Ministry in a Minute: Food Distribution with GoFresh

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Denman Award Winners Announced

The Oklahoma Conference has announced the 2020 winners of the Harry Denman Evangelism Award. Rev. Brian Matthews and Evelyn Phyffer have been selected as this year’s conference award recipients; Phyffer’s award is being given posthumously.

“Every time someone receives an honor, I believe it spurs others on in their own journey,” said Rev. Derrek Belase, director of connectional ministry. “To read or hear about someone else’s contributions, in this case in the area of evangelism, spurs others on in their journey with Christ.”

Matthews is the lead pastor of Ada-First. His nomination form describes his passion for teaching and preaching as well as his inviting spirit in attracting new visitors to church. He recently released “More than Miracles,” a collection of five sermon series he preached from 2014-2018 that can be used as a devotional guide.

“Brian’s contributions to evangelism have been evident in all the places he’s served, but especially in Ada,” Belase said. “His attention to young families, his development of sermon series, and his recent publication of daily devotions as they continue to follow Christ, is a no-brainer for the Denman award.”

Phyffer, a certified lay servant, was a member of OKC-Crown Heights from 2001-2016, when she moved out of state to be closer to her son. During her time at Crown Heights, Phyffer was heavily involved in Volunteers in Mission and the United Methodist Women. She organized VIM trips to Ghana, Liberia, Cuba, and Mexico, supported local ministries through item collection and donations, and had a way of encouraging everyone to be involved in service and discipleship. She passed away on July 11.

“Evelyn’s commitment to evangelism really came through racial reconciliation, engagement and mission all around the world, in addition to using her skills as a lawyer to live out her faith with various state agencies in Oklahoma,” Belase said. “She followed Christ with everything she did and invited other people on that journey with her.”

Learn more about the Harry Denman Evangelism Award at foundationforevangelism.org/harry-denman-evangelism-award.

NPNP Grants Delayed until February 2021

The grant cycle for New People New Places has...
To all of those who gave to Circle of Care during COVID-19, we thank you for your generosity and support. You provided a way to bring help, healing, and hope to children, families, and youth during incredibly uncertain times.

Learn more about the many ways you can support those in crises by visiting circleofcare.org/ways-to-give

THANK YOU!
Dealing with disaster fatigue

BY DR. RICK VANCE | UM MEN
JULY 28

Like you, I hoped we would be further along in the recovery from COVID-19 by this time. This morning’s report from the Centers for Disease Control, tells me that we are not.

This public-health disaster has deeply affected people around the world. For more than five months we have been trying to live in a reality that is characterized by constant change and uncertainty.

Research shows that early in a disaster cycle, people tend to pull together. There is a spirit of community and unity that draws people together.

Do you remember earlier this year, how people supported one another? People were getting to know their neighbors.

Eventually though, stress built up, optimism wavered, and discouragement and cynicism set in.

With this in mind, I believe it is time for us to look at the coping skills we are using to navigate this new reality. In an article published by UC Davis Health, writers discuss this current reality where people are saying; “… they don’t care if they get COVID-19. They’d rather risk getting sick than stay home or be careful. Others have simply stopped listening to health leaders and science.”

They suggest that we have the ability to help ourselves if we develop coping skills that include:

- Exercise: Even a simple walk will help
- Talking: Talk it out with a trusted friend
- Constructive thinking: Be compassionate with yourself and others
- Mindfulness and gratitude: Live in the moment and be thankful for the blessings God has given you.

We are living in unprecedented times. We are all susceptible to the stress that accompanies this type of disaster. It is important to remember that we must care for ourselves and care for those whom God has placed in our pathways.

Utilizing Wesleyan accountability groups such as the Class Meeting and being open to Christian conversations, we can begin to navigate the obstacles of COVID-19 fatigue.

Through it all remember John Wesley’s words; “The best of it all is, God is with us.”

If you need resources during this time, please let us know.

The Rev. Dr. Rick Vance, director of the Center for Men’s Ministries, General Commission on UM Men
rvance@gcumm.org
Lewis, Vivian proved faith can change a nation

BY KATHY L. GILBERT | UM NEWS

The Revs. John Lewis and Cordy Tindell “C.T.” Vivian were models of authentic religion who proved that people of faith can change a nation, said the Rev. James Lawson, a United Methodist pastor who worked side-by-side with both men in the early days of the civil rights movement.

Lewis and Vivian both died on July 17.

Lawson said the news stories that have followed — while mentioning the two men were clergy — leave out that important religious component and the true impact of both men’s lives.

“They don’t lift up John Lewis and C.T. Vivian as models of what authentic religion is about,” he said. “Authentic religion enables a country to view these issues without a spirit of revenge or hatred.”

Leaving that out “creates in me spiritual, moral grief and agony,” he said.

Congressman Lewis, an ordained Baptist preacher, died at the age of 80. Lewis represented Georgia’s 5th District, which comprises most of Atlanta. He had announced in December 2019 that he been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Vivian, who was 95, died of natural causes.

Vivian’s social justice work preceded that of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. He nonviolently and successfully protested segregated lunch counters in Peoria, Illinois, in 1947. He later became part of King’s executive staff at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Atlanta.

As Freedom Riders, Lawson, Lewis and Vivian were arrested and spent time in jails including the infamous Parchment Prison — The Mississippi State Penitentiary. “Parchment torture chamber is what I called it,” Lawson said.

In his training of pastors, Lawson said, “Gandhi was not our major teacher, Jesus was.”

Retired Bishop Woodie White said Vivian and Lewis and other disciples of King saw nonviolent resistance as a principle.

“They lived it out and never strayed from it, no matter how difficult the resistance was,” he said. “It was faith-based and that is why they were able to go the distance.”

The Rev. Gil Caldwell, a retired United Methodist pastor and veteran of the civil rights movement, wrote a commentary for the weekly newspaper in Asbury Park, New Jersey, reflecting on the passing of Lewis and Vivian and the death earlier this year of the Rev. Joseph Lowery.

“Rev. Joseph Lowery, Rev. C. T. Vivian, and Congressman John Lewis, were persons who gave
their blood, sweat and tears to dismantle and transform the racial inequalities of our nation. May their lives and deaths, motivate us to make of 2020 the year that a Reconstruction of America began,” he wrote.

The Rev. Jasmine R. Smothers, pastor of Atlanta First United Methodist Church, grew up in Atlanta. She said Lewis and Vivian “weren’t just people you read about in history books or saw on the news.”

“Regardless of what they were doing or where they were headed, they always stopped to remind us (especially the children) who we are, whose we are, and our responsibility to fight for equity and justice,” she wrote in a Facebook post.

She, too, remembered Lowery as one of the “giants.”

“Thank you, Lord, for allowing these giants to forge the way. Thank you for their impact on my life. Give us the strength to continue the work. There is no time to be weary.”

In his 1998 memoir “Walking with the Wind,” Lewis wrote of his hopes for the new generations of young activists.

“What I tell them is that the best way to help themselves is to help each other. To work for each other. To push for each other. To pull for each other. Yes, it’s a different setting, a different situation, a different world we live in today than the one in which I came of age. … It was easier for us to stand up and confront blatant segregation than it is for young people today to deal with the more insidious and subtly deep-seated dynamics of racism, or sexism, or greed and exclusion. But that doesn’t mean they can’t do it. In fact, I tell them, they must. They have a moral obligation and mandate and mission to do it.”

Taylor Hall, a 19-year-old United Methodist activist in Indianapolis, said she takes inspiration from Lewis who, like her, started his work for change as a young adult.

Lewis’ first of more than 40 arrests came when he joined in a lunch counter sit-in at Woolworth’s in Nashville, Tennessee in 1961. He was hit during the sit-in but never raised his hand in retaliation.

“What makes me want to start activism young is that I see how many people started at young age in the civil rights movement,” Hall said. “If they can go do it, I can go do it too. You don’t have to be 40 or 50 to take a leadership position.”

She is part of the new group Black Women in Charge that works for racial equality through peaceful demonstrations and meeting with Indianapolis leaders. Hall also has used her voice in another way, releasing the song “I Can’t Breathe.”

She sees Lewis and other civil rights leaders as exemplars of what people can accomplish through nonviolent protest.

“They can overcome that adversity with nonviolence,” she said. “They showed it works. And should be able to do that going forward to make a difference today.”

The Rev. Dawn M. Hand, Pittsburgh District superintendent in the Western Pennsylvania Conference, met Lewis years ago through Marian Wright Edelman, another legendary civil rights icon.

“Congressman Lewis exuded humility. I was struck when he asked about my work as a pastor. It was a holy time to be in the presence of those extraordinary faithful public servants,” she said.

Lewis modeled the life of Jesus, she added.

“The image of the brutal beatings on the Edmund Pettus Bridge is forever etched in my mind,” she said. “Congressman Lewis modeled for us how to turn tragedy into triumph. Living his life in such a way to affect monumental change in voting rights for Black people and justice for all people.”

Lewis ended his memoir by referencing Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.

“As a nation, if we care for the Beloved Community, we must move our feet, our hands, our hearts, our resources to build and not to tear down, to reconcile and not to divide, to love and not to hate, to heal and not to kill.”
CIRCLE OF CARE RELEASE

Circle of Care, founded in 1917, continues to serve children and families across Oklahoma. Over the past two years, Circle of Care has built 6 houses focused on providing safe and loving homes for sibling sets in foster care. The most recent two homes were completed and opened in Shawnee, OK this past spring.

As part of their ongoing Legacy of Care campaign to keep siblings together, Circle of Care is committed to building two additional homes and raising a total of $1.6 million for an ongoing endowment to provide future support and upkeep to the 8 homes originally planned for the campaign.

In the past few weeks, the Paul Milburn Gift Fund advisory board made the decision to donate $250,000 to Circle of Care as an endowment gift for the two homes in the Shawnee, OK area. In addition, they awarded Circle of Care a $25,000 matching grant. The challenge match must be met by June 2021 to access and utilize this additional grant.

"During Paul’s life he was passionate about giving children the means to succeed. From children fighting for their lives at the Children’s Hospital, providing tutoring and mentorship opportunities for high school and college students and supporting youth organizations after school programs. But providing a hand up rather than a hand out to those children growing up in the foster care system gave him the most joy”, stated Joe Carter, VP of Development at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation.

These resources will allow Circle of Care to create a true legacy of care for siblings across Oklahoma who find themselves in state custody due to no fault of their own. In addition to these specific homes, Circle of Care serves 170 foster families and 235+ children in foster care and is the 2nd largest private provider of foster care services in Oklahoma.

“This generous gift by the Paul Milburn Gift Fund held at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation will allow us to maintain and upkeep these homes for years to come. This investment in our mission will allow us to continue to support our foster families and the children in these homes at an extremely high level”, stated Keith Howard, CEO and President at Circle of Care. “The sibling bond should be the longest bond someone has over their lifetime and it is our heart to see siblings kept together or reunited through the homes and services we are able to provide.”

You can get more information about Circle of Care’s capital campaign at legacy.circleofcare.org.
Online worship makes evangelism less intimidating for many

BY DOUG POWE AND ANN A. MICHEL, LEWIS CENTER FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Anecdotal evidence suggests that worship attendance has increased rather significantly for many congregations that are now worshipping online in comparison to their previous in-person attendance. Many factors are likely contributing to this rise. But one may be the ease and comfort of “virtual evangelism.”

Many church members feel uncomfortable inviting friends to come to in-person church. Some may even feel uncomfortable divulging that they attend church at all. But using social media to share enthusiasm for a church’s online worship seems to be more intuitive and natural. And extending a virtual invitation is not only easy, it is also more comfortable. It probably doesn’t feel quite as “in your face” and it removes the immediate fear of rejection. For those who do not normally attend church, online church is more visible and present to them than what goes on behind closed doors on Sunday mornings. And they can explore faith without fear of ridicule or judgment and without the intimidating experience of walking into a room full of unfamiliar faces.

It is hard to draw firm conclusions based on what has been for many congregations a brief and novel sojourn into the realm of online church. But it appears that many find virtual evangelism easier and more spontaneous than face-to-face evangelism. Here are some ideas for encouraging virtual evangelism in your congregation.

Post sermons on social media

The simplest option is posting links to sermons or worship experiences to social media platforms. People can share the post and comment briefly about how the sermon impacted them or mention something that touched them in the worship experience. This simple act of posting has the potential to reach more people in an hour than face-to-face evangelism might reach in a year. And for many people, simply posting or sharing something isn’t nearly as scary as starting a conversation about God or the church.

Invite friends to worship online

Intentionally crafting an invitation on various social media platforms asking others to participate in a live stream or Sunday experience is a step up from just
posting on social media. A message as simple as “join me in participating in our livestream on Sunday at 10 a.m.” can suffice. This type of social media invitation reaches many more people than inviting one person at a time. And the invitation can be made without putting anyone on the spot or having to worry about how a particular person will react.

**Share what the congregation is doing**

Many congregations are learning that ministry is still possible even amid the restrictions of the pandemic. Sharing what your congregation is doing to transform lives and how others can safely participate can be another connection point. If your congregation needs volunteers to safely pack or hand out food during this crisis, this could be a low-barrier connection point for individuals who may otherwise have no clue how your church is serving the community.

**Host a watch party**

Inviting someone to view a livestream with you gets a step closer to a face-to-face invitation. The advantage of a watch party is that it allows you as host to walk through what is happening and to answer questions if your guest is unfamiliar with your church. And it allows your guest to experience worship in smaller, more personal setting. The disadvantage is that it poses the same risk of rejection as a face-to-face invitation. This may be a second step to take when you have learned that someone accepted your general invitation to participate online.

It may be that the apparent enthusiasm for sharing online church will subside once the novelty wears off or the crisis subsides. But we hope it doesn’t, because this easy, low-barrier way of sharing has the potential to accomplish more in a week than a year’s worth of “Bring-a-Friend Sundays.” And it requires considerably less investment and anxiety.

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**For more ideas from the Lewis Center for Church Leadership, visit www.churchleadership.com.**

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**Communications training expands to meet leader demand**

A midst heightened demand, the United Methodist Communications training team has launched a new set of online courses designed to assist those in leadership tasked with creating and maintaining engaging online worship experiences in a socially distanced world.

The agency confirms a surge in church leader training interest as churches seek to keep members safe due to COVID-19 pandemic concerns. Their course demand has increased this year with United Methodist Communications assisting double the usual registrants by the end of the second quarter of 2020.

Online courses have been standard United Methodist Communications offerings for a number of years. Through online learning, over 10,000 global church leaders were trained in various communication topics between 2017 and 2019. Last year alone, the agency trained more than 3,000 church leaders from around the world. When in-person gatherings halted due to coronavirus, the communications agency responded immediately with new and updated training courses to educate local church clergy and leadership on how to effectively utilize technology to engage their congregations in a remote, virtual setting.

This summer, four new courses have been released:

- **Communicating about Online Giving** - offers effective ways to communicate about giving to have fruitful ministries. This training shares the tools you need to show why we give and how to give to the ongoing work of the church through online platforms
- **Ministerio en los grupos de Facebook** - provides a Spanish translation option for those wishing to use Facebook groups in their ministry efforts
- **Leading Remote Worship** - helps leaders start, continue or improve their technology use to provide meaningful remote worship experiences
- **Recording Great Video** - shares how to use technology churches may already own and a few accessories to start recording video for their ministry

These learning opportunities are part of the agency’s continued dedication to educate church staff and leaders to excel in ministry using communications efforts.
You can change someone’s life by how you invest your time, energy, and resources. We can make it possible; call David Battles to start planning your invested legacy today.

**Embracing Special Needs**

Mustang UMC received a grant to continue their unique program, Embrace, which allows the church to work with families of individuals with special needs. Mustang UMC has been actively working with these families for years in order to provide them with a safe and loving environment in a faith community.

Embrace meets monthly for a special worship service that is designed especially for these families. They also offer unique opportunities like respite care, a Christmas Eve service, and are looking to add other events like a Special-Needs Easter Egg Hunt. The church community also understands that oftentimes in families with special needs individuals, there is additional stress and has decided that as part of this ministry they will provide family help such as counseling referrals.

Mustang UMC was seeking grant funding to go along with pledges and cash in hand donations, as well as a special offering, in order for them to help train their congregation and make purchases for worship supplies, such as sensory kits, specialty seating options, and funding for the family counseling referrals and respite programs.

**You can apply too!**

If your church or charity has programs like these that you are actively seeking to expand, or are looking to start, please contact us regarding a Petree Grant or go to our website (lastinngood.org/petree) to review the Guidelines for the Petree Grant. **The Fall Petree Grant application period is open and accepting applications through September 15th.**
Pastors with a badge advance police reforms

The Rev. Jeremy Wicks has served as a police chaplain, a reserve police officer and a Black Lives Matter organizer. He sees no contradiction in any of these roles.

“In my heart, I honestly believe and my experience tells me that everyone is working toward the same goal,” the Michigan pastor said. “We want communities to be safe. We want people to flourish.”

Wicks is among dozens of United Methodist clergy in the U.S. who have experience carrying a badge as police chaplains or as officers themselves. Many, like Wicks, are licensed local pastors.

These pastors provide pastoral care to people who confront crime and disaster, and who frequently interact with people on their worst days. They have prayed with police in distress and buried officers killed in the line of duty.

However, many chaplains and police also say reforms must happen for the safety of both officers and the communities they serve. These clergy want to help dismantle racism, and they see no conflict in declaring that both blue lives and Black lives matter.

The Rev. Dawn Houser, a police chaplain as well as pastor of the United Methodist church in Aitkin, Minnesota, puts it this way: Black Lives Matter “is not like pie where if you get some, then I get less.”

These pastors shared their advice at a time when tumult continues to rock much of the country following the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and other African Americans by police hands.

United Methodist leaders in Oregon have condemned violence by some protesters and police in Portland, where strife has escalated in recent weeks after the arrival of federal agents. The leaders, including Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky, urged that United Methodists not be distracted from anti-racism work.

Pastors who work closely with law enforcement echo that sentiment. These clergy with a badge deplore arson and destruction of property, but also defend the right to peaceful protest and urge city, state and national leaders to heed the cries for justice.

What needs to happen is “good trouble,” said the Rev. Jack Steiner, invoking the words of civil rights protestor, the late Rep. John Lewis. Steiner is a former police officer and now pastor of two United Methodist churches in the Louisville, Kentucky, area.

“Jesus — the one whom we praise and love and want to go see at the end of our lives — calls for us to be one people,” Steiner said. “There is no
Pastors with a badge, cont.

other way we can be.”

Wicks now leads Mosaic Church, a new United Methodist congregation he planted in Traverse City, Michigan. Before that, he was a police chaplain and reserve officer for years in Williamston, a town about a three-hour drive to the south.

“Everyone knows we have systemic racism we have to overcome in this country, and the conversation has gone on too long,” he said. “So we have to move from platitudes to action.”

The vast majority of police go into the profession with the aim of helping people. But in a country with a heavily armed public, policing in the U.S. is deadlier than in most of the world.

Police nationwide shoot and kill around 1,000 people each year, according to The Washington Post, which maintains a database of fatal shootings by on-duty officers. A disproportionate number of those killed are African American, Hispanic or Native American.

There’s no question police routinely put themselves in harm’s way. Houser, who grew up in a law enforcement family, said the crackle of Velcro fastening as someone puts on a uniform can still strike fear “because you know they are in danger every time they go out.”

The FBI reported that last year 89 U.S. law enforcement officers lost their lives on the job, either by criminal acts or by accidents such as car crashes. That’s only part of the story.

Far more police officers in the U.S. die of suicide each year than in the line of duty. B.L.U.E. Help, a nonprofit that tracks such deaths, reported that at least 228 officers died by suicide in 2019.

A big problem is police are required to do too much, said Houser and other United Methodists who work with law enforcement.

“Police are expected not only to make sure people abide by the laws, but they are expected to be a counselor; they are expected to be a mentor; they are expected to be an EMT,” Houser said. “They are not paid to do that, and they certainly aren’t trained for it.”

In her rural county in north central Minnesota, she said police had to respond to 24 attempted suicides last year. There are no mental health professionals available.

Law enforcement dread mental health calls. Often, it’s not clear what threat a person poses to themselves or others — and it’s even less clear how to de-escalate the situation.

The call to “Defund the Police” is scary, said Wicks, the organizer and former reserve officer in Michigan. But he said the Black Lives Matters activists he knows don’t want to abolish the police, but rather reallocate resources to such areas as mental health to ease police burdens.

The Dallas Police Department embarked on a reform last year that a number of United Methodists hope will help.

Under a pilot project, the department now dispatches a police officer, a paramedic and a social worker on mental-health calls. The social workers help the department triage calls and determine whether a person poses a danger or simply needs basic help.

The Rev. Doris Smith is a detective with 31 years of experience on the Dallas police force and pastor of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Paris, Texas. 2016 file Photo by Sam Hodges, UM News.

The Rev. Doris Smith is a detective with 31 years of experience on the Dallas police force and pastor of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Paris, Texas. 2016 file Photo by Sam Hodges, UM News.

The Rev. Doris Smith is a detective with 31 years of experience on the Dallas police force and pastor of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Paris, Texas.
Pastors with a badge, cont.
lost friends on the force when four Dallas police
officers and a transit officer were killed in a 2016
ambush.

She urges people to remember police just
want to return home safely too. But Smith, who
is African American, has been listening closely
to what young protesters say about inequality in
policing.

“People don’t trust the police,” she said. “To
rebuild trust, we have to be willing to meet in the
middle.”

Not every police force has the funding for a
project like that in Dallas.
The Rev. Shawn R. Moore, former police
officer in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, now
teaches police, and he thinks mandatory training in
de-escalation, cultural competency and anti-racism
are needed.

He suggests officers do an internship in the
neighborhoods they serve so they can get to know
the community leaders, nonprofits and other
groups in the area before they ever go out on a
call.

Moore, who is also associate pastor at Living
Spirit United Methodist Church in Minneapolis,
notes that police need to do reconciliation with
their communities. The first policing operations in
North America were slave patrols, and later police
officers brutally enforced states’ Jim Crow laws.

Overcoming that past, he said, requires
reconciliation.

“For true reconciliation to happen in our
communities, law enforcement has to apologize
for acts in its history,” Moore said. “The
community needs to forgive and then ask what
they can do.”

All the United Methodists who spoke to UM
News agree the church has a role to play in
reconciling police and the larger community.
The Rev. Ash Harmon is both a constable’s
deputy and pastor outside Dallas. In both roles, he
said, he aims to serve as a shepherd.

“I’ve learned that the person in the back of
squad car is someone’s son or daughter and one
of God’s children,” he said. “I always preach that
you’ll never look into the eyes of someone God
doesn’t love.”

When residents moved to Epworth Villa,
PROMISES
were made to them and their families.

And today, we’ve kept them.
Through the times—even the uncertain ones—Epworth Villa
residents and their families have always known one thing’s for certain:
We keep our promises. The promises of peace of mind, an invigorating
lifestyle, great food, a comfortable residence to come home to,
long-term care if ever needed. And an expert, compassionate team
always by their side. These are the promises we made
yesterday—the same ones we’ll continue to make—
and keep—today and tomorrow.
Oklahoma Conference student chosen for GBCS Ethnic Young Adult Internship Program

ViaFaith McCullough, a senior political science student at Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas and member of the Oklahoma Conference, has been selected as one of four interns for the Global Board of Church & Society’s Ethnic Young Adult Internship Program.

McCullough is an advocate of peace with justice from Oklahoma City. At school, she serves as the student chair of the Panther Pantry and Fresh Market, public relations coordinator of the Political Science Club and a member of the Social Justice Institute.

In 2018, McCullough served as an arts coordinator at Project Transformation, a reading literacy summer program tasked at increasing the literacy level of K-5th grades. From a young age, her roots in activism were cultivated by her family’s activism in the local Oklahoma City area. Her work in the community has inspired her passion for human rights and community advocacy.

During her EYA internship this summer, McCullough will work with RESULTS, an organization that moves to influence political decisions. While at RESULTS, her work will focus on organizing meetings and attending policy-based discussions. She hopes that through this internship God will continue to direct her in the right path.

McCullough is the daughter of Heartland District Superintendent Victor McCullough and Rev. Nancy McCullough. Read more about all the interns at www.umcjustice.org.

Church of the Resurrection offers annual Leadership Institute as online conference

The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas announced that registration is now open for Leadership Institute 2020, held online Sept. 24-25.

The online format will feature relevant and actionable leadership development content through a live-streamed event, plus on-demand bonus material spanning across all ministry areas.

Individual tickets are $49 through Sept. 1.

The conference features:

- 4 General Sessions on Thursday, 9/24 led by nationally known speakers uniquely positioned to address the extraordinary issues church leaders are facing in 2020 and beyond, including: Founder of Harvard’s Center for Public Leadership, Ron Heifetz; Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, The Most Reverend Michael Curry; and Senior Pastor of Church of the Resurrection, Adam Hamilton.
- 2 Breakout Sessions on Friday, with 6 topics to choose from at each session, followed by Live Q & A with the presenter(s). Sessions led by both Resurrection staff and guest presenters.
- A library of on-demand workshops covering a wide variety of ministry specific topics, all with tangible takeaways for church leaders to implement in their own setting.
- All the Live sessions and the on-demand workshop library will be available exclusively to Leadership Institute participants for 1 year.

The conference also features a variety of ways for participants to connect with each other, including chat rooms for focused discussions and the ability to set “meet-ups” with colleagues.

Details and registration can be found at li.cor.org. For questions, contact the ShareChurch Team at sharechurchconferences@cor.org or 913-232-4139.
Ministry in a Minute

In late June, Rev. Patricia Johnson, pastor of Wellston and Luther, oversaw the food distribution from GoFresh in Wellston with 15 volunteers from McLoud assisting. Johnson will lead another distribution effort on Aug. 15. Photo submitted by Rev. Tish Harris.
Save the Date

**GBHEM E-Panel Series | Aug. 12**
“Leading in Crisis: Keeping the mission alive”
Rev. Dr. Doug Powe of Wesley Theological Seminary and COB President Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey
www.gbhem.org/e-resources/gbhem-e-panel-series

**Local Church Historian’s School | Begins Sept. 14**
A free 12-week online course
By the General Commission on Archives and History
Visit gcah.org/resources/local-church-historian-school

**Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation:**
Postponed to October 2021

Employment

- Chief Financial Officer. Michigan Annual Conference, full-time. Bachelor’s degree with emphasis in Finance or Accounting required; master’s degree or CPA designation preferred. [Job description here](#). Email resume and cover letter to jobs@gcfa.org.
- Pianist. Guymon-Victory Memorial, full-time, paid position. Please contact choir director Sandy Cross at sandycjeanm@hotmail.com or by phone at 806-339-3044.

Appointments

- Ellen Chimowa, to Moore-New Life/senior pastor at Noble, effective Aug. 1.
- Levi Duggan from supply to senior pastor at Union City/Cogar, effective Aug. 1.
- Tino Espinosa, from Tulsa-St. Mark’s to the Florida Conference, effective Sept. 1.
- Frankye Johnson from senior pastor to associate pastor at OKC-The Christ Experience, effective July 1.
- Ralph Kevin McKinley from not appointed to Duncan-Wesley/Comanche-First, effective Aug. 1.
- Erica Thomas from associate at OKC-Quayle to associate at OKC-Quayle and Langston Wesley Foundation Campus Minister, effective Aug. 1.
- Mike Winchell, from senior pastor at Noble to associate effective Aug. 1.

Passages

Rev. Justus Edmondson passed away on June 27. He was a pastor in the Oklahoma Conference between 1952 and 1988. He also served as the president of the conference’s Board of Pensions for 10 years. A graveside service was held on July 10 Memorial Park Cemetery in Tulsa. Donations to Restore Hope Ministries in Tulsa were requested in lieu of flowers.

Louise McCrory, wife of long-time pastor Rev. Quitman McCrory, passed away on July 6, 2020. She died one day after her late husband’s funeral. A visitation service was held on July 8 at Moore Funeral Home in Tulsa.

Retired pastor Rev. Diana Cox Crawford died on July 17. She served five churches in the Oklahoma Conference between 1992 and 2013. A service was held on July 24 at Muskogee-St. Paul’s.

Rev. Don Horton died on Aug. 4; he was 91 years old. Horton served eight churches in the Oklahoma Conference between 1953 and 1997. He also served in the Pennsylvania Conference from 1955 to 1975. Services will be held on Aug. 8.

Share your event or job opportunity in the Contact.
For consideration, email your listing to editor@okumc.org. Deadline for the September issue is Aug. 20.