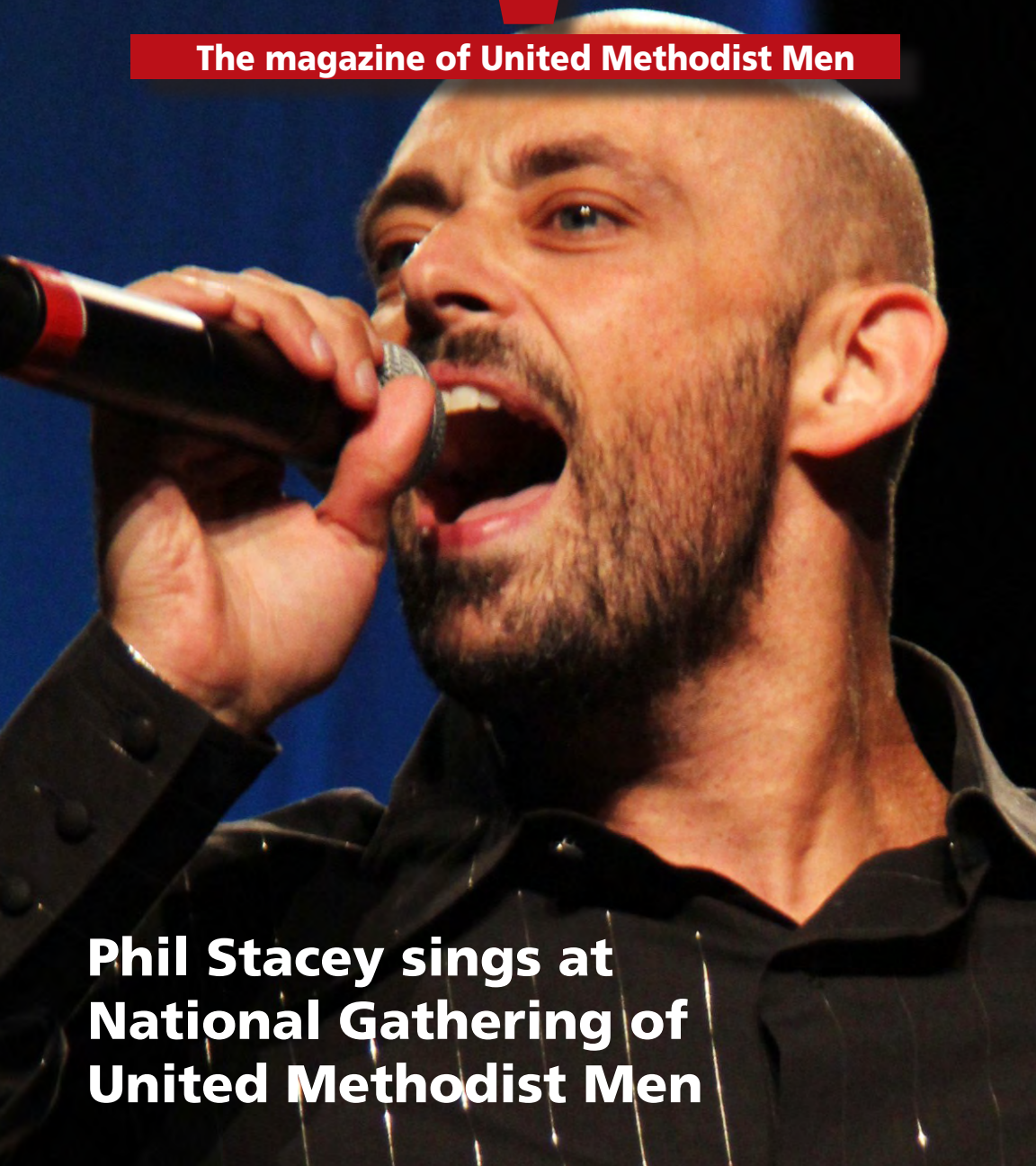


UM MEN

The magazine of United Methodist Men



**Phil Stacey sings at
National Gathering of
United Methodist Men**

A letter from the General Secretary

The 11th National Gathering was a wonderful blessing. Several of the articles in this issue are a reflection of that exciting event.

As we have learned from Man in the Mirror, any event like the gathering requires “the next right steps” if it is to be transformational. For that reason, suggestions for the “next right steps” were included in the program book.

The team that put this event together wanted this to be more than a “great event.” They wanted it to create a positive change in you, and in your church. As disciples of Jesus Christ we are to make or reproduce more disciples; that is our core function. When we are judged by God, I believe the single question asked will be, “Who did you bring to Me?”

For those who were not able to attend the gathering, the live streaming has been turned into nicely edited DVDs, which are available through the commission.

Also included in this issue are articles from church leaders that will encourage you to become an active participant in disciple making. There are reports about men’s ministry and scouting that contain great ideas you may want to replicate. And there is a report from the other big event in July, the National Scout Jamboree, which was another special blessing.

Both the gathering and the jamboree required a great deal of staff time and imagination. I want to thank our Nashville staff and the deployed staff, but also want to include dozens of volunteers who made these events work. Events like these would be impossible, boring and expensive without the many volunteers who shared their talents and other resources.



Thank you. Know that your work continues to bless many people.

We continue to assess how we are serving you, so don’t be surprised if you get an email asking about men’s ministry and scouting ministry in your local church and your expectations of the commission. Those surveys are very helpful so please let us know how we are doing. They are also available on our website. Stay in touch, and please continue to be a blessing to all you meet.

Striving to be His servant,-

Gilbert C. Hanke
General Secretary



contents

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UM Men

Fall 2013

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Cover Photo:

Phil Stacey sings "From the Inside Out" during the 11th National Gathering.

Editor's note: This magazine includes articles from individuals who hold diverse opinions. We hope all articles are thought provoking; they are not necessarily the opinions of the General Commission on UM Men.



The 11th National Gathering is now history, but it's fun to use some of the pages of this magazine to relive some stirring

speeches and heart-pounding singing from that July event.

I spent the first hours of the three-day event coordinating the first basketball tournament where I was staggered by the skill of teenage boys from Alexandria, La., and Baltimore, Md. If a college scout had been in the gym, he would have been conducting a lot of interviews. They were exchanging three-point shots like they were lay-ups.

I then joined some 200 men at a workshop on men's ministry where even the most experienced men's ministry specialist would come away with some new understandings.

Thanks to careful planning by the staff of the General Commission on UM Men and the support of cooperative volunteers, most participants quickly registered, found their dormitories and their workshop rooms. I wish there were a way for the assembly to applaud those caring behind-the-scenes workers.

I was enormously impressed with the presentation styles and content of the featured speakers. If you expected stilted speeches behind a pulpit, you would have been disappointed. The men responded with applause, sup-

portive shout outs, hugs, and responsive trips down the aisles.

We were blessed by the singing of Phil Stacey. I understand why he was an American Idol finalist, but I can't imagine why he wasn't the winner. He was joined by talented organist Richard Algeria and his son, choir director Andrew Algeria.

I was also immensely impressed by the enthusiastic way men assembled scores of hand-crank carts, packaged 17,000 meals for Stop Hunger Now, and bagged 25,000 pounds of sweet potatoes for local food pantries. Nearly everyone at the gathering pitched in to assist one of the three mission projects.

It seemed everyone was reluctant to leave the Curb Event Center after the concluding Sunday morning Communion service. The men would be taking new discernments back to their communities, but they were in no hurry to leave the location where they had made new friends and scaled some lofty spiritual peaks.

This was only my third national gathering (I know veterans who have attended 10 or more of these quadrennial events), but in my limited experience, this event seemed to mark a new level of spiritual maturity. Participants seemed hungry for new ways to reach millennials, and they thoughtfully took advantage of opportunities to increase their understanding of—and relation with—Jesus the Christ.

I doubt that I'll be working for the General Commission on UM Men in four years, but if I am still a guest on this planet I will attend the next national gathering.

Rich Peck



Bishop James Swanson, president of the General Commission on United Methodist Men, consecrates the elements during a closing worship service at the 11th National Gathering.

Transformation is possible — Bishop James Swanson

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

“Peter shows us transformation is possible.”

That’s what Bishop James Swanson told people attending the Saturday evening session of the July 12-14 National Gathering of United Methodist Men.

Noting how Peter moved from a man who denied knowing Jesus to become a man who proclaimed the gospel on Pentecost, Bishop Swanson said, “I’ve seen men do terrible things at one time and wonderful things at another.”

Swanson, who also serves as president of the General Commission on United Methodist Men, urged the men to recover John Wesley’s third word of grace. Wesley spoke about “prevenient grace,” “justifying grace,” and “sanctifying grace.”

“I expect growth and development and maturity out of you,” he said. “Even while God is transforming us, God still gives us power.”

Noting that sanctifying grace begins with recognition that something is wrong with us, Swanson said that after that recognition, “God can change you from the ‘inside out’.”

The theme of the conference was “From

the Inside Out, words from a song performed by Phil Stacey, one of five finalists on season six of the American Idol television show and the featured singer at the Belmont University event.


“I believe men have a deep yearning to become different from the ones they currently are,” said Swanson. “That desire needs to become performance.” He urged the men to “be bold enough to demand that your journey in the church will be bold.

“I may not always do it right. I’m a man and it takes me a while to get it right. You have to quit trying to figure it out for yourself. The church is of God, not of us.

“Give it to God and God will add what is missing.”

“We can do more than build handicap ramps; we can also do spiritual things.”

Noting how God can touch men, the bishop said, “Sometimes instead of going to worship, the worship gets you,” and he reminded the pastors of the times when “instead of giving a sermon, the sermon gets them.”

“We’re going to become mighty men of Christ,” the bishop concluded. 

Become like the mighty men of David

— The Rev. Shane Bishop

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

A United Methodist pastor urged some 800 persons attending National Gathering of United Methodist Men to become like the mighty men of David.

The Rev. Shane Bishop, pastor of Christ UMC in Fairview Heights, Ill, told the July 12-14 quadrennial meeting about three mighty men who helped David extend his kingship.

The first man was Jashobeam who killed 800 men in one battle.

The second was Eleazar who stood with David against the Philistines when the rest of his troops retreated. He struck down the Philistines till his hand grew tired and froze to the sword.

The third mighty man was Shammah who defended the land, struck the Philistines down, and brought a great victory to David.

"These three were the best of the best," said Bishop.

"What might it mean to be the mighty men of the United Methodist Church?" asked Bishop. "What if we decided to build the Kingdom of God or die trying?"

"Men don't become great because they expect God to do what God expects men to do. Stop waiting on your preacher. Get off the sidelines and change the world."

"I see pockets of life and vitality in United Methodist Men," said Bishop, who led a congregation whose membership grew from 200 to 1,700.

"We're not always going to get it right. Stop trying to be perfect. If we do nothing, we leave God with nothing to bless. God will change the trajectory of the spear if He can find someone to throw it.

"Don't die having never lived."

Bishop ended the presentation with an invitation for the men to get out of their chairs and tell the Lord that they will return to their homes to "let the spirit fly."

"Why do I have to move?" he asked. "Because Methodists haven't moved in a long time," he answered.

Hundreds of United Methodist men came forward to acknowledge their call to God's service. 



The Rev. Shane Bishop



Don Davis

We're dead if we don't minister to the millennials — Don Davis

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

“UM Men need to find a way to minister to the 80 million millennials.”

That's what Don Davis, a former NFL football star now serving as a chaplain to the New England Patriots told 800 attendees at the National Gathering of United Methodist Men.

“This is the laziest generation in history,” Davis said.

“Guess who made them that way.”

“Look to your left; look to your right; look behind you; look ahead of you,” said Davis. “If they all look like you, you're going to die.”


In prescribing ways to minister to people born between 1982 and 2004, the former University of Kansas player, suggested men look at questions Saul asked after being blinded on the Road to Damascus:

“Who are you, Lord? “What do you want me to do?”

Ananias, the man who accompanied blinded Saul, told him to 1) know the will of God; 2) see the righteous one, 3) hear his voice; and 4) become his witness.

“What are you waiting for?” Ananias asked Saul.

“What are you waiting for,” Davis asked United Methodist men. ““We have to minister to 80 million millennials.”

Davis, the father of two, recalled how one of his teenage daughters stamped her way into her bedroom and locked the door when she learned her father would only give her \$200 for her high school prom. He said, millennials respond in a similar manner to church teachings, and we won't reach them with words alone. He urged the men to pray for the millennials and win them to Christ with “contagious compassion.” 

Men take sponges home



David Delk, president of Man in the Mirror.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. —

People attending the National Gathering of United Methodist Men left the Belmont University Curb Event Center with half-inch sponges in their pockets.

The tiny squares were given to them by David Delk, president of Man in the Mirror ministries, based in Orlando, Fla.

In the final Sunday morning worship service, Delk told the assembly that sponges can be wet or dry.

A dry sponge soaks up moisture and a wet one provides water.

Some men are like dry sponges. Others are saturated with the water of the Gospel, and they provide water to anyone who touches them.

He encouraged men to keep the sponges as reminders of their need to stay connected to Jesus, because “when you take a sponge out of the water it starts to dry out.”

“Most men know just enough

about God to be disappointed,” Delk told men gathered at Belmont University. He said too many men depend on their own religiosity and moral actions, but if they are not connected to Jesus, they have no transformational power.

“The power of Jesus Christ can transform you ‘from the inside out’.”

Delk recalled an experience as an elementary school patrol leader who helped schoolmates cross the street. A bully intimidated him by knocking his books off a nearby post.

“If you write me up, I’ll beat you up,” said the bully.

Delk wrote him up.

When he later told his mother about his lack of enthusiasm about being beat up, she suggested Delk’s older brother could stand nearby on the following day.

Delk confidently returned to his post knowing his big brother had his back.

“We also don’t have to be worried about being bullied because Jesus Christ

has our back," said Delk.

"I want Jesus to be magnified because of what he does in and through my life," he said. "Nothing can stand against His church and His people."

In thinking about possible actions when men return to their homes, Delk advised them to act immediately and

not wait. He suggested some might want to become officers in United Methodist Men; others might want to become full-time pastors.

"If you don't pursue it now, it will start to fade," he said.

Sponges from Nashville may serve as reminders. 

David Delk demonstrates how a dry sponge soaks up moisture and a wet one provides water. – photo by Gil Hanke.





Following the Saturday morning session, the men walked two blocks to a Sport Science building to package food for Stop Hunger Now and to build PET (personal energy transportation) hand-driven carts for persons in Third World countries who have lost the ability to walk. Food packaging is on the left and cart building is on the right.



Participants in the national gathering packaged 17,000 Stop Hunger Now meals of dehydrated food for emergency situations around the world.



Men bagged 25,000 pounds of sweet potatoes in 90 minutes during the National Gathering. The potatoes were delivered or picked up by area food banks.



UM Men build hand-driven carts



Andrew (left) and Richard Alegria take a break from their duties as music leaders of the national gathering. This was the 8th national gathering at which Richard played the organist and piano, and the first time his son, Andrew, joined him as director of the men's chorus.



A men's chorus, under the director of Andrew Alegria, sang at the Saturday evening session and the Sunday morning worship service.



Dave Belt, president of Minnesota UM Men, operates the prayer line during the national gathering. Men answered the Upper Room Prayer Line on Friday afternoon and all day Saturday.



Players vie for a rebound during a July 12 basketball game during the Belmont University tournament.



A team from Alexandria, La., won first place in the first basketball tournament sponsored by UM Men; A team from Baltimore, Md., finished a close second. The teams were tied with one-minute to play in the 24-minute game.



Phil Stacey, one of the top five finalists on season six of the American Idol television show, performs in concert on Saturday evening. He also led congregational singing during the gathering. "From the Inside Out," the theme of the three-day gathering comes from one of Stacey's hit songs. The song is a prayer for Christ to change us from the inside out.



Men crowd into Vince Gil Room at the Curb Event Center of Belmont University for men's ministry leader training. Greg Arnold, a deployed staff member of the General Commission on UM Men, spoke about "the power of the third question." He noted that all skilled interviewers ask two softball questions: "How you doing?" "How's work?" They then ask the real question: How are you, really? or "Where are you?:" Most men want to tell you how they are doing, but no one is asking," said Arnold

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Man in the Mirror

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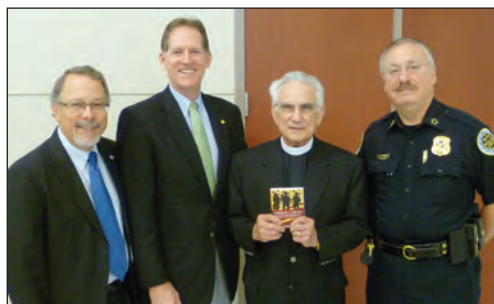
NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

The Rev. Fred Dettwiller, an Episcopal priest, provided the funds for 1,300 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to be given to Nashville police officers.


On June 28, Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on UM Men, and Larry Coppock, a commission staff executive responsible for the publishing effort, accompanied Father Fred to a meeting at the North Precinct where they gave copies of the book of daily devotions to first responders to the top 100 officers.

The books, with the notation "Courtesy of Father Fred," were later presented to an additional 1,200 police personnel.

"We offer our utmost appreciation to Father Fred for the gift and Steve



From left: Gil Hanke and Larry Coppock join Father Fred Dettwiller in a presentation of Strength for Service books to Steve Anderson, chief of Davidson County Police, during a June meeting of Nashville police officers.

Heim of Dettwiller Distributing for facilitating the invitation to the meeting of police leaders," said Coppock. 

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Who's Your Hero?

By The Rev. James A. Harnish

Who's your hero? We all need them. As men whose primary commitment is to Jesus Christ, we need other men to show us what the life of discipleship looks like. Our heroes don't need to be famous. They might be family members, coworkers or friends. Or they might be men who are remembered as saints in the long history of the Church.

"Saint" could be another name for a spiritual hero – a real person who lived in a way that shows us what it look like to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

I was drawn to St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) through his prayers and poems, one of which still appears in "The United Methodist Hymnal."

*Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills the breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.*

*Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Thy blest Name,
O Savior of mankind!*

*O hope of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek,
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!
How good to those who seek!*

*But what to those who find? Ah, this
Nor tongue nor pen can show;
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but His loved ones know.*

*Jesus, our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our prize will be;
Jesus be Thou our glory now,
And through eternity.*

Start every day with a prayer like that and it could change the way we live!

No perfect hero

But none of our human heroes are perfect. They are just as human, just as prone to error, just as capable of doing the wrong thing in the right way or doing the right thing in the wrong way as any of the rest of us. Even saints can make mistakes.

For example, John Wesley, the number one hero of Methodism, turned out to be a very poor husband. It probably would have been better if he had followed St. Paul's admonition to remain single. As a loyal subject of King George, he never understood the revolution that gave birth to the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

Bernard of Clairvaux was caught up in the political power struggles that broiled around the European empires of the 12th century. His powerful preaching became the inspiration for the Second Crusade (1146-1149). It was a colossal failure. It accomplished nothing. Many of the crusaders died of disease and starvation before reaching their destination. Most of the rest were either killed or captured soon after their arrival. Even worse, the Crusades ignited the fires of anti-Semitism in Germany and fertilized the roots of the tension between Christianity and Islam which continues to plague us today.

The impact on Bernard was devastating. He wrote an apology to the Pope and tried to disassociate himself from the Crusade, but he could not escape the role he played in launching it.

Bernard's story leaves me asking some difficult questions.

How could he be so right about Jesus and so wrong about the Crusade?

How could he be so deeply centered in the love of Jesus and at the same time become the driving force behind so much slaughter and death?

Why did he allow his passion for Christ to get tangled up with the political powers of the European empires?

What caused a man who was so devoted to the Prince of Peace to become an advocate for violence and war?

Bernard demonstrates for me the complex tension Jesus described when he said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Mark 12:17)


As followers of Christ we cannot escape our responsibility to represent the values of the Kingdom of God in the cultural and political systems in which we live. We are called to speak God's prophetic word of judgment and grace rooted in the biblical vision of justice, compassion and peace.

Don't cozy up to political party

The problem comes when we, like Bernard, cozy up too closely with political powers and start believing that any nation, party or political system is a direct expression of the Kingdom of God. Bernard reminds us that whenever the Church gets too closely aligned with Caesar, Caesar always wins and the faith

always loses.

One of my contemporary heroes is Peter Storey, who led the Methodists of South Africa in the struggle against Apartheid. You can read his witness in his book, *With God in the Crucible*. Across the 25 years that I have known him, Peter has consistently modeled a way of discipleship that confronts the political and social powers of the world while not being co-opted by them; a loyalty to the Kingdom of God that transcends loyalty to any nation; a way of witness in which the cross always takes priority over the flag; and a way of life that is unmistakably centered in the words, will and way of Jesus.

Our witness as men who are disciples of Jesus Christ often revolves around two questions. Who are our heroes? And what kind of hero will we be for someone else? 



The Rev. Jim Harnish is senior pastor of Hyde Park UMC in Tampa, Fla. He is the author of A Disciple's Path and other resources for discipleship in the Wesleyan tradition. He

enjoys playing with his grandchildren and cheering for the University of Florida Gator football team.

THE VEGETARIAN SEER

A seer in India believed that being a strict vegetarian and walking bare-foot everywhere he traveled was the key to enlightenment.

Unfortunately, this presented him with three problems.

First, the vegetarian diet gave him extremely bad breath.

Second, the long walks with no shoes severely hardened the bottom of his feet.



Third, the combination of diet and walking made him very weak.

All three problems bothered him greatly.

In fact, he was known all over India as the super calloused fragile mystic vexed by halitosis.

Committee releases Boy Scout edition of book for first responders

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

The Strength for Service Committee has released a Boy Scout edition of *Strength for Service to God and Community*, a book of daily devotions for police officers, firefighters, EMT personnel and other first responders.

The first 1,400 copies were given to Scouts attending the July 15-24 National Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in West Virginia.

An additional 10,000 copies will be available for Scouts attending the Latimer High Adventure Reservation in Tennessee, courtesy of Bill and Carol Latimer.

A 2007 gift of the Latimers, the Scout reservation is now owned and operated by the Middle Tennessee Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

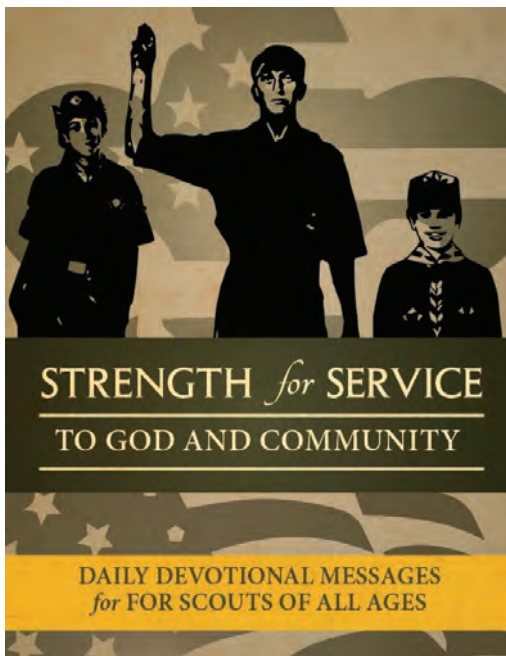
Reasons for a Scout edition

Dr. Robert Lee Edmonds, founder and chief executive officer of Eight Eleven Press, says it is appropriate to have a Scout version of the book for first responders.

"The Boy Scout motto, 'Be Prepared,' is every Scout's call to always be ready to do the best for themselves and their homes and communities," says Edmonds. "Following this scouting maxim builds each mind and body with the strength, understanding, and desire to do what is necessary and right at the right time."

Edmonds, the author of *In Our Own Way, Living a Scouting Life through Faith*, says, "Affirming God's role in everyday life inspires Scouts to make sound moral decisions and dutifully deal with difficult situations."

An Eagle Scout, Dr. Edmonds notes that scouting is grounded in the duty to help others at all times. "The prayers in *Strength for Service to God and Commu-*



nity are daily reminders to each Scout of his responsibility to be in service to his community and those in need."

Eight Eleven Press, a division of the Edmonds Publishing & Media Group, leads advertising, printing and distribution efforts for the book targeted at first responders.

Eagle Firefighters

Lou Paulson, president of California Professional Firefighters, found some 5 percent of firefighters in his district are Eagle Scouts.

"It shouldn't be a surprise that so many Eagle Scouts pursue careers in emergency services," said Paulson. "Part of it is helping other people at all times; part of it is the learning we got in scouting on emergency preparedness and first aid and all those things. It just seems like a natural fit."

Paulson led an effort to get Eagle Scouts now serving as firefighters to be-

come merit badge counselors or unit-level volunteers. A decal on their helmets identifies the firefighters as Eagle Scouts.

Of course, there are thousands of additional firefighters who were Scouts, but did not attain the rank of Eagle. As Scouts, these firefighters still learned about first aid and life-saving measures.

Merit badges

While we associate first responders with professional firefighters, police officer or EMT personnel, average citizens are frequently cast in the role of first responders.


"Boy Scouts could be categorized as 'first responders in training'," said Larry Coppock, director of the Strength for Service, Inc. Fund.

"There exists an array of merit badges that present opportunities for Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts and Venturers to learn about how to conduct themselves and respond in emergency situations," said Coppock.

Merit badges include: First Aid, Emergency Preparedness, Lifesaving, Wilderness Survival, Fire Safety, Traffic Safety, Public Health and Safety. Related badges include Communications and Personal Fitness. A Search and Rescue merit badge will be available in 2014.

New organization

Since the books are addressed to men and women of all Christian denominations, the commission has formed a non-denominational Strength for Service Board to continue publishing and distributing both books, and the committee has applied for non-profit, 501(c)(3), status. L.W. Smith, a South Carolina layman who led efforts to distribute the first volume, is serving as chairman of the effort to form the new organization.

To support financially the ministry, visit the donation section of www.strengthforservice.org or call 615-340-7145 for information. 

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COMMUNICATIONS

Blind Sea Scout speaks at conference laity banquet

MOBILE, Ala.—

Eagle Scout Tripp Gullede, 16, stirred up a passion for Scouting among persons attending a laity banquet during the June, 2013, Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference.

The fact that Tripp is blind has not stopped him from obtaining the rank of Eagle, an achievement attained by only 2 percent of Boy Scouts. To achieve that rank, Tripp had to earn at least 21 merit badges, demonstrate the Scout spirit and complete an extensive service project.

Eagle project

Tripp's Eagle project was to re-deck a 110-foot pier for the Mobile Sail and Power Squadron, an organization that offers boater education to the public.

A member of Sea Scout Ship Mobile Bay, chartered to Government Street UMC in Mobile, AL, Tripp said, "The Power Squadron has done a lot to help with our Sea Scout Ship, and I wanted to

give back to them."

The first few hours into the December project, Tripp worked alone as he ripped out decaying boards.

"I had some seriously sore arms and legs and a really bad back," said Tripp. "The idea of the project is that the Eagle Scout candidate has to raise all the funds and supervise and take part. But your job is mainly to be the project manager and make sure it all gets done. It took me that first work day to understand that."

Tripp recruited 20 volunteers from his ship, Power Squadron members, and his home troop, Troop 227 chartered to Dauphin Way United Methodist Church, to assist in the project. The Scouts put in a combined 350 man/hours tearing out boards and replacing them with new, pressure treated 2-by-6 inch planks. They also cleared away brush and added two ramps.

Scouting deepens spiritual life

Tripp explained to the laity banquet how Scouting has deepened his relationship with God and provided him the opportunity to provide spiritual leadership to his peers, first as the troop's Chaplain's Aide. In the role of Senior Patrol Leader for his troop and as Boatswain for his ship, Tripp explained that he reinforced the habits of grace at meal times and the expectation of Scout-led worship during campouts. "Not everybody grows up participating in worship regularly or knowing how to give thanks," he discovered. "Every Scout has a duty to God and I began to realize that I have an opportunity to set an example for others to follow."

One of the scriptural passages that serves as a spiritual compass for Tripp's family is John 9:1-3, the passage in which Jesus says a man was born blind in order that God's mighty works might be displayed in him.



Tripp's completed Eagle project provides safer footing for people using the 110-foot pier for the Mobile Sail and Power Squadron.

“We have been blessed during Tripp’s years of blindness and we have the expectation that further blessings await after he experiences healing and a visual acuity that is beyond medical expectation,” said the Rev. Rob Gullede, Tripp’s dad and the pastor of Government Street UMC in Mobile.

Both Tripp and Rob attended the July 2013 National Scout Jamboree in West Virginia where Rob served on the Sea Scout exhibit staff and Tripp was a patrol leader for his local contingent. In 2010, they attended the last jamboree at Fort AP Hill in Virginia.

“Our tiny downtown congregation is doing the impossible,” said Rob. “For more than 11 years, we have sponsored a Sea Scout Ship to serve area youth. Over the years we have seen a blending of scouts from affluent backgrounds with those from the inner city.” He describes these bonds of friendship as remarkable. “We began with nothing but we’ve discovered every imaginable resource for teaching citizenship, seamanship, and duty to God along the way.”

The congregation responded to a new “problem” when several Sea Scouts expressed interest in forming a new Boy Scout troop in order to pursue the Eagle award. The boys stirred up interest among their non-scout friends too. In May, Troop 122 was chartered with about eight boys, ages 14, and 15, well past the usual age for joining a troop.

Eagle Court of Honor

Tripp’s Eagle Court of Honor was held last May in Government Street UMC.

His great uncle, Brig. Gen. Inge Waddle, U.S.A.R. (ret.), presented Tripp with a flag that had flown over the U.S. Capitol. “We have watched proudly as you have moved from one challenge to another,” said Waddle.

U.S. Senator Jeff Sessions, a longtime family friend and an Eagle Scout himself, gave the charge to the new Eagle.

“It was really cool” to have a U.S. senator at the ceremony, Tripp said.

Tripp presented Paul Hendrix, a well-known Scouter, with a mentor pin, which an Eagle Scout may present to the person he believes helped him the most in his effort to attain the rank.

Tripp has served as Senior and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader with Troop 227.



Tripp takes a 60-mile-an-hour trip down a 1,000-foot zip line during the National Jamboree in West Virginia.



Tripp's completed Eagle project provides safer footing for people using the 110-foot pier for the Mobile Sail and Power Squadron.

"Now, after getting Eagle, I've moved into a role where I mentor the new scouts as they come in," he said.

Honor student and drum major


Tripp is an honor student in the International Baccalaureate program at Murphy High School, where he plays the French horn and marches with the Mighty Marching Panthers band. This fall, he will be their drum major.

He copes with his blindness by finding ways to work around it. "I do the same things everybody else does, but I go about them differently. In the time that you take to think about all the reasons you can't do something, you could have found a way to do it."

He usually gets around at school and elsewhere with a cane or by hitching a ride with his hand on a friend's shoulder. When he marches in Mardi Gras parades, he and a buddy wrap a belt around their arms so that he can keep pace.

Tripp has been playing the piano since the age of 5 and he plans to major in music education when he attends college in a few years. His goal is to become a teacher, or a band director.

Tripp's vision difficulties are the result of Retinopathy of Prematurity, diagnosed when he was only one month old. Surgery preserved some of his vision, but about two years ago, a complete retinal detachment caused his vision to deteriorate. A major surgery in 2011 repaired much of the damage. Now he waits for a lens implant "when the time is right", to restore vision. Every three months, the family drives to Miami for checkups and consideration of future surgeries.

"I didn't realize that I couldn't see as well as everyone else did until I got into first grade. It didn't upset me; I just realized that I was different," said Tripp. 

Men minister to recovering men at Freedom Farm

By Ward Clayton

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. —

A gift of bread went a long way for the 200-member UM Men organization of Mandarin UMC. The group supports downtrodden men housed at the Freedom Farm, an arm of Trinity Rescue Mission that provides housing and rehabilitation in Jacksonville.

Scourged by alcohol, drugs and depression and separated from their families, up to 35 men work and live at the suburban Jacksonville farm. Devotions and choruses of gospel songs mix with work to harvest 5,000-8,000 pounds of vegetables annually. The men are instructed on how to re-enter society with a Christ-like lifestyle during their six to nine-month stints.

The relationship between Mandarin UM Men and the Freedom Farm began three years ago when Ed Landers and Dan Stanley picked up leftover bread from Jacksonville restaurants to deliver to the farm. Landers remembers the September day in 2010 when he first carried bread to rural St. Johns County farm. After traveling a pine tree-lined dirt road for half a mile, Landers saw a pond, a V-shaped,



From left—Trinity Freedom Farm Interim Director Chris Burkhart, former Mandarin UMC Men's Ministry President Michael Maxwell and Ed Landers stand before the welcome sign at Trinity Freedom Farm in St. Johns County, Fla. Landers first delivered bread to Trinity Freedom Farm in 2010 and encouraged Mandarin men to help the organization. Photo by Ward Clayton.

single-story cinderblock dormitory and a chapel. The 56-acre farm contains hogs, goats, chickens, ducks and pet dogs and cats.

"I knew God was speaking to me and that I'd been there before," Landers says. "I remember years ago coming down



The Rev. Dave Byers, former Trinity Freedom Farm director, addresses the groups during an April Mandarin men's breakfast in Jacksonville, Fla. Photo by Robbin K. Tungett



Trinity Freedom Farm participants sing during the men's breakfast.
Photo by Robbin K. Tungett.

the road with a friend who was taking a young man there who had an alcohol problem. I knew then exactly what the Freedom Farm was. It grabbed me by the heart. I said I've got to bring this to the guys in the men's ministry."

The bread mission quickly developed sturdy roots of support led by Michael Maxwell, then president of the Mandarin men's group. "We are the hands and feet of Christ when we work with the Trinity Freedom Farm," says Maxwell. "We are blessed by the progress they make."

Now led by President Bruce Seidner, the men sponsor an annual spring breakfast that includes more than 20 Trinity Freedom Farm participants. The residents share their songs and testimony with some 100 members of the Mandarin's men's organization. The breakfast is followed by a life-skills seminar led by human resources specialists, businessmen and financial consultants. The men hope to make this a biennial event.

Each year, Mandarin men also provide \$600 to sponsor at least one Freedom Farm resident. They also collect dress clothes from people attending their Easter pancake breakfast. In 2012, the men filled a pickup truck with 300 sports coats, pairs of slacks, dress shirts and golf shirts. David Jackson, a plant manager for

uniform supplier Cintas and a member of Mandarin UM Men, provided shirts and pants to Freedom Farm residents, and Steve Fullerton, manager of a Jacksonville Panera Bread that donated bread, offered furniture to the farm when the store was remodeled.

In addition, four Freedom Farm participants helped paint youth Sunday school rooms, and some of them helped work a Thanksgiving "free sale." One of the Freedom Farm volunteers, a veteran of Operation Desert Storm, said the free sale helped clothe his 10 children.

Mandarin men are now working with Chris Burkhart, the new Trinity Freedom Farm interim director, to increase the association between the farm and the church.

Providing for others is coming full circle, a blessing the Mandarin men and Trinity Freedom Farm can proudly say grew from a simple loaf of bread.



Ward Clayton is a communications and public relations professional in Jacksonville, Fla., with more than 30 years' experience in media and public relations. He is the author of Men on

the Bag: The Caddies of Augusta National.

A graphic featuring silhouettes of seven people of various ages and ethnicities holding hands in a circle. They are positioned over a stylized globe that shows parts of the United States and other countries. The title "Across the Nation" is written in large, bold, black letters across the middle of the globe.

Across the Nation

SPRINGFIELD, Tenn.—

Church celebrates Christmas in July

Members of Palestine UMC celebrated Christmas in July as they gave 75 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to first responders in Nashville. The 70-member congregation collected \$500 over two Sundays to purchase the books.



From left: Kevin Smith, a member of Palestine UMC, joins Fire Chief Jimmy Hamill, Fire Sergeant Don Pulley, Pastor Diane Coppock, Springfield Mayor Billy Paul Carneal, and Chief of Police David Thompson in the presentation of 75 copies of daily devotions for first responders in the Springfield area.

WALKER, La.—

Men work with local food bank

Each month, men of Faith Crossing UMC team up with the Food Bank of Greater Baton Rouge to distribute surplus food, paper products and other items to underserved members of the community. The men unload truckloads of goods and coordinate distributions to some 350 people.

The men also sponsor a jambalaya-dinner-and-talent show to provide financial support for youth mission trips.



Gene Stephens (left) and Mike Gatlin, members of Faith Crossing UMC, unload gallons of sweet tea to be distributed by a Baton Rouge food bank.

COCHISE COUNTY, Ariz.—

Scouting coordinator presents awards to eight youngsters

Jim Larsen, scouting coordinator for Cochise County in the Desert Southwest Annual Conference, presented God and Family Awards to eight youth. The curriculum is designed to help children in grades 4 and 5 understand God's role in healthy families.

April Tucker received an adult Cross and Flame Award at the same ceremony.



LINDEN, Mich.—

District hosts meeting at high school

UM men of the Crossroads District hosted their sixth annual men's gathering at the Lake Fenton High School. One hundred and eighty men and boys from Genesee County heard singing by the Stronghold Quartet and a sermon by the Rev. Dale Freed, a Wesleyan evangelist.



The Stronghold Quartet entertains the district gathering

BARNARDSVILLE, N.C.—

Church sponsors study program for special-needs Scout

Venture Crew 891 and Barnardsville UMC sponsored a God and Family program for special-needs Scouts. Three Scouts completed the program and received Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) awards.



"These guys have learned that they can accomplish most things together," said Tim Buckner. "Their view of spiritual matters is both refreshingly simple and full of compassion."

For their service project, the boys weeded flower beds at an elementary school, planted three azaleas and installed two bluebird houses at the church.

AIKEN, S.C.—

Men take swings for handicap ramps

UM men of St. John's UMC hold an annual golf tournament to raise funds for Jack Meeks Memorial Wheelchair Ramp Ministry. The ministry builds between 18-20 ramps each year for local residents, regardless of church affiliation. Each ramp costs \$700.

Jack Meeks led the ministry for six years, and the ministry was named in his honor after he died in 2009.

FORT WORTH, Texas —

Dinner raises funds for West, Texas

A dinner provided by men's and women's organizations of Genesis UMC celebrated the ministries of the Fort Worth

United Community Center, a UM center to serve and empower those in need.

Contributions from the 170 guests were donated to West, Texas, following the explosion of a fertilizer plant in that town.



From left: John Gibson, Vint Boston, Rudy Starling, Mike Nipper, Bob Howse, Troy Chapman and Glen Estes serve as cooks.

ROCKFORD, Ill—

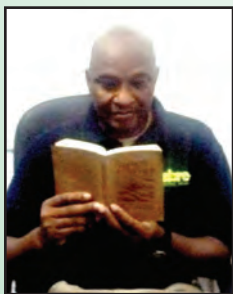
Men give \$16,500 to alleviate hunger

During the open ceremonies of a Rockford Aviators baseball game, Rockford District UM Men presented a check for \$16,500 to the Society of Saint Andrew Meals for Millions program and four local food pantries. The money was raised during the "Harmony for Hunger" concert in April.

BAGDAD, Iraq—

Ugandan reads *Strength for Service* in Iraq

Fred Mugisha, a native of Uganda, has been reading *Strength for Service to God and Country* for the last three years. "It has changed my life," he says.



Fred used to work with a private company that served U.S. troops before they departed the country. He now works with a company serving Iraqi troops.

"In the past I could attend a Christian chapel with U.S. troops, but I am now with Muslim companies that don't allow any Christian fellowship," says Fred. "This leaves me to read *Strength for Service* on my own."

BRENHAM, Texas—

Hanke meets with former pastor

Thirty-five years ago, Gil Hanke was a member of First UMC of Brenham, Texas, when the pastor, Sam Duree, talked him into going on a mission trip. That was the beginning of a lifetime of mission trips, including 25 to Haiti where he provided hearing aids for children, and he occasionally worked on construction projects.

Sam and his wife, Beverly, retired in Brenham and Hanke was invited to speak to an all-church May 23 dinner sponsored by UM Men where he renewed his friendship with the couple.



Gil Hanke speaks to an all-church gathering at First UMC in Brenham, Texas, his former church home.

CAMDEN, Maine—

Men compete for best tie

Men and boys competed for a best-tie award on a Men-of-Faith Sunday at John Street UMC. Competitors provided a female panel with reasons why they should be declared the winner.

The church provided ties to those who showed up without one for the June celebration.

JACKSON, Miss.—

Men reminded to 'man up'

Donald Beard, president of Mississippi Conference UM Men, provides free "man-up" coins to chartered UM groups.



Beard explains that the coins "represent your commitment to your men's group, your church and most importantly, your decision to 'man up' for Jesus Christ." He urges men to carry the coins at all times.

MERIDIAN, Miss.—

Fourteen years of ramp building

An ecumenical team in the Meridian District has built 860 handicapped ramps over the last 14 years. There are 25 on a waiting list.

A group meets in the Kemper County workshop of Jerry Fox on Mondays to construct parts of the ramp. Later in the week, the team completes the ramp on site.

When a ramp is no longer needed, the team recycles the building materials.



Obie Leggett, the owner of a new ramp, joins with volunteers.

PICKENS, S.C.—

Men build storage area

UM Men of Porter's Chapel and Mount Bethel UMC constructed a food storage area for Asbury Hills Camp and Retreat Center. The additional storage saves dollars for the center by reducing the number of food deliveries. The Rev. Dick Waldrep, pastor, says this is the first of several planned projects.



LAKE MARY, Fla.—

Men support Wounded Warrior project and firefighters

In June, UM men and Scouts of Grace UMC shucked and cooked corn donated by Sanford Produce. Rill Rape cooked beans and hot dogs and church women provided desserts. Sales from the effort resulted in \$285 for the Wounded Warrior Project and the troop.

Last March, men from Grace UMC honored firefighters at a pulled-pork meal. St. Lucie Firefighter Tommy Neiman, author of *Sirens for the Cross*, spoke about firefighters who show the strength of Christ. Firefighters were later given copies of Neiman's book.

ALLENTOWN, Pa.—

Some 900 attend UM Day at amusement park

UM Men of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference received \$2,700 to support various mission projects from their UM Day at Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom.

"The weather was perfect and the lines



for the rides were very short," said Ross Brightwell, conference president. "We had 900 who used UMC coupons, up from 606 last year."

The men received \$3 from each coupon used.

"The best part of the day was visiting with the United Methodists who came by our UM booth, specifically our youth groups, families and pastors," said Brightwell. Bishop Peggy Johnson and Southwest District UM Men President Derrick Gutierrez helped in the booth.

FT. WORTH, Texas —

Golf tournament raises over \$5,000 for charity

Men of Alliance UMC set a lofty goal for their first golf tournament. They wanted to recruit 48 players to raise \$3,000 for "Food for the Soul" in Teller, Texas.



"In the end, we had 63 golfers (only 14 golfers were from our church) and 15 volunteers," said Michael Cyr. "We raised \$5,445.93 for Food for the Soul. This amount will provide weekend food for the entire school year for approximately 60 students.

"Even the course managers were floored by what God did and have asked us to come back," said Cyr.

PRESCOTT, Ariz. —

Commission sends *Strength for Service* books to firefighters

After an Arizona wildfire killed 19 of the 20 members of the Hotshot Crew, the Commission on UM Men sent 100 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community*, to their families and other first responders in the city.

Doug Wright, scouting coordinator for the Desert Southwest Conference, coordinated the effort.

According to the "Granite Mountain Interagency Hotshot Crew" website, their members' "common bond" is "our love of hard work and arduous adventure. We believe in rigorous physical and mental training, which allows us to perform at the optimum level in any location and under any circumstances."

There are 1,082,500 firefighters in the U.S.; 278,300 are career and 804,200 are volunteer. The Strength for Service team of the commission hopes to provide copies of the book of daily devotions to each one.

PITTSBURGH, Pa. —

Church provides books for first responders

Haven Heights UMC provided funds for 50 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Country* to be sent to U.S. service men and women, and the congregation purchased 50 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to give to police officers, fire fighters and emergency medical technicians in the Pittsburgh area.

WESTLAKE, Ohio

Waffle breakfast raises \$1,000

The annual Palm Sunday waffle breakfast sponsored by UM Men of Westlake UMC raised over \$1,000. They gave \$200 each to the Society of Saint Andrew and Stop Hunger Now. The balance was given to other UM care facilities.

NATCHITOCHEs, La.—

Melons for food pantries

UM Men of Natchitoches First UMC have annually provided sweet potatoes for area food pantries. This year, Troy Pennington, a UM in Grapeland, Texas, generously gave 6,000 pounds of watermelons for the Robeline, La., Food Pantry.

Coy Birdwell said this service came from a UM to UM Men to those in need.



Stanley Pennington, Troy Pennington, and LaWanda Pennington, members of First UMC in Grapeland, Texas, join Loye Hortman and Coy Birdwell of First UMC, Natchitoches.

AMBLER, Pa.—

Christian fellowship wins softball tournament

New Hanover UMC won the 21st annual UM Men softball tournament, but Ross Brightwell, president of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference UM Men, said Christian fellowship was the real winner of the day of competition between the nine participating teams.



New Hanover UMC softball team

Send news of your men's organization to Rich Peck (rpeck@gcumm.org).

humor

Mom and Dad were taking 12-year-old Alex home from Sunday school.

"What did you learn today," asked Mom.

"We learned about how Moses delivered the Israelites from Egypt."

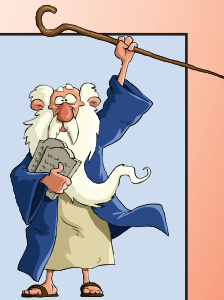
"And how did they do that? "

"Well," stammered Alex. "Moses sent special forces to break down the prison wall along with jet fighters to provide air protection. He then gave

Israelites landing craft to cross the Red Sea and then sent a B2 to bomb the pursuing Egyptian army."

"That's not what your teacher really taught is it, Alex?"

"No, but you'd never believe me if I told you what she really said."



Men gain leadership skills at National Gathering

NASHVILLE—

Some 200 men crowded into Vince Gil Room at the Curb Event Center of Belmont University for men's ministry leader training.

Greg Arnold, a deployed staff member of the General Commission on UM Men, spoke about "the power of the third question."

He notes all skilled interviewers ask two softball questions:

"How you doing?"

"How's work?"

They then ask the real question:

How are you, really? or "Where are you?"

Most men want to tell you how they are doing, but no one is asking," said Arnold.

The Rev. Dr. Jennifer Wilson, pastor of Wheatland Salem UMC, Naperville, Ill., told the seminar that if they want to reach boys they will have to talk about three things: "dating, sex and sports."

Wilson had 19 boys and four girls in her 2013 confirmation class at her previous church in LaSalle, Ill.

"You may feel awkward talking about sex, but do it anyway," said Wilson.

The pastor is featured in "Amazing Grace: A Church for Men," a 14-minute film that shows how the church increased in membership by focusing on men and boys. "We're seeing lives really changed: marriages being saved, families being stronger, men being leaders, fathers being leaders," says Wilson



The Rev. Dr. Jennifer Wilson addresses the workshop on men's ministry.



UM Men Awards

Christian Nygaard

Men honor former conference president

WESLEY, Iowa—UM Men of the Iowa Annual Conference honored Christian Nygaard with a life membership. The active churchman has served as a local president, a district president and a conference president. He currently serves as president of the North Central District UM Men.

Nygaard has been active in Walk to Emmaus and currently serves on the Iowa Conference Board of Pensions.

Will Laesch'

Men give life membership to president

ROCKFORD, Ill.—Will Laesch, president of the UM Men at Grace UMC, received a life membership for his willingness to cook and his generosity to UM Men.

An executive with the Rockford Health Department, Laesch also chaired the Grace Finance Committee.

“He is an excellent example of witnessing for Jesus Christ through acts of compassion, justice, worship, and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit,” said Steve Nailor, a long-time leader of UM Men. “He certainly inspires others to serve and become disciples of Jesus Christ.”

Robert Powell

Former president receives Harry Denman Award

MOBILE, Ala.—The Alabama-West Florida Conference presented Robert Powell, former president of the National Association of Conference Presidents and former president of the UM Men Foundation, with the Harry Denman Evangelism award.

The award honors people for outstanding efforts in Christian Evangelism.

The conference noted Powell's role as district director of Lay-Speaking Ministries, the

creation of the 14-year-old district pastor-appreciation dinners, and his election to four General Conferences and six Jurisdictional Conferences.

The conference especially noted his leadership in the distribution of Faith-Sharing New Testaments and his workshops designed to help men win others to Christ.

A former owner of three automobile parts stores, Powell now serves as development associate for the UM Children's Home.

“I pray that I can live up to the task of being like Jesus and Dr. Harry Denman,” said Powell. “Dr. Denman was the greatest evangelist ever in our church. He was a man of one message—the love of Jesus Christ.”



Robert Powell addresses the Alabama West Florida Annual Conference.

The Rev. William Freeman

Tennessee Conference official inducted into John Wesley Society

BRENTWOOD, Tenn.—The Rev. William (Bill) Freeman, director of information technology for the Tennessee Annual Conference, was inducted into the John Wesley Society during an awards banquet in June.

A graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary and a clergy member of the East Ohio Annual Conference, Freeman served for 20-years in various capacities for the UM Publishing House. Beginning as a representative of Cincinnati and Dayton Cokesbury

stores, he was promoted to the post of regional manager. He was later named sales manager of the new Electronic Publishing Office where he developed the first electronic versions of the *UM Hymnal*, the *Book of Discipline* and the *Book of Worship*. In 1994, he was named national director of Church Management Systems and Software Sales.

Freeman is a member of the Tennessee Conference UM Men executive team.



The Rev. William Freeman

**The Rev. John Collett Jr.
Superintendent named life member**

BRENTWOOD, Tenn.—The Rev. John Collett, superintendent of the Nashville District of the Tennessee Annual Conference,



From left: Robert Cate, Ingram Howard, John Collett, Cliff Steger, Gil Hanke and Dr. Bill Bowen participate in the awards service at Tennessee Conference.

received a life membership in UM Men during a June awards ceremony at Brentwood UMC.

A graduate of Vanderbilt Divinity School, Collett was ordained elder in 1974 and served six UM congregations before being named to the cabinet in 2007. Following the June conference session, he was named executive assistant to the bishop.

He is an eight-time delegate to Jurisdictional Conference and a two-time delegate to General Conference. He chairs the McKendree Village Foundation.

**Lee White and Warren Wright
Leaders of Virginia church named life members**

HARDYVILLE, Va.—Lee White, chair of the Clarksbury UMC Council, and Warren Wright, lay leader of the congregation, were named life members of UM Men.

The Rev. Eric Vaudt praised White for his baking skills and maintenance work at Heart Havens. “If there is any type of event at the church, he will be there to serve in whatever way he can,” says Vaudt.

Wright serves as lay leader and president of UM Men, and he also works with special needs adults at a Heart Havens home. “He leads a men’s Bible study and is a certified lay speaker,” says Vaudt. “He also accompanies me in taking Holy Communion to our home-bound members.”

“A lot of work is accomplished in this church due to the efforts of these two men,” Vaudt concludes.

**Wayne Barnhardt
Cold Springs honors hot cook**

CONCORD, N.C.—UM Men of Cold Springs UMC presented Wayne Barnhardt with a life membership. He was honored for cooking eggs and cleaning up during

monthly breakfasts, stirring stew and making slaw for an annual barbecue, and manning the stove at a fair booth.

A member of several church boards, he also serves as an usher on Sundays.

Neil Oliver

Men honor 43-year member of UM Men
KNOXVILLE, Tenn.—Men of Middlebrook Pike UMC presented Neil Oliver with a lifetime membership for 43 years of service to UM Men, including a term as president.

A member of the Army National Guard from 1941-45, Oliver has served the church in many capacities including a confirmation mentor, FISH pantry and the Chancel and Early Risers choirs.

“We are extremely proud of Neil Oliver and his service to the UM Men and church,” said Mark Giles, president of Middlebrook Pike UM Men.



Mark Giles (right) presents a life membership certificate to Neil Oliver.

Rudy Gomez

Men honor former conference president

DALLAS, Texas—Rudy Gomez, former president of Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference UM Men, was inducted into the John Wesley Society in June 2012. A member of the Dallas Indian UMC and an adult Sunday school teacher, he was named lay speaker emeritus by the Lay Speaking Ministries, Metro District, North Texas Conference. He has served as a scoutmaster and attended the Philmont Wood Badge training. A former member of the General Commission on UM Men, he attended his seventh National Gathering in July.

Jay Hinkley

Carl Young inducts former president into John Wesley Society

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—During a John Wesley Fellows dinner at the National Gathering, Carl Young surprised Jay Hinkley by inducting him into the John Wesley Society. Hinkley served for four years as president of UM Men in the Louisiana Annual Conference.

Young said he once roomed with Hinkley while on a mission trip.



Carl Young (right) presents a John Wesley Society Award to Jay Hinkley.

Dr. Peter Thoms

Men honor 30-year veteran of men's ministry

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Dr. Peter Thoms, a legacy member of UM Men, who has been involved with men's ministry for 30 years, was inducted into the John Wesley Society during a July 12 John Wesley fellows dinner at Belmont University.

"What I've done is a pittance for the Lord," said the family physician from Flint, Mich.



Gil Hanke (right) presents a John Wesley Society Award to Dr. Peter Thoms, a graduate of the University of Michigan Medical School.

GCUMM by the numbers in 2013

14 annual conferences maintained or increase the number of chartered organizations

17 annual conferences maintained or increased the number of EMS members (Every Man Shares in Evangelism, Mission and Spiritual Life).

40 men now serving as men's ministry specialists

210 men and women now serving as scouting ministry specialists

800 men and women were trained and inspired at the 11th National Gathering

1,400 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* were given to Scouts at the National Jamboree

1,500 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* were given to first responders in Boston, Mass., Newtown, Conn., West, Texas, and Nashville.

17,000 Stop Hunger Now meals were prepared at the National Gathering

25,000 pounds of sweet potatoes were bagged in 90 minutes at the National Gathering

\$25,185 raised by UM Men for the Upper Room Prayer Center in 2012

30,000 Scouts spent five days in 350 sites to provide 300,000 volunteer service hours for local projects, including Stop Hunger Now.

\$35,000 raised by UM Men to purchase a bus for UM mission work in Vietnam

90,759 prayers answered by the Upper Room Prayer Line in six months

\$179,800 raised by UM Men for Meals for Millions

470,000 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Country* have now been distributed, primarily to U.S. service men and women.

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**Gilbert C. Hanke, General Secretary
General Commission on United Methodist**



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UMC has huge presence at the BSA National Jamboree

By Larry Coppock

MOUNT HOPE, W.Va.—

The UMC provided vital lay and clergy leaders for the July 15-24 National Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve.

The 10-day event included five days of public service, a Protestant worship service, a UMC Communion Service, and information at the Faith and Beliefs exhibit area.

Approximately 30,000 Boy Scouts and 7,000 leaders participated in activities like coasting down 500 yard zip lines, rafting the New River Gorge, patch trading, and visiting the Faith and Beliefs exhibit area.



The 2013 BSA Jamboree at The Summit

Faith and Beliefs

More than 20 volunteer UM leaders served in the 20-by-40-foot tent housing information about scouting ministry specialists, Stop Hunger Now, the 2014 UM Scouters workshop at Philmont, and the *Strength for Service to God and Community* book of daily devotions for first responders.

Twelve scouting ministry specialists provided information to Scout leaders, and visitors

to the tent received 3,000 Stop Hunger Now patches.

Special thanks to Ken Todd and Keith Smith who served as vice chairmen of the exhibit, and to the Rev. Steve Hickle who led the Stop Hunger Now area and performed yeoman's service.



Scout Jamboree patch

Protestant service

The Rev. Dr. Bruce Reed preached at the July 21 Protestant worship service. An elder in the West Virginia Conference, Reed retired from active duty as the state chaplain for the West Virginia National Guard and is currently the director of state family programs for the guard. He encouraged more than 10,000 Scouts of all Protestant denominations to spread the gospel.

The service included a praise band from Morris Memorial UMC, Charleston, W.Va. The cross used in the 2010 UMC Jamboree service was used in both the Protestant and Roman Catholic services. The Rev. Greg Godwin coordinated the Protestant service.



Heavy rain soaked 1,500 Scouts attending the Protestant worship services at the 2013 National Jamboree.



The Rev. Jason Fry coordinated a UM Communion service at the Brownsea Island for 800 Scouts following the Protestant service. West

Virginia Area Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball served as celebrant at that service.

Steady rain came down during both services, but it did not dampen the spirits of the Scouts and leaders.

More than 800 copies of the Scout edition of *Strength for Service to God and Community* were distributed at the UM service. The word spread and before long all 1,400 copies were given out to excited Scouts and leaders.

Five days of service

The largest service project in West Virginia included some 30,000 Scouts who spent five days in 350 sites to provide 300,000 volunteer service hours for local projects including Stop Hunger Now. Scouts packaged 16,000 meals for emergency situations in West Virginia and around the world.

Red Cross volunteers distributed more than



Gil Hanke, Carl Hanke, and Larry Coppock hang out at the UMC exhibit area. Carl is a district Scout executive in the East Texas Council and son of Gil.

100,000 bottles of water to the Scouts serving in six southern West Virginia counties.

Two Venturing units and three Scout troops volunteered at the UM Burlington Family Services, Inc., Beckley Campus. Scouts and leaders provided valuable on-site work, and they had the chance to hear about the ministry at this residential treatment facility for troubled youth.

“The program director and facility director were amazed by what was accomplished,” said Phil Howard, coordinator of the work along with his brother Bill, The brothers are both Eagle Scouts. More than 1,000 volunteer hours were provided over two days. Popsicles were served to volunteers at the end of their workdays. Greg Godwin prepared a large banner for each Scout to sign along with their hand print as a testimony to their work.

Overall a big thank you goes out to the 11 UMC pastors who served as chaplains, including the Revs. Jason Fry and Alan Morrison, headquarter chaplains. Special thanks also go to 20 volunteers who manned the UMC Faith and Belief exhibit for more than 10 days.

First in West Virginia

Held every four years, jamborees are a Boy Scout tradition dating from 1937. Many Boy Scouts consider it one of the highlights of their scouting career.

This jamboree was the first at the 10,600-acre Summit Bechtel Reserve, an old coal mine the BSA selected as its permanent home of national gatherings. The Summit replaces Fort A.P. Hill, Va., which played host to jamborees from 1981 to 2010.

Some called this the most physically demanding jamboree. Obese Scouts were not allowed to attend due to rigorous health standards.

For the first time, hundreds of girls who are members of Venturing crews also attended.

The Summit will host a high-adventure camp next year, and the Jamboree will return in 2017. The World Jamboree will be held there in 2019.

UM Men honor creator of 9-11 memorial

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

When Jeff Cox, was a 15-year old Boy Scout in Windermere, Fla., people kept telling him to dream big.

In 2009, he was looking for an Eagle project when the idea of a 9-11 memorial was mentioned at a summer Scout camp. He was only 7 years old on 9-11 and lived 1,500 miles away from the tragedy, but he was enthusiastic about the idea.

He drew a proposed design of the monument on a paper napkin at an ice cream shop with a newly found friend, Sterling Folk, who thought it was a great idea too.

Steel from the World Trade Center

Jeff's dream received a jump start when he learned that he could obtain a steel beam from the ruins of the World Trade Center. Windermere Mayor Gary Bruhn and Jeff wrote a letter to the N.Y./N.J. Port Authority to assure them that the twisted 650-pound steel beam would go towards a memorial. They had to wait months as the steel was still considered part of a crime scene.

"I thought we were going to have to drive to New York to pick up the beam using my pickup truck," said Jeff. "But then Mom suggested I go online and call some of the big shipping companies. UPS Freight stepped up to transport the metal at no charge from the Port Authority to Florida."

First memorial in Florida

With a tenacious spirit, 2,000 volunteer hours, and the support of the town council, Jeff's plans unfolded into the first official World Trade Center memorial in Florida. The monument

includes 90 hand-drawn colored tiles that encircle the beam. Each tile has an image representing the homelands of the nearly 3,000 victims.

"It was just meant to be," said Jeff.

Dedicated in February, 2010, the monument now sits next to the Windermere library as a place for meditation and a site for 9-11 anniversary services.

Some 1,300 people attended the unveiling and dedication ceremony. The service included music, prayers, a motorcycle parade by the Patriot Guard Riders, and a flyover at the end of the National Anthem. The Rev. Dr. Bill Barnes, pastor of St. Luke's UMC in Orlando, gave the benediction.

National honors

Jeff was awarded the Glenn and Melinda Adams Award of the National Eagle Scout Service Project. His project was selected from 55,000 submissions.

Jeff is also a founding member of the International Messengers of Peace, and at age 16 he was named Orange County's Citizen of the Year.

Jeff received a Good Samaritan Award, the highest youth award presented by UM Men, during the 2013 National Gathering.

"I've been amazed at the number of people who have helped make my dream come true," said Jeff. "Thanks to UPS, the Port Authority, the town of Windermere, Mayor Gary Bruhn, Sterling Folk, and especially Scout Troop 6 which meets at St. Luke's UMC; they all helped make this dream a reality.

See video of Jeff and the memorial: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hdpb8tPNDF0>.



Gil Hanke (left) and Larry Coppock present Jeff with a Good Samaritan Award during the National Gathering of UM Men. Photo by Bob Vogt



Jeff's monument serves as the gathering place for anniversaries of the 2001 attack upon the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. A wreath was placed at the 2012 service by Mayor Gary Bruhn.

Scouting Awards

Greg Godwin Scout leader receives Marine Corps Award

GRAPEVINE, Texas—

The Rev. Greg Godwin, pastor of Concord UMC in Athens, W.Va., received a Community Service Award from the Marine Corps League during a May national board meeting of the Boy Scouts of America.

Godwin, a scouting ministry specialist and a member of the General Commission on UM Men, leads a Cub Scout pack, and served as a chaplain during the National Jamboree where he coordinated the Protestant worship service.



Greg Godwin (left) receives the Community Service Award from David Steward, president of the Central Region Board. Albert 'Sparky' Duroe, a member of the regional board, looks on.

Doug Wright Conference presents Torch Award

TUCSON, Ariz.—

The Desert Southwest Conference presented a Torch Award to Doug Wright, president of the Arizona 4-H Foundation that serves over 100,000 Arizona youth. A scouting ministry specialist, Wright is scouting coordinator for the annual conference and a board member of the General Com-

mission on UM Men.

“Doug is very active with the Catalina Council BSA where he sits on the executive board and chairs the endowment committee,” said Chuck Moyer, another scouting ministry specialist in the conference.

Wright worked with Larry Coppock to provide 100 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* to the families of the 19 Granite Mountain Hotshot fire fighters killed in a June 30 forest fire. He also gave copies of the daily devotions to other first responders in the Prescott area.

Wright said the award was special as “many folks never really knew how busy I have been with my work with the UMC, scouting, and 4-H.”

Ben Gorton Scouting helps youth gain scholarship

BEREA, Ky.—

Ben Gorton, a member of Venture Crew 877 in Chittenango, N.Y., received the Ethel and Ira Martin Scholarship from Berea College. The award honors a promising student who is considering full-time ministry, missions or education.

Ben, a member of the Berea class of 2016,



Doug Wright conducts a vesper service for 56 boys at Camp Lawton, atop Mt. Lemmon near Tucson. Participants in the June 30 service prayed for the 19 firefighters who died on the same day at the Yarnell Hill fire near Prescott.

will have a dual major in religion and English with a minor in theater. In applying for the award, Ben noted his role as chaplain of his Scout troop and his experience at the National Jamboree and the World Jamboree. He said those experiences led to a decision to further his religious studies.



Ben Gorton

Richard Cherrington
Scout collects 1,500 pounds of pasta
WESTMINSTER, Colo.—

Richard Cherrington, an Eagle Scout, president of an Order of the Arrow chapter, a member of a high adventure crew, the Civil Air Patrol and an active member of the Wallace UMC youth group, received a Good Samaritan Award.

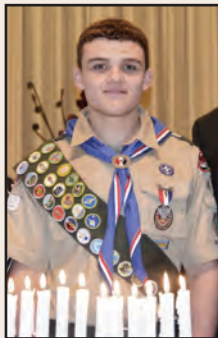
The church cited Richard for collecting 1,500 pounds of pasta in a “Scouting for Food” drive for a local food bank.

Matthew Powell
Scout builds fence for Eagle Scout project

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.—

Matthew Powell, a member of St. Andrews UMC, attained the rank of Eagle, during a ceremony at St. Andrews UMC.

For his Eagle project, Matthew worked with the St. Andrews Board of Trustees and the City of Virginia Beach Department of Permits to construct a 180-foot fence with gates at the church parsonage. The parsonage hosts social events for youth, families, and other guests. Matthew, a recent gradu-



Matthew Powell

ate of Kempsville High School, led 15 adults and fellow Scouts from Troop 417 to complete the project. Men of St. Andrews UMC are active supporters of the troop.

Now a freshman at Virginia Military Institute, Matthew is majoring in political science. Following graduation from VMI, he will receive a commission in the United States Navy.

Jim McCarthy
Church honors PRAY leader
SHARPSBURG, Ga.—

Jim McCarthy, a counselor for Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) at Cokes Chapel UMC, received a Cross and Flame Award from the church. McCarthy, assistant BSA council commissioner, received the award along with the 21 young people who received religious PRAY emblems for their studies.

Jim



McCarthy, front left, receives the Cross and Flame Award for his leadership in scouting.

Mark Jordan, pastor at Cokes Chapel UMC, presents the award. Behind them are (from left) Glenda McCool and Sean and Cormac McCarthy, class assistants.

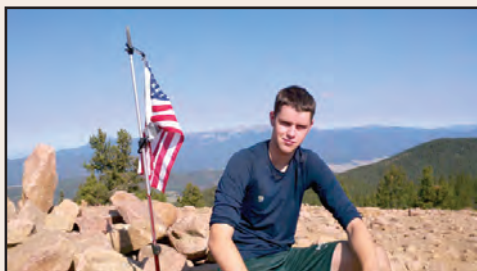
Jacob William Vecchio
Eagle Scout appointed to U.S. Air Force Academy

SAINT FRANCISVILLE, La.—

Jacob Vecchio, 18, is attending the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs following his nomination by U.S. Congressman Bill Cassidy.

Jacob attained the rank of Eagle Scout at age 16. He earned the Webelos Arrow of Light award, the Webelos Super Achiever award, the Order of the Arrow Brotherhood, 37 Boy Scout merit badges, the post of Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, the Bronze, Gold, and Silver Eagle Scout Palm awards, the Philmont Scout Ranch Arrowhead award, the Duty to God award, and the Wilderness award.

He has backpacked the Wind River Range, Wyo., camped along the Appalachian Trail, hiked the Italian Amalfi coast, climbed to the summit of 14,255-foot Longs Peak in Colorado, completed a half marathon in Georgia, skied the Swiss Alps, explored Tennessee caves, climbed cliffs in the Appalachian and Rocky Mountain ranges, white-water rafted in North Carolina and Georgia, and served as a guide on a 65-mile, 10-day backpacking trek in the rugged Sangre de Cristo Mountain range at the Philmont Scout Ranch, N.M.



Jacob reaches the summit of 11,742-foot Mount Phillips at the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico

Jim and Terri Schmitz
Kansas couple receives Torch Awards

PARSONS, Kan.—

Jim and Terri Schmitz, members of Wesley UMC, received Torch Awards during a June 2 celebration.

A 28-year scouting veteran and a member of the Order of the Arrow, Jim has served as adviser of a Venture Crew, an assistant scoutmaster, scoutmaster, and charter organization representative.

Terri was a Girl Scout leader for her daughter's troop in the 1980s. She now helps with her two granddaughters' troops. She has served as a board member of both Bluestem and Kansas Heartland Councils and is currently the secretary for the Heartland Council. She received "Thanks" and "Thanks II" badges for her service as a Girl Scout volunteer.



Jim and Terri Schmitz

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