



Jerusalem 33 A.D. ... 5A



Mike Young at CSCM ... 8A



Retirement Event ... 8A

Community garden sprouts at First Hurst UMC to feed neighbors in need

Earlier this month, volunteers from First United Methodist Church of Hurst planted a community garden that will benefit their neighbors in need. The garden was funded in part by a grant from the Public Health Department and is being administered by the Tarrant Area Food Bank.

For several months, First Hurst volunteers have been planning the garden and constructing raised planting beds on the church's campus northeast of downtown Fort Worth. On April 2 the planting began with vegetables that, when harvested, will benefit the clients of Mission Central, a local charitable agency.

Church members, guests and preschool children from the church's Day School cast their votes to name this special place the "Village Garden," which was announced on April 2.

FUMC Hurst has a strong tradition of helping their community. In 1996, the church founded the local charitable agency Mission Central to aid their neighbors in need. The agency has provided more than \$1 million in goods and services to families in northeast Tarrant County, and has since become a separate non-profit organization.

The second Friday of each month, First Hurst, in conjunction with Mission Central and Tarrant Area Food bank, offers a mobile food pantry from 10 a.m. to noon in the church's parking lot. In addition to fruits and vegetables, dairy products and eggs, clients can receive aid in applying for various forms of assistance.

Each fall, First Hurst provides full

| **Continued** on page 8



Photos by Dick Voss

The raised beds have been constructed and now members and friends of First United Methodist Church of Hurst are planting vegetable seeds and started plants for the Village Garden. Crops will help to feed neighbors in need.



Giving Back and *Giving Forward* ...

Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center has been named recipient of the 2011 Central Texas Annual Conference Offering.

More than 18,000 children, youth and adults come to the camp site each year for meetings, retreats and as part of the summer and mid-year camping and retreat programs.

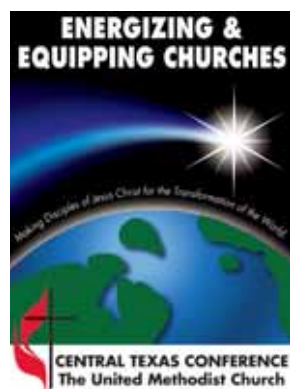
Besides the Annual Conference Offering, which will be received during the June 5-8 meeting in Waco, the folks at Glen Lake Camp will be asking individuals and local

churches for a variety of other gifts. Over an eight-week period, GLC will be asking YOU to become a member of the Glen Lake Gift of the Week Club.

Week 1: GLC wants to hear your stories. If you came to Glen Lake Camp in 1939 or anytime after that, or if you came to Still Water Lodge last weekend or anytime before that, act now to share your story. Contact GLC Executive Director Rev. Kay Hawkins at kay@glenlake.org with your memories — playful, poignant or profound. If you don't "write," call

the camp at 254-897-2247 and ask for Curtis or Seth. They will arrange to come visit you and record your story.

"Your story is very important to us," states Rev. Hawkins. "Don't miss the deadline of April 20 to share your story." Check the conference's weekly *E-Link* for more week-to-week details on how you can participate over and above the Annual Conference Offering through the Glen Lake's Gift of the Week Club. Don't get the *E-Link*? Contact Susan@ctcumc.org.



the
Central Link

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The Wilderness Way

BY BISHOP MICHAEL LOWRY

55. One of the formative events in my own spiritual pilgrimage was a mission trip during spring break of my sophomore year in college. As a part of a Quaker college group we worked building a community center deep in the backwoods “hollers” (hollows or valleys) of Appalachia, Ky. Like so many others, the mission trip and encounter was vastly different from my normal life. Living and working in a greatly impoverished society impacted me more than it did those we were helping.

As a parent, I have commented on how the mission trips our son and daughter went on as high schoolers changed them. A trip to Guatemala as a couple with the mission team from the last church I served has left its lingering impact on Jolynn and me. Coming to the Central Texas Conference, I was immediately impressed (and remain so!) with the great and godly impact of CTCYM (Central Texas Conference Youth in Mission). Serving communion at the closing of the Senior High CTCYM trip is both a highlight and a high priority for me.

Both anecdotally and in research, we have come to understand the significant impact of mission trips (as well as other hands-on experiences/ministry in helping the hungry and hurting both spiritually and physically) in making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Through such events participants are spiritually transformed even while they are engaged in helping to transform our world. The *Reveal: Focus* study pointedly reports: “Serving those in need naturally triggers spiritual growth when people act as Christ’s hands and feet in settings that sometimes take them out of their comfort zones.” (Greg Hawkins and Cally Parkinson, *Focus*, p. 41)

In making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world we have slowly learned that there is often a critically important mission link. We tend to divorce serving from spiritual reflection. “When reflection on practices of faith is minimal or missing, when those involved in service projects do not ... ponder the situation of those served and relate these to the sacred scriptures and practice of their own community, then precious opportunities to make explicit the connections between faith and life are forfeited. Mushy and indistinct god-talk substitutes for engagement with the “master

stories” of students’ faith.” (Mark William Radecke, “Service-Learning and Faith Formation,” *Journal of College and Character* (July 2007, Vol. 8 No. 7)



David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons in *UnChristian* write: “We must commit to doing the hard work of recapturing Christianity’s essence in our own lives. It’s easy to point out the imperfections of others, but it takes much more humility and grace to confront the faults in ourselves. Being Christian is hard work. Putting the needs of others above your own, loving your neighbor, doing good to those who would do evil to you, exercising humility, suffering with those less fortunate, and doing it all with a pure heart is nearly impossible. But it is Jesus’s model and call. And that is what it will take.

When an aspiring saint asked Mother Teresa, “How can I be like you?” her simple response was, “Find your own Calcutta.” She understood the core of the Christian life – the truest knowing comes in the doing.” (*UnChristian* by David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, p. 225)

To make disciples for the transformation of the world we need to find our “Calcuttas” and spiritually through prayer and Bible study reflect on our mission experiences. If the goal is to “make disciples” (per Matthew 28:19-20), action and reflection must be wedded.

Karla Koll comments, “Without reflection, action becomes simply activism.” With out biblically guided reflection and prayer, the high of spiritual experience dissipates like the fog giving way to the heat of the day. Serving and reflection wedded together provide a crucial component in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

(For those wishing to investigate this connection I recommend Kenda Creasy Dean’s deeply insightful eighth chapter of *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church*, pp. 157-184.)

2011 Central Texas Annual Conference:

The 2011 Central Texas Annual Conference convenes June 5-8 in Waco with Rev. Adam Hamilton, senior pastor at United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, as featured speaker/trainer. Guests are welcome to come hear him and join in the worship each evening at First United Methodist Church, Waco.

Transforming Church Experiences

Jerusalem 33 A.D. reenacts Jesus' final days

First United Methodist Church Killeen presents for the second year the miracles, trials, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ during their Jerusalem 33 A.D. Thursday and Friday, April 21 and 22 at Methodist Park, 3501 E. Elms, Killeen.

The community is invited to witness this passion play side-by-side with villagers, money changers, Romans soldiers, Judas, King Herod and Jesus himself.

The members of First Killeen have turned a small valley at the corner of Cunningham and East Elms roads in Killeen into the ancient City of Jerusalem and Christ's last days.

It's not so much to proselytize or to make a statement, we just want to make the Easter story come alive, Rev. Skip Blancett, senior pastor, told a reporter last year for the *Killeen Daily Herald*.

The live reenactment is divided into two separate events each evening. From 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday is the portrayal of the Last Supper and the betrayal and trial of Jesus. Then, on Friday from 5 to 7 p.m. the ancient community and visitors witness the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

David Archer, who has portrayed Christ for this event, says, "This is about touching people's hearts and God's glory."

In the *Killeen Daily Herald* newspaper article, Taylor Short writes: "As guests filter into the simulated reality of Jerusalem, families of actors cook with cast iron over a fire while others share details about Passover and why they eat certain foods. Women chase small children by the creek and Roman guards, clad in gold-trimmed brown

leather, warn guests to behave, standing brazenly with bright red capes and helmet plumes whipping in the wind.

"The townspeople whisper rumors about a man claiming to be the son of God before he walks into the village flanked by guards and gasping children. After Jesus saves a woman from being stoned to death and declares his knowledge of the betrayal at the Last Supper, Judas monologues about how we can all learn from Judas' mistake. Soon, after a kiss from Judas identifies him, Jesus is arrested by the Romans. Friday's presentation features his crucifixion and resurrection.

Admission for the event is one can of food or a donation. All food collected will be given to the Killeen Food Care Center. Donations will go toward the cost of the event.

For more information on Jerusalem 33 A.D. or the church's Walk Through Bethlehem during the Advent season, contact Terry Bierwirth at 254-634-6363 or terry.bierwirth@fumc-killeen.org.



Above: Judas talks to people about his betrayal of Christ. Right, the townspeople whisper rumors about the man claiming to be the son of God.



Christ carries his cross through the streets during First UMC Killeen's Jerusalem in 33 A.D.



Conference Calendar

- April:**
- 16: Great Day of Service
 - 19-20: Appointive Cabinet
 - 22: Conference Center closed for Good Friday
 - 24: Easter Sunday
 - 30: Conference Student Leadership Team meeting
- May:**
- 9: Cabinet meeting
 - 16: Cabinet Training Day
 - 17: Central Texas Methodist Foundation Board meeting at Conference Center
 - 22: Waxahachie District Conference
- June**
- 5-8: Central Texas Annual Conference at Waco Convention Center and First UMC, Waco as host church
 - 7: Annual United Methodist Women Luncheon at Waco Convention Center, Waco
 - 12-18: Central Texas Conference Youth in Mission Jr./Sr. High Combination mission trip
 - 12-18: Central Texas Conference Youth in Mission Senior High mission trip
 - 23-25: Bishops' Week at Mount Sequoyah, Fayetteville, Ark.
 - 23-26: WGRS of Christian Mission at McMurry University, Abilene

Petition submissions are welcome for the 2012 General Conference

Between now and Sept. 27, United Methodists can submit petitions for consideration by the 2012 General Conference, the denomination's top legislative body.

According to church law, "Any organization, clergy member or lay member of The United Methodist Church may petition the General Conference"

Detailed instruction for submitting a petition are available on the General Conference website (gc2012.umc.org). Petitions must be typed and may be submitted via

email to petitions@umpublishing.org, through the website, by mail or by fax.

The deadline for petitions submitted only by regular mail or fax is July 1, to allow time for transcription and translation. Petition should indicate whether they have general church budget considerations.

The mailing addresses for petitions (hard copy accompanied, if possible, by digital version on diskette, CD or USB drive) are: Gary Graves, Petitions Secretary,

United Methodist General Conference, P.O. Box 140, Rockfield, KY 42274, or, for delivery purposes, to 2511 Richpond - Rickfield Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

When submitting a petition, you must indicate whether a petition has "general church budget implications," meaning a petition that causes the need for funding (i.e. creation of a new program, staff position, support requirements, etc.) through the general church apportionments. Such petitions require review by the General Council on Finance

& Administration to verify if the funding is already included under the recommended quadrennial budget.

Submitters must also indicate whether a petition has "global implications," meaning it is a constitutional amendment, has a direct effect on the global work of general agencies, places requirements or expectations on all annual conferences, districts, or churches, or speaks to societal concerns regardless of the particular form of secular government.

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

All Things Made New: Cooperative School of Christian Mission

The heart and soul of the Central Texas Conference Cooperative School of Christian Mission, sponsored annually as a cooperative effort of the Outreach Council and the United Methodist Women, is the spiritual growth study.

Participants take this course of study and one other, either the geographical study on Haiti or the issue study that this year focuses on global Christianity. "All Things Made New" is the theme for this year's school that will be held during August at First United Methodist Church of Fort Worth and at Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center, Glen Rose.

Lead teacher for the spiritual growth study this year is Rev. Dr. T. Michael Young, former Fort Worth District Superintendent and the CTC's candidate for bishop, who will be teaching *Coming Out on the Side of Grace: Forgiveness & Reconciliation*. He will teach both weekday and evening classes.

Others teaching this course are:

Eve Hamilton, a lay member of White's Chapel United Methodist Church in Southlake and current chair of Mission Ministries for the conference;

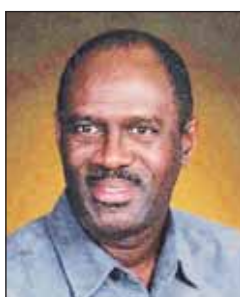
Ralph Thompson, a certified lay speaker and associate lay leader with the Southwest Texas Conference, is the founder of "Miracle on 18th," a worship ministry that grew from a local soup kitchen to helping congregations adopt new ways of



Mike Young



Eve Hamilton



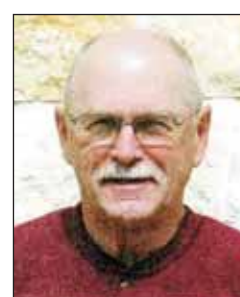
Ralph Thompson



Rhonda Troll



Nancy Maples



George Murphy



Laraine Waughtal



Steven Campbell



Brenda Wier



Connie Haynie-Smith



Pamela Pinkerton

worship and new ministries.

Rev. Rhonda Troll, a member of Bulverde UMC, local UMW leader and certified lay speaker, has served as mission coordinator for spiritual growth in the San Antonio District of the Southwest Texas Conference.

Teaching the *Geographic Study on Haiti* are:

Nancy Maples is director of music ministry at First UMC in El Campo, a UMW leader in the Victoria District of the Southwest Texas Conference, and a popular CSCM study leader among the South Central Jurisdiction conferences. She has led previous studies on Sudan.

George Murphy has participated in hurricane and earthquake UMWIM recoveries in southeast Texas after Rita and in Thor, Haiti in 2010. He will lead a UMWIM team to Haiti later this year.

Rev. Laraine Waughtal, pastor at Bluff Dale/Morgan Mill UMCs, has led the Central Texas Conference Disaster Response Team over the past six years. She will be returning to Haiti later this year and leading a UMWIM team.

Teaching the *Issue Study on Joy to the World: Mission in the Age of Global Christianity* are:

Rev. Steven Campbell, a pastor

serving churches in the Northwest Texas Conference since 1970, has been a study leader in most of the conferences of the South Central Jurisdiction.

Rev. Brenda Weir recently retired after 19 years as executive director of the CTC's Metropolitan Board of Missions. A calling to justice ministries and faith-filled experiences has made her a popular CSCM study leader over the years.

Leading the *Children's Study on Kric Krac: Haiti* is Connie Haynie-Smith; and the Youth Study on *Forgiveness & Reconciliation: Coming Out on the Side of Grace* is Pamela Pinkerton. Haynie-Smith has been the children's ministry coordinator as First Crowley UMC for 11 years, and has taught the Children's

Study at the past two CSCMs.

Pinkerton, a resident of Grand Prairie who works with older adults and host agencies for providing meaningful return to work force opportunities.

CSCM weekday and evening classes will be held Aug. 1-4 at First UMC Fort Worth. CSCM weekend classes are Aug. 5-7 at Glen Lake Camp. The school is open to men, women and children of all ages. CEUs are offered for the convenience and educational requirements of the clergy.

For more details and to register (early registration assures your place and time to order/read the study resources) visit the conference website at www.ctcumc.org and click on the "Christian Leaders" banner.

Village Garden at First Hurst | Continued from page 1A

Thanksgiving dinners for more than 1,000 local families. Grocery sacks with shopping lists attached are distributed in late October. Church members shop for the groceries and return their full bags to the church in mid-November. The week before Thanksgiving, the groceries and frozen turkeys are distributed to local families.

The Adopt-a-School partnership of First Hurst with Bellaire Elementary School has been recognized multiple times by the Texas Association of Partners in Education (TAPE). Church members provide ongoing support to Bellaire through school supply drives for students and teachers, tutoring of students, and donation of classroom equipment and supplies.

The Village Garden is the latest expression of the church's commitment to local mission efforts.

"One of our church's core values is transformational generosity,"



said Dr. Michael McKee, senior pastor. "We believe that through generous gifts and service to others, not only can the lives of those we serve be transformed, but our lives as well. The volunteers that have spearheaded this community garden effort are tireless and enthusiastic. I am looking forward to seeing what we will harvest from this garden,

and what the garden will sow in our community."

The Village Garden effort is led by Vicky Otterman (817-296-3525). First United Methodist Church is located at 521 W. Pipeline Road, Hurst, TX 76053. For information, call 817-282-7384 or go to www.fumchurst.org.

Retirement Party for Rev. Harvey L. Ozmer

In celebration of 43 years of dedicated service, a come-and-go event honoring Rev. Harvey L. Ozmer will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 14, at St. Luke United Methodist Church (3200 Denton Hwy., Fort Worth 76117).

If you are unable to attend but would like to extend best wishes and share a memory, story or picture with Harvey and the Ozmer family, please send a card or letter to Ozmer Retirement, 464 Bailey Ave., Fort Worth 76107. What you share will be presented to him at the event.