in appointment making are:

1. God — the Kingdom of God
2. The Mission Field
3. The Local Church
4. Clergy

In that order!

Rather than move in a linear fashion down the declension sheet, we are going to examine what churches are missional, strategic, high potential, face critical needs, are new church starts, are facing hospice situations, etc. We will work on pastoral leadership from a similar perspective.

We will work on a number of appointments in a concurrent, non-linear fashion and be governed less by the declension sheet. Will this work perfectly from the start? Absolutely not! We are learning as we go. In wilderness, we have to learn new ways of being and doing if we want to survive. A peace-and-pay-strategy is the way of death. Trusting in God to guide us in the wilderness is a scary new way of moving forward.

As we look to the immediate future, we have a number of "clear openings" (i.e. places that are or will for certain require a new appointment). In that regard, I have received letters requesting retirement from Dr. Doyle R. Allen, executive director of Mission Ministries and assistant to the bishop, and Dr. J. Allen Goss, executive director of Church Growth & Development. With these two servants, our conference has been blessed with their combined 76 years in ministry. Dr. Clifton Howard, superintendent of the Waco District, will reach the maximum eight-year period for superintendency as defined by *The Book of Discipline* and must leave the superintendency. I have extended Rev. Connally Dugger as superintendent of the Mid-Cities District for an additional year.

The "clear openings," places that are or will require a new appointment, include:

1. Executive Director, Mission Ministries
2. Executive Director, Church Growth & Development
3. Waco District Superintendent
4. Evant/Purmela United Methodist Churches
5. Wesley United Methodist Church, Waco
6. Cross Plains United Methodist Church
7. Italy United Methodist Church

If you are interested in these openings (especially for the churches), please contact your district superintendent no later than Friday, Feb. 6. We are not going to be interviewing people. I have already been in months of prayer and consideration about the Cabinet and Extended Cabinet openings. We do want to operate with more transparency and invite people to provide input. As we learn a wilderness way, know the bishop makes appointments with advice of the Cabinet.

Where will this lead us? I'm not sure. I do invite us to relax and pray for leadership. This is a time to trust God and follow the Spirit's leading. We don't have careers as clergy. We have a calling from God. The churches are not our churches. They belong to Christ. They make up "the body of Christ." (I Corinthians 12:27) God is in charge; we are not, and this is a good thing.



March 22-29 Is Cover the Uninsured Week

Churches Are Needed for Enrollment Assistance; Training Available Feb. 20 in Arlington

An estimated 50,000 children in Tarrant County alone qualify for SCHIP/Medicaid low or no-cost medical insurance but are not receiving benefits because they are not presently enrolled.

Enrollment Sites Needed

The Tarrant County SCHIP Coalition is seeking locations for SCHIP/Medicaid enrollment events. Our churches would be a

convenient and appropriate site. If your church would like to sponsor and promote an enrollment event, the coalition can provide training and/or bilingual staff to help facilitate the event.

For more information on hosting such an event, please contact Rev. Mary Spradlin at ssumc@sbcglobal.net or 817-460-8655.

SCHIP/Medicaid Assistance Training for Host Churches

Assistance training for the SCHIP/Medicaid health insurance application process will be held from 9 to 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 20, at St. Stephen United Methodist Church, 1800 W. Randol Mill, Arlington 76012.

The State of Texas has the highest percentage of uninsured children in this nation so

enrollment is important. If your church would like to learn how to help families enroll in the SCHIP/Medicaid low or no-cost health insurance, please make plans to send one of more people to this free event.

For more information about the training event and how to get involved, contact Rev. Mary Spradlin at ssumc@sbcglobal.net or 817-460-8655.



RETHINK CHURCH

What if church wasn't just a building, but thousand of doors — each door opening up to a different concept or experience of church — so that whoever knocks might find a journey to call their own.

The United Methodist Church will launch its new **10thousanddoors.com** nationwide campaign April 22 in conjunction with World Malaria Day, illustrating the thousands of doors leading people into the church and from the church into the community.

With the new campaign, the United Methodist “Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.” ad campaign which began in 2001 is entering a new realm through online ads targeting people ages 18 to 44. From Aug. 20 through mid-October, the ads will appear on Beliefnet, e-Harmony, Yahoo, CitySearch, About.com and other social media sites. More than 21 million people are expected to see them.

“We’re seeking to reach people who feel like something is missing from their life and are looking for meaning or purpose,” said Rev. Larry Hollon, chief executive of United Methodist Communications, which coordinates the campaign.

The interactive ads will ask users questions about their desires and beliefs and offer a choice of answers. After they submit a response, they will see a summary of the poll results, along with information and links to explore more about the UMC. The ads will feature streaming video of campaign’s television spots and offer a



Rev. Larry Hollon announces new campaign.

free MP3 download of the theme music. Users can follow the links to www.United Methodist.org to learn more about the denomination, find a local church or request a brochure.

The congregations of the Central Texas Conference will want to be prepared to revamp their local church profiles as part of this nation-wide evangelism tool that directs seekers to our local churches. Watch the conference Web site (www.ctcumc.org) for information updating your Find-a-Church profile. — *From UMNS*

Conference Volunteers in Mission made great impact in 2008

Churches in the Central Texas Conference made great strides during 2008 in mission trip activities.

Based on the reports that the conference office received from congregational mission leaders, the CTC sent out 407 mission teams comprised of 3,355 team members.

Specifically, the conference learned of three medical mission teams and 404 construction teams, including the Central Texas Conference Youth in

Mission (CTCYM) during the summer. Eighty three of the teams volunteered in areas affected by hurricanes and worked an estimated 2,650 work days.

Together, all of the mission teams completed an estimated total of 17,011 days of work, and gave an estimated \$897,065 in project contributions and team expenses.

Based on a seven-hour work day at \$19.51 per hour (the standard value in 2008 for the volunteer

work hour), our teams contributed \$2,323,192 in volunteer time! The known teams served in 10 countries across the globe and seven states within the United States.

These numbers do not include the myriad ways that CTC churches also served in their local communities through Habitat for Humanity, local food pantries, Meals on Wheels and various other projects to which members are

faithfully committed on a regular basis. On behalf of the conference, thank you for the ways that you have served communities in need!

Please be sure to let the conference know about upcoming local church mission trips. For more information about United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM), please visit the UMVIM page on the conference Web site at www.ctcumc.org.

CTC meets 100% in General Church apportionments

“It is a great thrill to report that once again our Central Texas Conference has paid 100 percent of its General Church apportionments!” states Rev. Harvey Ozmer, director of Finance & Administration.

“With only a few hiccups in past years, our Conference is one that traditionally has met its connectional ministry obligations. In spite of the challenges of the national economy, the churches of Central Texas remitted 95.9 percent of the Conference budget. This was an increase of .08 percent compared to 2007, he said.

The final report indicated that 283 of the 306 churches of the Conference met their connectional

giving in full. He called attention to the Weatherford District where every church paid out at 100 percent. The Brownwood and Temple districts paid out at 100 percent with special giving.

Total apportionments remitted was \$10,701,490, according to Ozmer, and the total paid for all benevolent causes was \$11,782,432. “Perhaps more important than the numbers is that everyone expressed their deep love and commitment to God and the church as they shared in the mission and ministry of Christ,” Ozmer said.

February

- 6-7: United Methodist Men’s Retreat at Glen Lake
- 7-8: Youth Mid-Winters Retreat #1 at Glen Lake
- 7: Glen Lake Camp Board of Directors
- 9: 2010 Budget Requests Due
- 9-13: UMVIM Mission Trip to Lake Charles, La.
- 10: Board of Ministry at First UMC, Hurst
- 12: Clergy Tax Seminar at Arlington Heights UMC, Fort Worth
- 12: Board of Trustees at Conference Center
- 13-14: Spanish Immersion at Acton UMC
- 15: Aldersgate Enrichment Center Day
- 17: Central Texas Methodist Foundation Board of Directors at Conference Center
- 18-21: Cabinet Inventory Retreat
- 18: Committee on Rules, Policies & Guidelines at Conference Center
- 20-22: Youth Mid-Winter #2 at Glen Lake
- 24: Harris Summit on Mental Health at Round Up Inn, Fort Worth
- 26: Council on Finance & Administration at Conference Center
- 26: Metropolitan Board of Mission Annual Dinner at Round Up Inn, Fort Worth

March

- 1: UM VIM Team Leader Training at Salado UMC
- 5: Waxahachie District clergy meeting at First Waxahachie

For the latest updates on the conference and youth calendars, visit regularly www.ctcumc.org



— Noteworthy Items —

Metropolitan Board of Mission Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner for the Metropolitan Board of Mission in Tarrant County will be held at 6:15 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 26, at Fort Worth's Round Up Inn, Will Rogers Memorial Center.

The Metro Board is the mission arm of the Fort Worth and Mid-Cities districts of The United Methodist Church. The annual event celebrates more than two dozen outreach ministries supported by the churches and individuals of the two districts. For more details and to purchase tickets by Feb. 23, visit www.metroboard-umc.org.

Nominations and applications now due for awards and scholarships

As the Central Texas Annual Conference approaches in June, conference agencies and task forces are calling for nominations and applications in order to recognize achievements and award scholarships.

Please check the conference Web site at www.ctcumc.org for information about the following opportunities and others as they are announced:

Morris Walker Awards — Board of Laity recognizes achievements/service and awards scholarships to one clergy and one lay person. Deadline for nominations is April 20.

Merit Scholarship(s) — Higher Education Task Force awards scholarship(s) to outstanding high school seniors who will be first-time students at a United Methodist-related college/university. Amount of scholarship dependent on UM Student Day offering. Deadline: April 30.

Stephens Scholarship(s) — Higher Education Task Force oversees selection of one student majoring in finance/business and one student majoring in journalism/public relations. Deadline: April 30.

D.E.A.L. College Grants — Committee on Disability Concerns recognizes one upper classman with a handicapping condition and one student with a declared major in assisting persons with handicapping conditions. Deadline: April 30.

Central Texans attend Congress on Evangelism



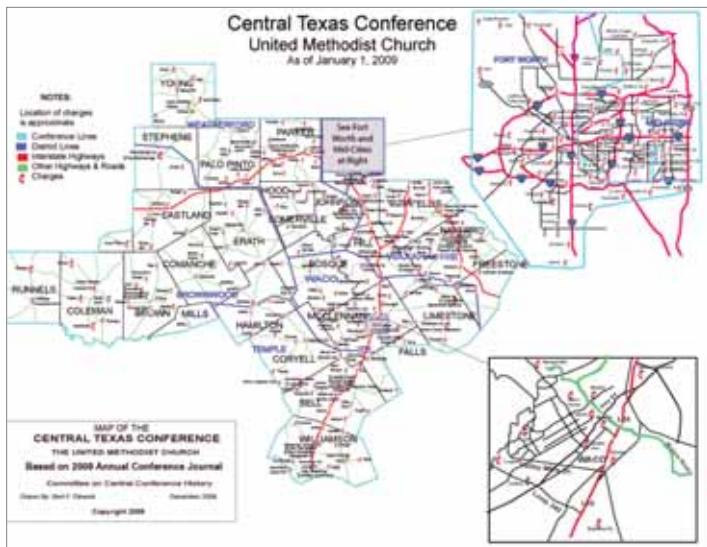
At least a dozen lay and clergy from the Central Texas Conference attended the annual Congress on Evangelism last month. Among the participants were, at left, Marlene Richardson of Crowley United Methodist Church and Rev. Ron Albertson of Trinity United Methodist Church, Arlington, and Rev. Mark Winter of One Man Show Ministry who is seen at left entertaining the children.



Finally! A new downloadable Central Texas Conference map

Now online is a downloadable map of the Central Texas Conference area that can be used for locating churches, meeting sites and event

venues. The map shows district lines and the communities where churches/ministries. Visit www.ctcumc.org to download this map for your use.



Church Growth | Continued from page 1A



LifePoint United Methodist Church in the Keller area is one of the successful new church starts, supported in part by the Church Growth & Development SHARES program. For more information about LifePoint, visit their dynamic Web site at www.lifepoint.com. Dr. Thomas Childs is the pastor.

Do you find yourself in the new *More Dumb Things Churches Do & How to Avoid Them?*

Following the success of the original *Ten Dumb Things Churches Do and How to Avoid Them*, author Philip Wiehe returns — this time with co-author Linda McFadden — with a positive and practical new guidebook for clergy and church leaders.

With 50 years' combined experience, the authors have a firm grip and focus on common congregational challenges, plus the insight and strategies to address these challenges head-on.

So what kind of dysfunctional church do YOU attend? Pick one or more from the list and see the solutions.

"Pastor-Is the Star" Church — Jesus Christ is not available to run our parishes, so if you think you are, or think your pastor is Jesus, think again.

Stuck Church — Never changes. Its motto is, "We owe it to previous generations of church members to honor the previous generations."

Delusional Church — Any clergy person who gets caught up between the congregation's fantasy about itself and the reality of limited resources is headed for burnout!

Addictive Church — The coffee hour may be genial, but the real juice is in the hushed conversations in the parking lot and lively e-mail exchanges.

Pitiful Church — Sunday school superintendent begins the recruiting pitch to teachers with "You probably don't want to do this and don't have time anyway ..."

Busy Church — This church engages in ministry simply by multiplying its activities; lots of energy, but it isn't necessarily going anywhere.

"We-Want-to-Grow" Church — What does this congregation really want, and more to the point, why do they want it? Example: Older members claim to want more youth, but don't want to run the youth program and are reluctant to pay somebody else to do it.

Wasteful Church — It is easy to talk the talk of Creation theology, but

when it comes to walking the walk in our wasteful consumer society, this church either doesn't know how to be environmentally responsible or is just lazy.

Denominational Church — Relying exclusively on denominational loyalty to fill the membership rolls has no future — partly an evolution of the Body of Christ as a social institution.

Conflicted Church — A congregation that can get into a snit about most anything. Often the debate is not so much about an issue as about the merits of the people engaged in the debate.

Poor Church — This church may not in fact be poor at all, but is always struggling to generate enough money to meet even a minimal budget. Poverty is not about the bank account, but about the human heart.

ISBN: 978-0-8192-2258-9. Church Publishing Inc./Morehouse Publishing. 917-373-8510 or wfalvey@cpj.org.

2009 Annual Conference offering requests due

Each year the Central Texas Annual Conference receives a special offering at Annual Conference in June that is designated for a particular ministry or cause.

The amount collected in the past has varied greatly, generally determined by the interest in the cause or ministry and the effectiveness of the recipient organization in promoting itself and the offering.

The conference Mission

Ministries is accepting suggestions for any agency or cause as recipient of the 2009 Annual Conference offering. Requests should be submitted in writing by Feb. 18 and include the following information:

- Name, address, e-mail, telephone and contact person (name, address, e-mail and telephone numbers) of the submitting organization
- Name and position of person submitting the request

- Brief description of the mission/ministry of the organization
- How the offering funds would be used, if selected

Submit requests by Feb. 18 to: Dr. Doyle R. Allen, executive director of Mission Ministries, 464 Bailey Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76107-2153.