The Oklahoma Conference has announced the possibility of CCLI/CVLI licensing coverage being removed from the 2021 Annual Conference Budget.

Since 2016 the conference has covered the cost of the basic CCLI/CVLI licensing process for all local United Methodist Churches through blanket coverage funded through an apportionment. The Conference Communications Ministry oversees the copyright licensing of all our conference churches for the use of downloading music, reproducing song sheets, projecting lyrics on a screen and showing movies for worship services, daycare centers, and after school programs through two companies: Church Copyright License International (CCLI) and Church Video License International (CVLI). The CCLI/CVLI license allows the church to produce and play copyrighted music and video in local churches and related day care ministries (live streaming and Song Select require an additional license that the local church must purchase individually).

By having conference-wide coverage, our churches pay 33% less for coverage than if they were to obtain these licenses individually. Because the group rate provides such a significant discount, local churches are able to drop their individual coverages.

However, in recent years as apportionment payout has dropped, a number of churches are receiving the benefit of CCLI/CVLI coverage without paying the apportionment line item. The inequity created from this situation is no longer tenable.

A recommendation will be made to the 2021 budget of the conference to eliminate this line item in the apportionment allocations. If the budget is approved without this line item included, churches will need to have their own coverage starting January 1, 2021. This memo is to alert churches to this potential action so that they have time to plan for individual coverage before January 2021.

If you have questions, please direct them to Communications Specialist Tabitha Beckman (tbeckman@okumc.org) in the Communications Ministry office.
Below you will see the links to the CCLI/CVLI and One License (offers bundle pricing including live stream) web pages that will provide additional information on how to proceed in securing the licenses. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

- us.cvli.com/churches-camps-ministries
- us.ccli.com/about-ccli
- onelicense.net/options-and-prices

**Technology grants offered for rural and small membership churches**

At its quarterly meeting, the Commission on the Rural and Small Membership Church voted to give its entire budget of $8,000 to churches with fewer than 100 members that need to make technology upgrades or purchases to continue to offer worship as the pandemic continues.

Applications are open and grants will be awarded in September. A church can be eligible for $500 if they aren’t putting any money into the project, but if they are putting in some dollars, the grant can increase to $750. It’s a small offer, but hopefully helpful. The application is ready and available at [okumc-reg.brtapp.com/SmallChurchTechnologyGrantApplication](http://okumc-reg.brtapp.com/SmallChurchTechnologyGrantApplication).

This is the second time in as many years that the Commission has sent nearly all of its budget back to churches. In 2019, they gave grants to churches who came to our regional planning workshops and then envisioned new ministries from those events.

**Orders meeting on Sept. 22**

The Orders Meeting for clergy will be held on Sept. 22 via Zoom. Registration is required at [www.okumc.org/orders2020](http://www.okumc.org/orders2020).

Worship will be livestreamed at 11 a.m., and an afternoon breakout session will be held at 1 p.m. There will be a break for lunch in between. Zoom links for both worship and the breakout session will be sent through online registration closer to the date of the event.

Before the meeting, clergy are asked to watch “Feeling like you didn’t sign up for this, and other pastoral realities of 2020,” an online panel produced by the Global Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The panel was moderated by GBHEM’s Rev. Shannon Conklin-Miller and features Bishop Grant Hagiya of the California-Pacific Annual Conference and Bishop Ken Carter of the Florida Annual Conference. The bishops draw from personal experience, both mistakes and successes, to discuss a variety of topics, including:

- What congregants need to see from leaders during times of crisis
- How all clergy can support communities of color
- Why social justice and active anti-racism must be a part of any ministry
- How to be a non-anxious presence in an anxious world
- The importance of rest and self-care for effective leaders

The afternoon session will consist of small group breakout discussions. Participants for each group will be randomly selected, and there will be no designated facilitators. Instead, clergy are asked to prepare for the discussion time on their own by watching the panel. There will be no set end time for discussions. During the breakout discussions, clergy are encouraged to ask questions such as:

- How has/is your church bringing effective discipleship within the pandemic?
- What does it look like to disagree and discuss current issues within your congregation?
- How can you be the hands and feet of Christ while still being socially aware of others vulnerabilities?
- What does the church need to do in order to be present within your immediate community?
- How can your group be in prayer for you?

Participants may choose to ask additional or different questions during their discussion time. Once the group is finished with the discussion time, they can leave the breakout session by ending the Zoom call.

Clergy are asked to send any questions to Rev. Nancy Johnson at njohnson@okumc.org or to call 405-530-2007.

**$10,000 raised for elder’s funeral expenses**

The appeal to help with the final expenses for retired colleague, Rev. Barbara Brown, netted a total of $10,000. These funds came from individuals, churches, and a couple of special funds, including the Clergy Crisis Fund. Rev. Brown passed away without any insurance or money to have a proper burial. With the donations, the full costs of Rev. Brown’s services were covered, according to Terry Koehn, the Green Country District Superintendent. We are humbled and grateful for the response to this appeal.
OK Camps hosts Family Camps

When large gatherings were banned due to the COVID-19 pandemic, OK Camps looked for new ways to reach families with spirit-filled activities in a natural setting. The solution: Family Camps.

Family Camps allowed families to spend a weekend at one of OK Camps’ three camp grounds during the month of July. Each family that registered stayed in their own cabin to help maintain a safe social distance from other campers, and meal times were staggered when safe distancing was not possible in the dining hall.

“It was great,” said Karla Darter, who attended Canyon Camp with the Brinson family. “My grandkids had a great experience for their first time to come to camp.”

“The time away from our home was invaluable for our family,” said Alan Herndon, who attended a family weekend at Canyon Camp with the Powers family. “It was a boost to our spiritual formation to have Worship each day led by Sam and others attending that weekend. The time to hike and have planned devotions dedicated to these times as a family really heightened our time experiencing God through nature.”

Donna Magruder hosted a Family Camp at Crosspoint the last weekend of July. She said it was interesting to have three generations of family there together. Debbie Hallum and her family attended the same weekend as Magruder.

“It was a very fun and relaxing weekend with family and close friends,” Hallum said.

Ashley Daugherty attended a weekend at Camp Egan with Andrea Shafer.

“Everyone was amazing, and we really enjoyed it,” Daugherty said. “We will be going back to Camp Egan even if family camps aren’t offered in the future.”

Learn more about OK Camps at okcamps.org. To book a fall retreat or family getaway, contact oklahomacamping@okumc.org.
DALLAS, TX – The Lilly Endowment-funded initiative at Perkins School of Theology, “Reboot: The Congregation as Youth Worker,” has selected 10 congregations for the program’s second phase of developing innovative congregational youth ministry.

The new Innovator Cohort includes:

- Agape Baptist Church – San Antonio, TX
- Christ’s Foundry UMC – Dallas, TX
- Faith UMC – Hot Springs, AR
- First Presbyterian Church – El Campo, TX
- Hope UMC – Tulsa, OK
- Lakewood UMC – Dallas, TX
- New Covenant Fellowship of Austin – Austin, TX
- Salem Institutional Baptist Church – Dallas, TX
- St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church – Houston, TX
- The Village UMC – DeSoto, TX

These 10 congregations were selected from the original 18 chosen from 62 applicants to participate in the Starter Cohort. During this initial phase, all 18 congregations completed a six-month discernment process exploring congregation-based youth ministry with a comprehensive project proposal.

“The proposals we received from the congregations selected for the Innovator Cohort embodied with excellence and creativity the core purpose of the Reboot grant, which is to equip and energize the congregation for their ministry with youth,” said Rev. Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison, Associate Dean for External Programs and co-director of the Reboot grant. These congregations will receive up to $12,000 in grant funding to support their proposed Reboot program that each will implement during this cohort phase. With the help of a youth ministry consultant, known as a Reboot coach, these congregations will lead the way toward programmatic innovation in congregational youth ministry.

Rev. Thomas Hoffman, who pastors Tulsa-Hope, said he and the church are blessed beyond belief. “Debbie Gant, our youth director, has been spearheading this and has done an amazing job right from the first,” Hoffman said. “With Reboot’s assistance, we are excited about what’s ahead for us as we envision a new direction in youth and family missional deployment around Tulsa.”

Five veteran youth workers were selected as Reboot coaches based on their professional experience working with churches of similar contexts (ecumenical, cultural, economic, social, and racial) and proficiency in developing innovative models in congregational ministry with youth:

- Stephen Bumgarner, Director of Youth Ministries, First UMC Waxahachie, TX
- Joel Eichler, Director of Student Ministries, First UMC, Prosper, TX
- Beth Johnson, Minister to Youth and Families, University Park UMC, Dallas, TX
- Shanterra McBride, Founder and Chief Consultant, Marvelous University, Dallas, TX
- Zach Schrick, Director of Youth Ministries, First UMC, Conway, AR

The coaching team will be led by Rev. Sam Halverson, Associate Director, Center for Congregational Excellence for the North Georgia Conference of the UMC. Rev. Halverson is also the author of One Body: Integrating Teenagers into the Life of Your Church, an integral resource used by the Reboot cohort.

The Innovator Cohort will embark on the implementation and iteration process for the next 18 months. Using their project proposals as a prototype, these congregations will design and develop a sustainable and innovative model for a congregational ministry with youth. Once these prototypes are tested and vetted for success in their own context, each congregation will adopt a church partner from their community to mentor.
The Oklahoma Conference has adopted an onboarding process for its leaders. New district superintendents and cabinet members underwent the process in August to help them better get to know their ministry contexts and those they would be working with.

“Whenever you have a new person, either as a pastor or as a DS, most people want to get to know them; it also gives the new pastor or DS an idea of issues that pop up,” said Chris Tiger, the director of congregational development and conference resources. “You can get a sense of the issues coming in, what are the best practices that were done in the past, what was helpful for them. Instead of having however many conversations, everyone gets to hear the same thing. It saves a lot of time, and it gives a head start to the work that you need to do together with your team.”

Tiger said the onboarding process is different from both the formal DS training, which he said was more informational, and the Passing the Baton seminar, which is to help welcome pastors to new appointments. The process helps leaders learn about important aspects and issues of their new appointment while offering staff or stakeholders the opportunity to get to know the new leadership.

The onboarding process used with OKUMC leaders was developed by Claire Bowen, a lay human resources professional in the Northern Georgia Conference. In 2016, the process was adopted for new bishops in the Southeastern Jurisdiction; this year is the first time a training for the onboarding process was held outside the jurisdiction.

Though at this time Tiger is the only person in the Oklahoma Conference trained to lead the onboarding process, he believes there’s a real possibility additional leaders will need to be trained to help bring the process to individual churches across the state.

“I think this is something that is gaining momentum across the UMC,” Tiger said. “I’m hopeful this can be another tool that can help with the transition process for leaders in our conference.”

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Clergy renewal retreat scheduled for October

The Oklahoma Conference will host a clergy renewal retreat at Canyon Camp on Oct. 15-16. The retreat invites clergy to “Come Away,” disconnect from the world, and connect with God.

Speakers include Rev. Rob Harris, Rev. Max Rudd and Rev. Susan Southall. The retreat will be hosted by Rev. Diana Pruitt, Rev. Nancy Johnson and Judy Horne, who will also provide music with Kevin Wilkerson. Spiritual directors will be available for prayer and personal guidance.

The retreat takes its theme from Mark 6:30-32 – “The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, ‘Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.’ For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.”

“(Clergy) are burning the candles on both ends and learning as they go,” said Johnson, the conference coordinator for leadership development. “We understand that not everyone will feel comfortable participating, but for those that do, we want to make this space available.”

Safety measures will be in place to protect both camp staff and retreat participants. Masks will be required, social distancing will be in place, rooms will be single occupancy unless occupied by spouses, and all guests are asked to bring their own bed linens, towels, and lawn chairs for sitting around the campfire. The campground will also require participants to sign a COVID-19 statement and have their temperature taken. Because internet is limited in the canyon, there will not be an option for remote participation.

The retreat will cost $50 per person or $70 per couple. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on Friday, Oct. 16. Registration and payment are due by Oct. 1. Register online at okumc-reg.brtapp.com/ClergyRenewalRetreat2020.

UMCOR COVID-19 grants help with homelessness and housing

BY CHRISTIE R. HOUSE | GLOBAL MINISTRIES

As part of the Oklahoma Conference, Restore Hope Ministries, founded in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1978, has expanded its services to fight evictions and keep more people in their homes during the pandemic.

The Rev. Jeff Jaynes, executive director of Restore Hope Ministries, says that even before the rise of COVID-19, Tulsa had one of the highest eviction rates in the U.S., an average of 1,200 per month.

“We are already seeing a flood of evictions,” he said, “and we are sand bagging as much as we possibly can. But we are hoping to build a ‘levee’ long-term to prevent homelessness for the whole community.”

Jaynes said Restore Hope Ministries is the only agency in the state that provides consistent rent assistance and does so with a 99% success rate. Individuals and families assisted by Restore Hope stay out of shelters and avoid homelessness.

Sometimes landlords come to Restore Hope Ministries for help. Recently, Terry Buckner contacted Jaynes to see if Restore Hope could help him prevent eviction of a tenant. The tenant, a veteran, was months behind on his rent. The tenant’s wife had died, and he was struggling.

Restore Hope Ministries provided rent assistance and connected the tenant to veteran service agencies that knew how to help him. He was overwhelmed when he learned his rent had been paid.

“We are thankful to UMCOR and the church,” Jaynes explained. “the best things that we do as the UMC are when we can come together, help people in need and reflect the kingdom of God to the community. We’re thankful for partnership.”

Learn more at umcmission.org.

Learn more at umcmission.org.
CJAMM to highlight work, trailblazers with virtual showcase and auction

Due to COVID-19, Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries will host a virtual CJAMM Showcase as an alternative to its Annual Silent Auction Benefit. The virtual fundraiser will celebrate success stories, spotlight the ministry’s team and volunteers, and recognize trailblazers in criminal justice ministry.

CJAMM Showcase will premiere on YouTube on Oct. 6 at 7 p.m. In addition to success stories from the Exodus Houses and New Day Camp, the showcase will also include presentations of the Stan Basler Award, Volunteer of the Year, and a life sketch from Francie Ekwerekwu, a public defender with a special personal connection to incarceration.

CJAMM is selling virtual tables and tickets for the event. Individual tickets are $50 each; table sponsorships start at $500, and additional sponsorships are available. A “movie box” complete with movie candy, popcorn and other goodies will be mailed to each ticket holder. Reservation deadline is Sept. 21.

CJAMM will also host an online auction at 32auctions.com/CJAMMauction2020. More than 60 items will be available to bid on, including gift cards, gift baskets, autographed memorabilia, die cast cars and original artwork. Bids will close on Oct. 9 at 5 p.m.

To be a sponsor or purchase a seat, visit cjamm.org/showcase. For details, contact the CJAMM office at office@cjamm.org or call 405-525-3522.

GCORR launches 30 days of anti-racism

The General Commission on Religion and Race is hosting 30 Days of Anti-Racism in September. The campaign encourages participants to engage in an activity every day that helps them become more anti-racist in thought and action.

During the campaign, participants are asked to engage in anti-racist activities and share photos of their progress on social media using #30DaysOfAntiRacism. Activities include participating in intercultural conversations, learning about local elections, supporting a black-owned business, learning about Hispanic Heritage Month, and examining implicit biases. Participants are also encouraged to ask their friends, family, churches and community partners join the campaign.

The project was inspired by Morgan Stafford, a campus minister in Tennessee, who spent the month of June doing at least one thing every day to listen, learn and do, and he tracked his progress on social media. After hearing Stafford’s story, GCORR adapted those efforts into a denominational campaign.

Download the full calendar of activities and find more information at gcorr.org/30-days-of-anti-racism.
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Smart—with a POD gift, your accounts will pass directly to the organization without going through an expensive and lengthy probate process. Accordingly, POD gifts are a smart way to make a charitable gift to further their mission.

You can change someone’s life. If you have questions or would like to learn more about POD beneficiary gifts, call David Battles to start planning your invested legacy today.

DBATTLES@OKUMF.ORG | 800-259-6863 | LASTINGGOOD.ORG
The Oklahoma Conference has joined with Crisis Care Ministries and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oklahoma to present a new webinar series.

“Caring for Your Congregation and Community During Crisis,” a new web series for ministry leaders, will address various issues facing ministry leaders in today’s political climate. Attendance certificates for continuing education credits are available for each course, but pre-registration for the course is required.

“Faith and community leaders are facing historic challenges, testing the limits of our creativity, strength, and resilience,” the website states. “In this webinar series, experienced specialists in disaster response, recovery, health, mental health, and congregational & family life offer their expertise to help leaders gain new skills and knowledge to face the difficult crises impacting our communities.”

Representatives from the following organizations are scheduled to present:
- Catholic Charities (Archdiocese of Oklahoma City)
- Crisis Care Ministries
- Heart and Mind Pastoral Counseling
- Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma
- St. Luke’s United Methodist Church
- Temple B’Nai Israel (Oklahoma City)
- The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oklahoma
- The National VOAD Emotional and Spiritual Care Committee
- The Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church
- The Oklahoma Department of Health
- The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- The Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corps Stress Response Team/SRT inc.
- The Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security
- Southern Baptist Disaster Relief

For more information contact crisiscareministries@gmail.com.
See topics at www.crisiscareministries.net.
Register online at okumc-reg.brtapp.com/CaringforYourCongregationandCommunityDuringCrisis.
COUNCIL OF BISHOPS NEWS

Bishop John Yambasu, the late resident bishop of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference, will be laid to rest on Sept. 6 after a series of services that will celebrate his life.

Bishop Yambasu died in a road accident on Aug. 16 on his way to attend a funeral of one of the pastors in the conference.

Among the speakers at the funeral will be Bishop Benjamin Boni of Côte d’Ivoire, who will bring greetings as president of the West Africa Central Conference College of Bishops. The Council of Bishops will designate a person to preach during the service. Because of the restrictions due to COVID-19, travel to the region is very difficult. The service will be livestreamed. A link will be provided later.

Bishop Yambasu was elected a bishop of The United Methodist Church in 2008 and installed in 2009. He served the Sierra Leone Area until his death. He was also the newly elected Chancellor of Africa University.

Yambasu was instrumental in bringing together a diverse group of representatives from United Methodist advocacy groups with contrasting views, and bishops from around the world, to collaborate on a proposed agreement for the separation of The United Methodist Church.

The agreement, the Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation, was achieved on December 17, 2019, and announced early this year. It will be considered at the next General Conference of the church, set for 2021.

Bishop Yambasu is survived by his wife, Millicent, and their five children — Rebecca, Adima, John, Emmanuel and Elizabeth. 

Click here to read the full story

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Save the Date

**Rural Life Sunday | Sept. 13**
Theme: The Gifts of the Rural and Small Membership Church
Learn more and find resources at [www.okumc.org/rural2020](http://www.okumc.org/rural2020)

**Restore Hope Ministries 14th Annual Golf Tournament**
Sept. 14 | Forest Ridge Golf Club in Broken Arrow
$680 for a foursome, $170 for a single | Sponsorships still available
No contact check-in requires online or mail-in registration
[www.restorehope.org/special-events/golf-tournament](http://www.restorehope.org/special-events/golf-tournament)

**Caring for Your Congregation and Community During Crisis | Weekly Sept. 29 - Dec. 8**
Sponsored by Crisis Care Ministries, the Oklahoma Conference, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Oklahoma
Topics: [www.crisisministries.net/caring-for-your-congregation-commun](http://www.crisisministries.net/caring-for-your-congregation-commun)
Register: [okumc-reg.brtapp.com/CaringforYourCongregationAndCommunityDuringCrisis](http://okumc-reg.brtapp.com/CaringforYourCongregationAndCommunityDuringCrisis)

**OKUMC COSROW Scholarship Applications Open | Due Sept. 30**
For women enrolled in seminary or Course of Study and to undergraduates pursuing a career in ministry
[Download the application here](#)

**CJAMM Showcase and Auction | Oct. 2**
Showcase premiere on YouTube at 7 p.m. | Movie boxes mailed to ticket holders
Individual tickets are $50 | Table sponsorships start at $500 | Reservation deadline is Sept. 21
Auction available at [32auctions.com/CIAMM auction2020](http://32auctions.com/CIAMM auction2020) | Final bids due by 5 p.m. on Oct. 9
Learn more or register online at [cjamm.org/showcase](http://cjamm.org/showcase)

**Clergy Renewal Retreat**
Oct. 15-16 | Canyon Camp
$50 per person | $70 per couple | Friday breakfast and lunch provided
All rooms single occupancy unless shared with a spouse
COVID-19 safety measures include mask requirements

**Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation | Postponed until October 2021**
A five-day experience of community living in the monastic tradition
Oct. 24-29, 2021 | Canyon Camp
Cabin: $480; Lodge, double: $525
Contact Kathy Leithner (katleit2@aol.com), Marilyn (marily@hugon.com), or Megan DeCastro (mdecastro@okumc.org or 405-530-2000)
Employment

- Minister of Students, OKC-Chapel Hill, part-time. Email resume and cover letter to Minister of Families Amanda Walz at Amanda@mychapelhill.org.
- Childrens Director, Tulsa First. Full-time. Job description here. Contact jeremyfulda@fumctulsa.org.
- Director of Student Ministries, OKC-New Hope, part-time. Please email resume and cover letter to Pastor J.D. Ward at pastor@newhopeokc.org.
- President/Dean, Gammon Theological Seminary. Atlanta, Georgia; full-time. Requirements and job description at gammon-itc.org/job-opportunities.html. Deadline to apply is Sept. 15.
- Youth Director, St. Luke’s Gethsemane Campus (Texas Annual Conference). Houston, Texas; full-time. Send cover letter and resume to youthsearch@stlukesmethodist.org.
- Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer/Director of Administration. Florida Annual Conference, full-time. Job description here. Deadline to apply is Oct. 2. Email resume and cover letter to jobs@gcfa.org.

Passages

Rev. Barbara Brown passed away on July 23. The retired elder served six churches in the Oklahoma Conference between 1991 and 2012, including Franklin, Tulsa-Christ, Hugo-Paul’s Chapel, Moore-First, Muskogee-Honor Heights and Muskogee-Spencer. Services are pending.

Martha Carson Hardt passed in Dallas on Aug. 22. She was 99 years old. Martha was the surviving spouse of Bishop John Wesley Hardt, who led the Oklahoma Conference between 1980 and 1988. Memorial services for Marta are pending.

Rev. Mike Smith, who was serving as the pastor of Muskogee-First, passed away on Sept. 2. He was 61 years old. Previous congregations include Hardesty, Mooreland and Ponca City-First. A memorial service will be held on Sept. 5 at Muskogee-First. Thoughts and memories to the family may be sent through the Cornerstone Funeral Home in Muskogee.

Appointments

- Donald Baker, from Otterbein to not appointed, effective Aug. 1.
- Jeremy Basset, from OKC-Wesley/Conference Director of Missions to Conference Director of Missions, effective Aug. 3.
- Bessie Hamilton, from associate at OKC-Quayle to associate at OKC-Quayle/Coordinator of Multiethnic Initiatives, effective Aug. 1.
- Shannon Stewart-Dooley, from pastor at Moore-New Life to associate at Norman-Goodrich, effective Sept. 1.

Share your event or job opportunity in the Contact.

For consideration, email your listing to editor@okumc.org. Deadline for the October issue is September 17.