

For information regarding the conference-wide **Day of Caring** on May 14, 2011 visit the Louisiana Conference web site at www.la-umc.org



LOUISIANA

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NEWS,
OPPORTUNITIES AND
WITNESS OF LOUISIANA
CONFERENCE MINISTRIES

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JANUARY 28, 2011

SCJ clergywomen gathering in New Orleans

“Wade in the Water,” the quadrennial SCJ Clergywomen’s Consultation, is set for March 22-25 in New Orleans. Women will gather to relax in a fun setting, to enjoy the company of women with shared experiences, and to learn from one another about effective leadership skills and justice

issues. There will be a fabulous concert by jazz artist Charmaine Neville, and worship with preachers Ouida Lee and Anita Phillips.

Plenary speakers include Dr. Katharine Rhodes Henderson, author of God’s Troublemakers: How Women of Faith are

Changing the World; Rev. Lorenza Andrade Smith, an advocate for the DREAM act; and Bishops Ann Sherer-Simpson, Janice Riggle Huie, and Sharon Brown Christopher.

See Clergywomen, page 2



Westlake UMC / 3



Noel UMC / 4



Clanton Chapel / 4

Haiti: One year later



Children play between rows of tents at Camp Corail outside Port-au-Prince, Haiti, where the United Methodist Committee on Relief is helping provide services for some 10,000 people displaced by the January 2010 earthquake. A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose.

Camp Corail offers shelter for displaced Haitians

BY KATHY L. GILBERT

An hour’s drive separates the quiet refuge of Camp Corail — among Haiti’s largest tent cities — from the clutter and clatter of the dusty, garbage-strewn streets of the capital city.

The population in and around the camp is about 10,000, with the thousands living in the planned settlement of hurricane-proof white tents joined by thousands more in makeshift shelters along the perimeter.

Nine pastel green and blue schoolrooms built by the United Methodist Committee on Relief’s nongovernmental

organization — one of several agencies providing day-to-day essential services — stand out in the sea of white.

“UMCOR” is spray-painted in red next to the front doors.

An anchor in the storm

This tent city offers a cleaner, more substantial home than the filthy tattered tents thrust into every corner of Port-au-Prince. But with no grocery stores, churches, restaurants or other urban conveniences, the camp is also isolated and sterile.

Since it is difficult and costly for tent-city residents to get to Port-Au-Prince for

food and water, relief workers bring those items — as well as services like security protection and latrines — to this camp, just a few kilometers north of the capital city.

The UMCOR-built schoolrooms have wheelchair access and capacity for 50 students. By dividing the free schooling into two half-day sessions, there are enough rooms to accommodate about 900 students.

“UMCOR is also supplying school materials, benches, desks and chairs,”

See Haiti, page 5

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ON THE JOURNEY

Christmas to Epiphany to Carnival to

The Christmas tree has morphed into a Mardi Gras tree at our house! The red, green and gold ornaments have been replaced with purple, green and gold. The tabletop trees, rather than sporting multi-colored lights have begun to wear purple, green and gold sparkly tinsel. We're moving on to another season.

But what a wonderful Christmas past! We had a special time with our children and granddaughter. Santa even found our house right here in Baton Rouge and all was right with the world. The Epiphany star has shone once again, we've remembered our baptisms as we have celebrated the baptism of our Lord, and the wise men have departed by another way. 2011 is in full swing!

While we were finishing up the final few days of Christmas, with those Lords a-leaping, Maids a-milking, and the like, there was another exercise going on in Louisiana Annual Conference. Staff and participants were gathering in Woodworth at the Wesley Center to introduce our new "Awakening" weekend. A time for those ages 16 – 22 to come together and begin the discernment process as to their future, this was a wonderful gathering. There were some 33 participants from all over the Conference who came to hear young clergy and laity share with them their calls into their Christian vocations and how they knew what God was calling them to do. We sang together, prayed together, walked the labyrinth together, talked together, worshipped together and listened together. I am totally confident that some of Louisiana United Methodism's strongest leaders will come forth from this group of young women and men! God has so much in store for us when they have fully assumed their roles as leaders of our churches, both as clergy and as laity.

At the same time this gathering was coming together, other important work was being done. District Superintendents were combing the districts helping every local church pay their apportionments at the highest level possible. With few exceptions, the payout was nothing short of fully faithful to the connectional mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church. Once again Louisiana has paid out at a very high level – 98.52% to be exact! Thanks to each pastor, every lay leader, and every person who frequents one of our churches for



your gifts of leadership and financial faithfulness who have made this possible. A full list of our record will be published in the next edition of Louisiana Now!, but I want to

say my deepest thanks now to all of you who made this possible.

Soon the appointment process will begin. The Cabinet will gather on February 3&4 to begin "taking inventory" of all of our appointments and will begin to share the results of advisory forms from Pastor-Parish Relation Committees and pastors. We will begin our actual work of making appointments beginning February 15. I ask that all of you who are reading this will begin to pray for this sacred work as we discern God's leading for the coming year.

The other thing I would ask you to begin to pray about is the upcoming election of delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences in 2012. Louisiana has retained our number of delegates from the last time we voted – 5 clergy and 5 laity for General Conference, and an additional 5 clergy and 5 laity for Jurisdictional Conference. We are indeed fortunate to have this large of a delegation, as our neighbors all around us have seen shrinking numbers. Overall, the United States has lost a significant number of delegates to the worldwide meeting, with the Central Conferences (Europe, Africa and the Philippines) gaining in delegates. The United States is slated to have 61% of the voting delegates at the 2012 gathering. Africa and the Philippines will experience growing numbers.

So, as Al Roker says on the Today show, "That's what's going on in our neck of the woods." And what a wonderful neck of the woods it is!! It's going to be exciting to journey through 2011 with you. I pray for God's guidance every step of the way.

In Christ's love,

Bill Hutchinson

Clergywomen, from page 1

Workshop presenters include GBOD's general secretary, Karen Greenwaldt; UMCOR's deputy general secretary, Cynthia Harvey; editor of *Alive Now*, Beth Richardson; GCSRW's assistant general secretary, Kim Coffing; GBHEM's director of continuing formation for ministry, HiRho Park; and SCJ clergywomen Stephanie Ahlschwede, Cheryl Jefferson Bell, Kathryn Boren, Susan Brown, Beverly Connelly, Debra Crumpton, Cristian de la Rosa, Amy Gearhart, Twila Gibbens, Bobbi Kaye Jones, Julienne Judd, Kabamba Kiboko and Raquel Mull.

Optional activities include tours of the post-Katrina city; a tour of St. Mark's UMC/North Rampart Community Center, an innovative urban ministry established by Methodist women; and various kinds of relaxation organized by hosting Louisiana clergywomen.

An early bird registration fee is available until Feb. 16, as are special rates at the Doubletree Hotel, just across Canal Street from the French Quarter. The hotel is in walking distance of great shopping, music and food, and many family attractions, including the Aquarium and Insectarium, the Mississippi River steamboat Natchez, the Children's Museum, and the famous New Orleans streetcars that run to City Park and the Museum of Art, as well as down St. Charles Avenue.

Register at <http://wadeinthewater.org> and find scholarship applications there. Clergywomen are asked to share that link on Facebook and join the Facebook group "Wade in the Water with SCJ Clergywomen"; to spread the word through email and phone calls; and to announce it at clergy gatherings. For more information, contact Ellen Blue at ellen.blue@ptstulsa.edu or 918-809-5128.

In Memoriam

Rev. Edison (Eddie) Morgan, Jr.
11/28/10

Rev. Chang Kyu Lee
12/7/10

Rev. Raymond M. Crofoot
12/11/10

Evelyn Lowe
12/24/10

Louisiana Conference *NOW!*

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Westlake High School's Student Council donated nearly 700 cans of food to Westlake United Methodist Church's food pantry, which serves needy residents in the City of Westlake as well as in the surrounding area. The organization collected the food at school and throughout the community. Student Council representatives unload one of two vehicles loaded with the donated items. Pictured are the Student Council reps along with Westlake UMC's pastor, Rev. Betty Northern (far right), Westlake UMC food pantry volunteers Warrenne Adams and Thora Donaldson, and Student Council sponsor Morgan Bertrand. Student Council members include Shelbi Stoker (Pres.-not pictured), Megan Ortego (VP), Savanna Johnston (Sec.), Taylor Whitley (Treas.), Brittany Genius, Shaylee Newlan, and Kasha Carpenter. On the cover, Baylee Thomas, 10, and Jenna Steward, 9, were in Westlake visiting their grandmother, Carol Thomas, and finding some great deals at the Westlake United Methodist Church's rummage sale held August 7. The event's purpose was to raise funds for the church's community Food Pantry. Photos by Marilyn Monroe/Westlake News

Westlake UMC continues 21-year-old ministry to poor with food pantry

Over 20 years ago, Westlake United Methodist Church in the Lake Charles District began a food pantry ministry that has been a blessing to both the community and church volunteers.

In 1990, church members Thora Donaldson and Charlotte Williams visited area schools with Rev. Larry O'Dell (pastor of Westlake UMC at the time) to ask counselors for the names of families needing assistance. They obtained the names of a couple of families, accumulated boxes of food and took them to the families.

Initially, church volunteers made and sold hot tamales to raise the funds to buy food. The congregation was asked to donate food items and/or cash gifts. "The congregation responded and that's how the food pantry was supplied for many years," said Jo Parker, a member of Westlake UMC. "Thora tells me that at Christmas during the first years, the church handed out approximately 20 food baskets each year."

The ministry quickly grew from simply a holiday basket distribution to a full-fledged food pantry. The pantry is open on Mondays and Fridays from 9-11:30 a.m. and on Wednesday nights from 5-7 p.m.

The Missions Committee currently has oversight of the pantry, and Thora Donaldson has been chair of the project since its inception.

The food pantry ministry offers more

than free food to those in need. Another facet of the ministry is the offering of coffee and cookies to those stopping by the pantry during regular hours. "We learn a great deal about our clients when we sit and visit with them. Times are very hard for people who live on a marginal income. We often see a family for a couple of months, and then might not ever see them again; or months or years will pass before they come back to us," said Parker.

Volunteers often hear, "I have no food for my children," or "I didn't know what to do until someone told me about this church." "We have learned that when people go to the local police station for emergency help, they are often directed to our church," she added.

Approximately 10 years ago, the pantry applied for and began receiving food from Second Harvest. That food, plus church donations, kept the pantry going. "Unfortunately, last year the Second Harvest budget was cut drastically, so the food available from that agency is now limited."

The church has expanded its requests for funding to area churches. "First Baptist Church of Westlake makes cash donations on a monthly basis," said Parker.

During 2010, the Westlake UMC food pantry served more than 1,795 people. Replacing the customary Christmas food baskets, the church has moved to cash

vouchers which are given to repeat clients who visit the pantry regularly, and to those who come in during the months just before Christmas.

As the food pantry ministry has grown, church volunteers have adjusted operations to meet the needs of an ever changing clientele. Periodically, transients who will not become regular clients stop by for food. The pantry keeps a supply of special items for them, such as food in "pop-top" cans.

Volunteers recently aided their first non-English speaking clients. Pantry workers went on-line and found a Spanish/English translation guide, allowing them to communicate more effectively with the clients.

Committee members have been brainstorming about other resources they can tap for supplying the pantry. Volunteers are preparing to write letters to corporations like Kraft Foods to ask for donations or food supplies.

In the past, when supplies have dwindled, help with restocking pantry shelves has appeared in surprising ways. Toward the end of this past December, the shelves were looking bare and Westlake's congregation made numerous contributions of food and money. The budget was exhausted. Rev. Betty Northern, Westlake's pastor, received a call from the Managan Center where KPLC-TV, the Red Cross and the Managan Center had been collecting food and toys for distribution at Christmas. The

center had leftover food and toys and wanted to know if the church would like to have them. All together, Westlake UMC received seven truck loads, which were unloaded, sorted and shelved by church volunteers on Dec. 23.

"We had boxes of food stored all over the church, it seemed. All the toys were quickly distributed to families in need. And this food has been a real blessing in restocking our shelves. We felt blessed that someone at the center knew our church had a food pantry, and the community trusted us enough to know that we would make good use of the items. It was truly a 'God thing'," said Parker.

Local churches throughout the Louisiana Annual Conference will participate in a variety of poverty outreach programs—like this successful food pantry—during "A Day of Caring: Feed My Sheep" on May 14, 2011. Congregations are asked to design a service project that will be implemented on that day, focusing on the needs of the poor in their neighborhood or community. Read more about "A Day of Caring" at www.la-umc.org

Sandy Morgan, chair of Westlake UMC's missions committee, is planning on gathering and printing low cost, healthy recipes to hand out to clients and others as part of the church's participation in "A Day of Caring" on May 14.



Twenty youth directors from the Louisiana Annual Conference attended the Perkins School of Youth Ministry held in Dallas. They learned a lot, shared information, and enjoyed awesome fellowship!

Church resources available on the web

- Watch as 350 youth and young people representing 32 countries shared their excitement and passion last summer in Berlin at the Global Young People Convocation and Legislative Assembly. For a brief video, go to <http://globallyoungpeople.org/resource/videos>.
- Understand the seven seasons of church planting. Learn more about those seasons at: www.path1.org/fornew-church.php.
- Encourage and inspire youth workers by introducing them to a new website created by the editors of devozine, a

magazine published by The Upper Room. Check it out by clicking on www.devoted2youth.org.

- Take advantage of ministry opportunities to reach people from Hispanic/Latino cultures. Get the DVD, Pentecost Journey: A Planning Guide for Non-Hispanic/Latino Congregation. To order, go to <http://tinyurl.com/4glrygb>.

- 2011 Children's Ministry Forum slated Feb. 22-24 at Coker United Methodist Church in San Antonio, Texas. For more information, go to www.gbod.org/cmfi.



Wyoming Conference aids Clanton Chapel - Dulac

The Wyoming Conference was merged into another conference and no longer exists, but their members found Dulac and came to work to help Clanton Chapel United Methodist and some needy families the week of January 8-January 15, 2011.

Pastor Kirby Verret and Clanton Chapel

UMC served up the usual bayou favorites like shrimp file gumbo, and many other dishes.

William Beebe and his team first came after Hurricane Rita, and find time every year to help Dulac.

Noel UMC - Shreveport



Members of Noel UMC worked to pack and distribute 600 bags of groceries for local families during their annual Giving Factory. Children from Noel UMC participated in A Night in Bethlehem on December 12 (cover photo). The night included sampling local cuisine, designing Roman coins and a Christmas pageant.

Camphor Memorial UMC - Scotlandville



Rev. Darlene A. Moore, pastor of Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church, traveled to Liberia, West Africa in December through the People to People Exchange Program where she was invited to deliver the sermon at A. P. Camphor UMC on Dec. 12. While in West Africa, she worked with children and adults; attended the United Methodist Church conference; and met with Mary Broh (Mayor of Monrovia), U. S. Ambassador to Liberia Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson, president of Liberia.

Rev. Moore also held a creative arts workshop at Camphor Memorial UMC on

Jan. 9. Children and adults braved the cold weather to come to the church to make dolls, paint paintings, write poetry and design sun visors.

Rev. Moore will have an exhibition of her paintings at Black Heritage Gallery in Lake Charles, La. from Jan. 28-Feb. 23, 2011. She has also created the logo for The African Methodist Heritage Center.

Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden proclaimed Nov. 14, 2010 as Darlene A. Moore Day in recognition of "outstanding and dedicated leadership at Camphor and in the Scotlandville community."

Pearl River UMC seeks to serve those in need with Christmas offering

In 2008, Rev. Ben McGehee challenged the members of Pearl River United Methodist Church to make a very special pledge.

He asked the congregation to match whatever they spent on Christmas, giving it to the church to support various ministries and mission opportunities decided on by the Administrative Council. That year, the congregation generously contributed more \$10,000 for the chosen ministries.

In 2009, Rev. McGehee again extended the challenge. That year, the offering collected was more than \$12,000.

Rev. Patty Hewitt, the current pastor for Pearl River UMC, continued the tradition in 2010 by setting a goal of \$15,000 for the congregation. "I was optimistic because I know how generous they are. Still, I knew it was a big step up from last year," said Rev. Hewitt.

During the Christmas Eve worship service, the offering plates were passed.

By the end of the evening, the offering counted. With generous hearts and by the grace of God, \$16,036 was received.

The funds will be distributed among the Methodist Home for Children in Mandeville, Crisis Pregnancy Help Center in Slidell, UMCOR water projects, and the Cambodian Methodist Church.

"The people of Pearl River UMC embody the true meaning of Christmas," said Rev. Hewitt.

Local churches throughout the Louisiana Annual Conference will participate in a variety of poverty outreach programs—like the funding of these four ministries—during "A Day of Caring: Feed My Sheep" on May 14, 2011.

Congregations are asked to design a service project that will be implemented on that day, focusing on the needs of the poor in their neighborhood or community. Read more about "A Day of Caring" at www.la-umc.org.





Jeandline, 2, plays with a doll while her mother, Jean Marise, prepares dinner in front of their tent at Camp Corail, outside Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Camp Corail is home to about 10,000 people displaced by the January 2010 earthquake that devastated the country. UMNS photos by Mike DuBose.



Haiti, from page 1

said Josny Mehu, a program officer for UMCOR-Haiti. The management of the schools will be turned over to the Haitian government.

A Haitian national, Mehu worked with the former UMCOR Haiti office before it closed in 2008. When the office reopened after the 2010 earthquake, he reenlisted.

Not only are the needs of the students are tended to, but so are the fears. Each building has been designed, tested and constructed to withstand a Category 2 hurricane, Mehu said. The schools are among the most secure structures in the camp, with features such as 30-degree roof pitch, hurricane strapping, reinforced trusses and half-inch plywood construction throughout.

“When Tropical Storm Tomas hit the island in early November, residents sought shelter in the schoolhouse,” Mehu said. “The buildings were not damaged and everyone was safe.”

The camp and the school fill a desperate need. The 2010 earthquake damaged or destroyed 4,500 schools in the Port-au-

Prince area, according to an initial survey by the Ministry of Education. As of September, about 1,000 schools still required debris clearance.

Finding shelter, comfort

Despite the harsh reality of being a home for refugees from the massive human disaster, the camp is not without beauty. White-capped mountains frame the horizon. Horses, goats and other domestic animals munch on the sparse grass leading up to trails through the hills.

But deep inside the tent city there are no trees, no grass, no bushes, no grazing livestock nor beautiful, pristine views.

The white gravel, used to cover and contain the dust in this settlement, reflects the heat and is blinding at midday. Even in the cooler month of November, it takes only minutes for the skin to burn and sweat to roll down the back.

UMCOR plans to plant papaya and lemon trees for shade and a community garden for food and income. Because the camp is located at the base of a hillside, UMCOR is building a drainage system to keep the camp from flooding. In fact, bus-

loads of residents were brought to this more secure camp from mudslide-prone areas during the rainy season.

Temporary wooden houses are also being constructed so tent dwellers eventually will be able to move into more private, comfortable living quarters. The homes will be placed in the same locations as the tents so everyone knows who will live where.

On a warm day in November, 3-year-old Deshca skips around one of the few sections with completed homes. Wearing a white dress, several sizes too large, she plays with the tattered satin ribbon around her waist. When she runs, she raises the dress hem, revealing dusty, little feet.

Sitting outside their small home, Deshca’s mother, Princifanie, keeps close watch on the child.

The family of six recently moved into the new house, and she is happy with the change from tent-dwelling.

“This is something I could never do when we lived in the tent,” she said, washing clothes in a small plastic pan. “It was much too hot during the day.”

Princifanie, who is pregnant, appreciates the comfort she has from owning a “real” home. She smiles and says, “Now if I get tired during the day I can go inside and lie down.”

Going inside to rest during the daytime is not a comfort offered to those still living in the tents, which are laid out with military precision on the white-gravel plots that cover an area of about 20 football fields.

The tents don’t “breathe” so it is impossible to sit inside during the day, says Jean Dline, a young mother who lives in one of the tents in Block 3.

Her family has been waiting several months for a chance to move into the more substantial wooden homes like Princifanie occupies.

She says the family is unhappy here, but they can’t go home. There is no home, nothing for them to return to, in Port-au-Prince.

“Life is very hard here,” she says. “But we have no choice.”

Church makes pillowcase dresses aimed to lift the spirits of Haitian girls

Every little girl loves a pretty new dress, especially if she has never, ever owned one.

And members of the Hillsboro United Methodist Church in Franklin, Tenn., are doing their best to make sure more than a handful of girls in Haiti receive a coveted dress.

So far, they have sewn 110 “pillowcase dresses,” crafted from brightly patterned pillowcases and other colorful fabric.

Inspiring them were the stories that members Bronwen and Bill Pope brought back from their mission trips to the Caribbean country ravaged by an earthquake a year ago.

The Popes’ first visit to Haiti was a short-term mission trip to an orphanage in 2002. That’s where the couple met their future son, Kenson, now 8. His adopted brother, Caeden, 7, whose biological mother and sister still live in Haiti, joined the Pope family a year later. The Popes are also the parents of two daughters, Hannah and Noa, now 13 and 10.

Wanting also to help the people of Haiti, Hillsboro Church member and tailor Cherry Lane Darken started the pillowcase-dress project, and congregants and community volunteers quickly stepped in to make the dresses. People began donating whimsically designed pillowcases, sheets and other fabric, as well as ribbon and thread.

Betty Hughes was one of the first to get involved. She loves the idea of providing new, one-of-a-kind dresses to girls accustomed to faded, worn garments and hand-me-downs.

“To have something new has to be exciting,” she says. “That’s why we’ve chosen ... not to make all (the dresses) alike. What a joy that’s going to be for that child. When they put that dress on, they’re going to feel even more special.”

Elementary student Lauren Jorgensen modeled a pillowcase dress. She saw pictures of some of the little girls Bronwen Pope had met. One girl stood out to Lauren, who told Pope she wanted the dress to belong to that little girl.

Lauren wanted the child to know someone made the dress just for her.

“Somebody’s caring about you and loving you and remembering you and praying for you,” Pope says. “I think that’s important.”

“The congregation has heard my heart” Relatively new members of the Hillsboro congregation, which averages 65 worshippers each week, the Popes feel embraced by their church family. “This congregation has heard my heart and is excited about Haiti,” Bronwen Pope says. “It feels good that people are listening and excited about the things I’m passionate about.”

Her fellow member Hughes agrees. “We’re an active little church,” she says. “We’ve all been blessed with more than we need, and when you’ve been blessed, you should want to share. It probably does you as much good as it does for the person for whom you are doing it.”

See Dresses, page 7



Lauren Jorgensen of Hillsboro (Tenn.) United Methodist Church models a pillowcase dress made for the girls of Haiti. A UMNS photo by Ronny Perry.



Representatives of Africa University visit the New Orleans area

On Feb. 19 from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m., the public and parishioners of the New Orleans District and the Louisiana Annual Conference are invited to attend an open dialogue with representatives from Africa University. Dr. Martha Orphe will host the dialogue at First Street Peck Wesley United Methodist Church, 2309 Dryades Street, New Orleans. Among the presenters will be the vice-chancellor, Dr. Fanuel Tagwira; a faculty member, Asst. Prof. Martha Mutisi; and a former student, Dr. Artemus Gaye. Light refreshments will follow.

When the U. S. embassies were bombed in Dares Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya in 1998, some of the first responders on the ground giving aid and comfort to the injured and dying were graduates of Africa University's Emergency and Disaster Response Training Program.

When devastating floods struck Mozambique two years later, those graduates were some of the first responders on the ground assisting with emergency relief.

When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast in 2005, Africa University donated a shipment of bedding (15,000 sheets and pillow cases originally designated for ministries in Africa) to ongoing efforts to care and provide for the survivors and evacuees of Hurricane Katrina. Also, the Africa University Development Office which is based in Nashville, Tenn. permitted its internet platform to be used to solicit and raise emergency funds for Dillard University immediately after Hurricane Katrina.

In 19 short years, United Methodists have built a first-class institution of higher learning at the Methodist mission site at

Old Mutare, Zimbabwe. Representatives of the university will visit the New Orleans area Feb. 19-22, 2011 to thank the churches of the Louisiana Annual Conference for their continuing faithful support and to provide an update on the continuing development of the institution.

In addition to the open dialogue on Feb. 19, on Feb. 20, 17 churches of the New Orleans District will host representatives of Africa University as guest preachers, speakers, and presenters. The churches and guest AU representatives are: Asbury and St. Matthew, Rev. F. Lloyd Rollins; Carrollton and Metairie, Dr. Maggie Jackson; First Street Peck Wesley, Dr. Artemus Gaye; Hartzell and Philips Memorial, Dr. Aubrey K. Lucas; Lake Vista, Kevin G. Goodwin; Parker Memorial, Josefa E. Bethea-Wall and Ruth

Ellen Stone; Peoples and Brooks-Shaw Temple, Shirley Drake Byers and Rev. Irene C. Pierce; Rayne Memorial, Dr. Nancy M. Carruth; St. Marks, Bishop Marcus Matthews; Hartzell Mt. Zion, Angella Current-Felder; Munholland, James H. Salley; St. Matthews's in Metairie, Prof. Martha Mutisi; and Thomas, Bishop Ernest S. Lyght.

The Louisiana Annual Conference and the churches of New Orleans District have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Africa University in its quest to become one of the premiere institutions of higher learning on the African continent. Everyone is encouraged to show their continued support for this institution by attending the open dialogue on Feb. 19 and one of the 17 churches on Feb. 20.

Society of St. Andrew holds gleaning program, offers Lenten study

Harvest of Hope is the ecumenical study, worship, and action mission trip program of the Society of St. Andrew.

This summer, the program is offering several opportunities to learn about hunger and about gleaning - a common sense solution to the issue. Participants will glean fresh fruits and vegetables which will immediately, through the help of local feeding agencies, find their way onto the tables of those in need. The group will experience a simple, healthy lifestyle during the event and will worship together, exploring what God wants us to do concerning our neighbors who are in need. The summer schedule is as follows:

June 24-26, 2011 (Intergenerational Weekend)

Location: Camp Kirkwood - Wilmington, NC

July 8-10, 2011 (Jr. High Weekend)

Location: Camp Occohannock - Exmore, VA

July 10-16, 2011 (Sr. High Week)

Location: Camp Occohannock - Exmore, VA

July 10-16, 2011 (Sr. High Week)

Location: Randolph Macon College - Ashland, VA

July 17-23, 2011 (Sr. High Week)

Location: Camp Kirkwood - Wilmington, NC

July 29-31, 2011 (Jr. High Weekend)

Location: Camp Alta Mons - Shawsville, VA

Aug. 5-7, 2011 (Intergenerational Weekend)

Location: YMCA Hargis Retreat - Chelsea, AL

For information, visit www.EndHunger.org or email SoSAHoH@EndHunger.org

The Society of St. Andrew, a domestic hunger-relief ministry that provides nutritious fresh produce to feeding agencies across the country, also offers spiritually nourishing devotions each Lent and Advent season. This upcoming Lent, the theme We've a Story to Tell, is inspired by the Christian journey and its impact on our personal lives. These daily devotions were contributed by a variety of writers from different denominations who share how their personal walk with Jesus has impacted

their lives.

Through daily devotions, scriptures, and prayers, this program offers an opportunity to strengthen your walk with Christ while joining in ministry to feed the hungry. All materials are offered at no cost and there is no obligation. However, participants are asked to seriously consider giving sacrificially. A donation of just \$1 a day during the season of Lent - \$47 - would enable the Society of St. Andrew to salvage over 2,000 servings of fresh produce. That is because the Society of St. Andrew's low operating costs allows fresh nutritious produce to be saved and delivered for only two cents a serving. Last year's Lenten Devotions program was responsible for providing over 2 million servings of food to families in need in our nation.

An optional "Good Friday Fast" booklet is also available for use in partnership with the daily devotions or as a stand alone program.

The Society of St. Andrew is a national nonprofit hunger-relief ministry that rescues about 25 million pounds of excess produce each year that would otherwise go

to waste for various marketing reasons. This food is then distributed to critical feeding agencies across the country at no cost to the agencies or the people they serve. The Society of St. Andrew has three main food salvage programs in addition to their spiritual-life programs. The Potato & Produce Project saves tractor-trailer loads of produce from being dumped for cosmetic reasons. The Gleaning Network send volunteers directly into farmers' fields to pick the excess produce after the harvest. The Harvest of Hope program is a Christian education and work mission experience. More information about the Society of St. Andrew and its hunger-relief programs is available online at www.endhunger.org or by email at sosainfo@endhunger.org.

All materials for the Lenten devotional program are free from the Society of St. Andrew. For a church sample kit or a personal packet, order online at www.endhunger.org/lent.htm; by phone, (800) 333-4597; or by email, church@endhunger.org.

Local church Welcoming Certification process is now 'online' with UMC

United Methodist Communications is pleased to announce a new online process for new and renewing welcoming certified congregations. Instead of the "paper and pen" process we have been using over the last 10 years of the program, we have moved everything online using our Online Learning Center.

For those congregations seeking certification for the first time, the forum "Becoming a Welcoming Congregations"

walks them through the activities they need to complete toward initial certification. With the help of other congregations seeking certification and a team of facilitators, the process is more efficient and engaging. Plus, we are able to quickly update and add new resources to support welcoming ministry. Access to this online forum and process is open to any United Methodist congregation and does not require any pre-authorization.

For those congregations already certified at any point since 2001, we are inviting them to join another online forum, "Welcoming Certified Congregations," where they will encounter more than 1,000 welcoming certified churches and complete activities toward renewal of their annual certification. This forum provides additional resources, community building and sharing to enhance welcoming ministry across our United Methodist connection. Access

to this forum is restricted to congregations that have already achieved initial certification and requires a pre-assigned username, password and enrollment key to participate in the renewal certification forum.

Complete details about both the new and renewing certification online forums and processes is available at our Welcoming Certification webpage, <http://umcom.org/welcomingcertification>.

Lubbock to serve as UMM leader

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Four persons with decades of experience are available to assist local churches, districts and conferences expand their ministries to men.

Following the announcement that Larry Malone, director of Men's Ministry, would retire at the end of 2010, Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the General Commission on United Methodist Men, recruited four volunteer leaders to assume the responsibilities of the 13-year veteran staff member.

The four volunteer leaders began their service in January, and enrolled in electronic training experiences in order to ensure they will be able to provide consistent and powerful messages to annual conferences, men's retreats, district rallies and local churches where they are invited.

Malone assisted Hanke in the selection process. "We had many excellent applicants, but these men each have unique skill



Rev. Mark Lubbock

sets that will broaden our ministry," said Malone. "Each is heavily involved in men's ministry and will remain active within their local settings," said Hanke. "The commission will pay travel expenses when the host conference or district is unable."

Rev. Mark Lubbock from Baton Rouge, La. is one of the four deployed staff.

A local pastor in the Louisiana Conference, Lubbock formerly served as pastor of three congregations.

As a certified men's ministry specialist he now helps churches in the conference establish effective ministries to and with men through Louisiana Men of Christ, an organization he founded.

Before becoming a pastor he served as president of a local unit of UM Men and is current secretary of the District UM Men.

He has led Man in the Mirror, Promise Keepers, Men at the Cross, Kairos Prison Ministry, and Men Mentoring Men events. Lubbock served as chief executive officer and president of a technology company since 1987; the organization is now called Louisiana Data Systems.

Breaux to speak at Student Forum

United Methodist college and university students will have the opportunity to explore leadership at Student Forum 2011 at the University of Evansville, May 26-29. Student Forum is the national leadership conference of the United Methodist Student Movement, sponsored by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Rev. Connie Breaux, director of the Grambling State Wesley Foundation in Ruston, will serve as one of the event's guest speakers.

Student leaders from all over the U.S. will gather in Evansville, Ind., to attend the event. The theme of the conference, which is planned and organized by college students, is "God is Calling. . .

. . . Will You Answer?" The conference will include leadership training, spiritual formation, and networking.

The registration fee to attend is \$75 per person. The fee includes all conference materials, lodging, meals, and a \$5 contribution to the UMSM Mission Fund.

Our focus for the event this year will be for participants to explore the many ways God calls and how God might be calling them to live. Additionally, students will have the chance to consider possible legislation to present to the 2012 General Conference.

Although registration for Student Forum is open to all young adult college and university students, each annual conference may still identify three voting student delegates and six alternate student delegates.

Registration will open early in 2011. For more information and to register, visit www.gbhem.org. You can see highlights from last year's event at www.umsm.org/studentforum.



Rev. Connie Breaux

Dresses, from page 5

On Pope's most recent trip to Haiti, she met a physician who was living in a tent. She learned that when the earthquake hit, the man grabbed his son and shoved him under a table to protect him. The house collapsed on the man's arm and crushed it. Now he cannot work.

"Life in Haiti," she says, "has always been hard and challenging." With the earthquake, even more Haitians have joined the ranks of the poor and homeless.

"The heart of the people of Haiti has not changed. I'm blessed every time I'm there just to see the people giving to one another and to see their generosity and their joy, to see kids playing," she says.

"You know they're hungry. You know they're thirsty. You know they're living in a tent. But they're still playing. They're still having joy."

During their travels, the Popes also became acquainted with Ann, who thinks she is about 70. Left without family, hands too crippled to earn money by doing laundry, she had no backup plan when the earthquake struck. Her tent was a blue tarp. "I'm alive because of the kindness of my neighbors," she told the visitors.

The Popes shared the woman's story with their congregation, which rallied to

raise \$2,500 to repair Ann's severely damaged home.

The Popes shared the woman's story with their congregation, which rallied to raise \$2,500 to repair Ann's severely damaged home. Reflecting on the pillowcase-dress ministry, she adds, "I think that's important because something new is very unusual, especially now in Haiti where the basics — food, water and shelter — are what most people are thinking about."

Member Carol Johnston hopes the dresses can boost the girls' self-esteem.

"We're not saving a child by making dresses, but we are doing a little bit," she says. "And I think every little bit helps."

Bronwen Pope doesn't want people to forget Haiti.

"A lot of people, when I say we've adopted from Haiti, think we've adopted from Africa," she says. "They have no idea that Haiti is ... an hour plane ride from Florida. Keeping an eye on Haiti, I think, historically we haven't done a good job of that. They're our neighbors."

Being in mission in Haiti has been an incredible experience, she adds. A stay-at-home mom, she will graduate from nursing school this spring. A long-term goal is to become a midwife in Haiti.

"Once you go," she says, "you're never the same. It changes your heart."



Carol Johnston of Hillsboro (Tenn.) United Methodist Church adds the finishing touch to a pillowcase dress to send to Haiti. A UMNS photo by Ronny Perry.

Job opportunities within the Conference

Henning Memorial UMC

Henning Memorial United Methodist Church in Sulphur, La. seeks a full-time Director of Music Ministries. Responsibilities include directing and developing choirs and expanding opportunities for traditional and contemporary music. Promote development of music for all ages and skill levels. Bachelor's degree in music required or an equivalent. Please send resume and attach recent photo to: asaph.hmumc@gmail.com

LSU Wesley Foundation

The Louisiana State University Wesley Foundation is seeking candidates for its full-time Campus Minister/Director. LSU is a Division 1 SEC University located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with a racially, culturally, and economically diverse student body of over 25,000. The Wesley Foundation, located adjacent to the campus, is the Louisiana Conference's outreach to LSU students, faculty, staff, and surrounding neighborhoods. We anticipate a starting date coinciding with the beginning of the 2011-2012 Conference year.

The Board of Directors prefers candidates who are Ordained Elders in the United Methodist Church. Qualified Ordained Deacons, local pastors and lay persons with experience in ministry with college students/young adults may also be considered.

The Wesley Foundation's strengths include a recently renovated building which is owned outright, an established residential program, a strong, dedicated Student Leadership Team, and a great opportunity for growth. We are looking for a director who can guide the Student Leadership in expanding the Foundation's ministry, and can work with the Board of Directors, area churches and alumni to establish a long-term funding strategy. Qualified candidates must have skills associated with developing, leading and equipping others for worship, spiritual formation, mission and social justice, and possess strong organizational and team management skills.

A detailed job description can be found at <https://sites.google.com/site/wesley-foundationatlsu/>. Interested applicants should send a resume and essay to LSUWesleyDirectorSearch@gmail.com. The essay should tell the story of your faith journey, what draws you to this particular ministry, and how you see campus ministry fitting into your own view of the Wesley Foundation mission: "Seeking out, inviting in, discipling and equipping a new generation of spiritual leaders for the world."

Lakeview UMC helps provide swim lessons for children

Members of the Lakeview United Methodist Church in Shreveport presented a \$1000 check to the Stewart-Warner Project Swim Fund of the Community Foundation on Dec. 9. After the tragic drowning of six Shreveport teens on August 2, 2010, members of the community set up the Stewart-Warner Fund, which bears the last names of the victims, to provide critical swimming lessons to area children. The Men's Club at Lakeview spearheaded the fundraising effort.

In order to raise the funds, members of the church helped the Men's Club sell tickets to a pancake breakfast held at the church, which is located in West Shreveport. The Brookshire's grocery store located on Pines Road donated supplies for the breakfast, Hilburn Printing provided free printing for tickets to the event, and Chef John Strand helped cook at the breakfast.

Shreveport Fire Chief Brian Crawford said of the effort, "It is this type of community-wide commitment and involvement that can and will make the difference in the lives of our children in Shreveport - particularly those who too often go without any extras, such as simply learning to swim."



Representatives from the church, the Men's Club and the Pine's Road Brookshire's presented the check to Community Foundation Executive Director Paula Hickman.

When asked about the event, Lakeview United Minister Rev. Dr. M. Theresa McConnell said, "Our church is a very mission-minded. The event brought members together, involved the community, and

gave us an opportunity to show the love of Christ. We hope others will creatively support the project through walk-a-thons, suppers, dances - whatever it takes to help save lives!

"For more information about the Stewart-Warner Project Swim Fund, visit www.nlacf.org"

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