News from Annual Conference

- Full list of clergy appointments, PAGES 2-4
- Story and more photos, PAGES 10-11

NEWLY ORDAINED — From left, with Bishop Jimmy Nunn (center) are new Oklahoma Conference elders Shyloe Hailey O’Neal, Desiree L. Sharp, Adam W. Shahan, Andrew L. Nelms, and Nathan Aquilla Mills; and Board of Ordained Ministry Chairperson Linda Harker.

PROVISIONAL ELDERS — 14 clergy members were commissioned as elders at the 2017 Oklahoma Annual Conference. From left are: (front) Michael Alan Carpenter, Christopher “Craig” Clark, Bishop Jimmy Nunn, Raymond E. Witzel III, Victoria Lee Shiuan Hie, Benjamin Johnson Pascoe; (middle row) Jeffrey Michael Hinton, Jeffrey C. Rickman, Emily Loren Robnett, Kaela Elizabeth Patterson Burdge, Jay A. Henderson, BOM Chairperson Linda Harker; (back) David L. Gordon II, Jinx Michael Barber, Stephen Cagle, and Dylan Pierce Ward.

President of OCU to retire

Oklahoma City University President Robert Henry will retire, effective June 30, 2018. He plans to focus on several writing and legal projects during a one-year sabbatical, after which he plans to return to the university to teach law and other subjects. Official announcement of his decision was made June 8.

“When I accepted the position of president, I committed to a five-year appointment,” Henry said. “I have tremendously enjoyed my time in this role, and after eight successful years, now is the right time to retire.”

Bishop Jimmy Nunn expressed gratitude to Henry for the work he has done at the United Methodist-related university. Among many accomplishments under Henry’s leadership, Nunn said, is “the fact that last year OCU finished in the black” financially.

“Personally I extend gratitude to President Henry for his warm welcome of me, the hospitality that he’s extended, and his eagerness to partner with the Oklahoma Annual Conference in constructive ways,” the bishop said.

Henry took the helm at OCU in July 2010. During his tenure, the university moved its School of Law downtown, introduced academic programs including a Physician Assistant program, and brought nationally renowned speakers to campus, including two Supreme Court justices.

He formerly served as a chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit and an Oklahoma legislator and attorney general.

The chairperson of OCU’s Board of Trustees, Ron Norick, said Henry’s careful stewardship placed the institution on sound financial footing and positioned the university for growth and continued success.

Special insert

Mission u

- Studies for all ages
- July 21-24
Oklahoma Conference
2017-18 Appointments

CIMARRON DISTRICT
Superintendent Charlie Graves

Glenpool-Living Water.................................Heather Scherer
Haskell/Porter........................................Paul Vickery
Jenks..................................................Russel Worrell
Kellyville..............................................Greg Boyd
Leonard..................................................Kenneth Smith
Mannford..............................................David Rowley
Oologah..................................................Jennifer Long
Owasso..............................................Chuck Horton
Associate.............................................James Cinocca
Associate.............................................Lora Stiles
Associate............................................Sarah Thorthmon
Sand Springs........................................Donald Tabberer
Sapulpa................................................Allen Schneider
Skiatook...............................................Susan Whiteley
Tulsa......................................................Lisa Hines
Verdigris................................................Robert Johns

GREATER TULSA AREA:
Tulsa-Aldersgate.................................Becky Pierson
Tulsa-Ashbury.................................Tom Harrison Jr.
Associate..............................................Jay Henderson
Associate..............................................Richard Read
Associate..............................................Guy Ames III
Associate..............................................Gloria McGee-Denton
Associate..............................................Todd Miller Craig
Associate..............................................Charles Ryser Jr.
Associate..............................................James Lenderman
Associate..............................................Jon Odom
Tulsa-Boston Avenue...............................David Wiggs
Associate..............................................Amy Venable
Associate..............................................Eva Marie Campbell
Associate..............................................Sara Pugh-Montgomery
Tulsa-Centenary.................................Keith Mcrort
Tulsa-Christ ........................................Bob Feist
Associate..............................................James Stillwell Jr.
Associate..............................................Wayne Hayes
Tulsa-Faith..............................................Charla Gwartyne
Associate..............................................Erma Pregler
Associate..............................................James Lambert
Associate..............................................Jessica Moffatt
Associate..............................................Matt Morgan
Associate..............................................Connie Cole Jeske
Associate..............................................Harold Hamilton
Associate..............................................Aaron Tiger
Tulsa-Grace/West Tulsa..........................William Welch II
Tulsa-Korean..........................................Tae Won Son
Tulsa-Lake..............................................Roy Betz
Tulsa-Memorial Drive.............................Temple Diehl
Tulsa-New Haven ..................James Graham III
Tulsa-Nueva Esperanza .........................Daniel Llanos-Jimenez
Tulsa-St James.........................................Gary Harber
Associate..............................................Jose Araujo
Tulsa-St. Luke’s Redemption II..............TBS
Tulsa-St. Mark’s.................................Barry Hayes
Associate..............................................Frank Slager
Associate..............................................Rosangela Sager
Tulsa-St. Matthew’s...............................Thomas Hofmann
Tulsa-St. Paul’s.................................Bill Crowell
Tulsa-Sheridan Avenue............................Mark Mann
Tulsa-Southern Hills.........................Tom McElroy
Tulsa-University......................................Nathan Mattix
Tulsa-University.................................Ann Mattix
Tulsa-Williams.................................TBS
Tulsa-Williams........................................Brian Mangan

EXTENSION MINISTRIES

Smyrna/Wingate UMC, Western North Carolina
Conference........................................Tracy Schumpert
Tulsa-Centenary community engagement coordinator
Deaconess........................................Melanie Dewey
Tulsa-St. Paul’s community outreach,
Deaconess..........................................Sandra Wilson Wickberg
Upper Room, Discipleship Ministries.........Thomas Albin
Wesley Foundation, TU, campus director ....Ron Gentry

CROSSROADS DISTRICT
Superintendent Rockford Johnson

Changes in active personnel since May 1
and parish changes are in boldface type.

EXTENSION MINISTRIES

SWOSU Wesley Foundation.............Velma Carriaga

GREATER OKLAHOMA CITY AREA:
OKC-Chapel Hill.................................Mark Jardine
Associate..............................................Jennifer Ahrens-Sims
Associate..............................................Christina Germany
Diocesan.............................................Suzann Wade
OKC-Church of the Servant .............Matthew Mitchell
Associate..............................................Randy Shrauner
Associate..............................................Tim Travers
Associate..............................................Robby Goggs
Associate..............................................Tracy Ivy
Associate..............................................Greg Tolle
Associate..............................................Kristi Swink
Associate..............................................Greg Hunt
Associate..............................................Michael Burkett
Associate..............................................Charlotte Teel

COUNCIL OAK DISTRICT
Superintendent Cindy Hlavik

Avant.................................Michelle Daignle
Bixby.................................Daniel Pulver
Associate.................................Matt Thompson
Bristow.................................Kathrine Hill
Broken Arrow-Abiding Grace............Chris Buskirk
Broken Arrow-First..........................Larry Varvel
TBS
Associate.............................................TBS
Broken Arrow-Heritage......................Scott Rodgers
Broken Arrow-St. Stephen’s..........................Kirt Moelling
Collinsville-Meadowcreek..................Mark Whiteley
Coweta............................................John Miller
Depew.............................................Kip Wright

EXTENSION MINISTRIES

Oklahoma Methodist Manor, Exec. Dir. ....Steve Dickie
Oklahoma Methodist Manor, Chaplain ....Dub Ambrose
Restore Hope Ministries, Exec. Dir. ....Jeffy Janes
Restore Hope Ministries, Chaplain........Peter White
GREEN COUNTRY DISTRICT
Superintendent Emery Mason

Adair/Foil.............................................Dylan Ward
Bartlesville-East Cross.........................Jeffrey Burress
Bartlesville-First.................................Kevin Tully
Bartlesville-Oak Park.............................Tari Carbaugh
Beggs/Mounds.......................................Richard Brasher
Bethel..................................................Richard Ryan
Big Cabin.............................................Scott Worley
Briggs/Woodall.......................................Marty Hern
Checotah............................................Jim Jones
Chelsea-Epworth.................................Tasha Holopeter
Chelsea-Memorial.................................David Sanders
Chouteau............................................Connie Taylor
Claremore-First....................................Ray Crawford
Claremore-Oak Park..............................Stephen Cagle
Associate...........................................Jamie Willis

EXTENSION MINISTRIES
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Morgantown, WV.................................Lisa Crone
Camp & Retreat Ministries, Director..........Ed Parker
Church World Service, Director of Development..............................Rebekah Wallace Belase
Assistant to the Bishop/Director of Communications Ministry........Joseph Harris
Conncetional Ministries, Director...............Craig Stinson
Discipleship, Director..............................Derrek Belase
KBC Missionary, Chaplain........................Jessica Higgins
GBGM Missionary, Associate Director of Leadership & Innovation........Carlos Ramirez
Saint Paul at OCU, Director of Missions........Elaine Robinson
Mercy Health Center, Pastoral Care Department......................Beverly Powell
OCU, Director of Religious Life...............Elizabeth Horton-Ware
OCU, Vice President of University-Church Relations/Dean of Chapel..................Charles Nef
Office of Mission, Director......................Jeremy Basset
Oklahoma Conference of Churches, Director of Emotional & Spiritual Care........Mary Hughes Gaudreau
Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation, Director of Conference & Church Relations........Darrell Cates
United Church of Religious Science (OKC) Administrative assistant, Deaconess.........Elaine Parent
Associate Director of VIM, Coordinator of Disaster Response.........Richard Norman

Prairie Center........................................John Chappell

HEARTLAND DISTRICT
Superintendent Greg Tener

Alex ..................................................Ashley Green-Young
Blanchard...........................................David Johnson
Associate...........................................Greg Ray
Chickasha-Epworth...............................Scott Keneda
Elmore City........................................Caroline Lovett
Lexington/Washington..........................David Cook
Lindsays.............................................Jacqueline Banks
Mayesville..........................................Mike Devine
Moffa/McIntosh....................................Diana Pruitt
Moore-First........................................Dan Wayman
Moore-Goodrich..................................Desi Sharp
Moore-New Life...................................Kathy Brown
Norman..............................................Donna Dodson
Oklahoma CIty........................................LaMarra Cook
Norman Bridgeview..............................Sue Lykins
Norman-Goodrich.................................Desi Sharp
Norman-McFarlin..................................Linde Harker
Norman-Pleasant.................................Devin Krause
Norman-St. Stephen’s..................Jennifer Himes

EXTRA DISTRICTS

LAKE COUNTRY DISTRICT
Superintendent Larry Bauman

Aka-Asbury.............................................Travis Muse
Ad-Arb.................................................Brian Matthews
Allen..................................................Bob Langston
Antlers..................................................David Mingus
Armore-Asbury.................................Randall Richards
Armore-First..........................David Daniel

LaMarra Cook

EXTRA DISTRICTS

LAKE COUNTRY DISTRICT
Superintendent Larry Bauman

Aka-Asbury.............................................Travis Muse
Ad-Arb.................................................Brian Matthews
Allen..................................................Bob Langston
Antlers..................................................David Mingus
Armore-Asbury.................................Randall Richards
Armore-First..........................David Daniel
NORTHERN PRAIRIE DISTRICT
Superintendent Tish Malloy

WICHITAS DISTRICT
Superintendent Connie Gibson

Billings ........................................................... Ruth Tips
Blackburn/Maramec ...................................... Jeffrey Kuhn
Blackwell ..................................................... Richard "Cap" McNary
Braman ....................................................... Travis Harris
Canton ......................................................... Daniel Hammons
Cleveland .................................................... TBS
Cushing ....................................................... Kathryn Neithner
Drumright .................................................... Charles Durant
Eaton .............................................................. John Curtis
Enid/Southwest/Enid-Peach Korean ..................... Kwon Kim
Enid-Christ .................................................... John Michael Robnett
Enid-First ..................................................... Randy Mitchell
Enid-Willow .................................................. Mark McCaw
Fairfax .......................................................... Lindee Denon
Finley ............................................................ Michelle McGuire
Jet/Prairie Valley ........................................... Kaela Burdge
Kaw City .................................................... Sheilla Combs-Francis
Kremlin .......................................................... Dale Lenmons
Lamont .......................................................... James Riggs
Lost Creek ..................................................... Max Rudder
Loyal ............................................................. Debbie Biehler
Lumkin .......................................................... Tina Cooper
Marland .......................................................... TBS
Medford ........................................................ Russell Tennant
Morrison/Yale ............................................... Richard Ayers
Mulhall/Orlando .......................................... Adrian Pollar
Nardin .......................................................... Steve Davis
Newkirk ........................................................ Susan Rice
Okeene .......................................................... Patricia Johnson
Pawhuska ..................................................... Brett Thomasson
Pawnee-First/Stede ......................................... Pam Cottrill
Ponca .............................................................. TBS
Ponca City-Albright/Ponca City-Ashbury .......... April Coates
Ponca City-First ............................................. Michael Smith
Ponca City-Old ............................................... John Smith
Ponca City-South ............................................ Steve Ritter
Pond Creek ................................................... Brian Hagen Jackson
Ringwood ..................................................... Rocky Remp
Shidler/Foraker/Grainola ................................... Paula Tucker
Stillwater-First ............................................. Michael Chaffin
Stillwater ..................................................... Ryan Cline
Stillwater-Highland Park .................................. Valerie Steele
Topekow/Prairie Chapel ...................................... TBS
Wakita/Manchester .......................................... Lisa Anderson
Waukomis/Drummond ...................................... Kris Mayberry

EXTENSION MINISTRIES
The Commons, Dir. of Pastoral Care/Chaplain... Gail Edmison
Turtle Rock Farm and Common Wealth Urban Farms, ... Richard "Cap" McNary
spiritual director, Deaconess ................................ Pat Hoerth
GSMB Missionary, Liaison to Palestine and Israel .... Kristen Brown
State University, Stillwater, Campus Minister .......... Michael Bartley
Stillwater Drug Court, Licensed Prof. Councilor .... Dale Lenmons

U.S. Air Force, Chaplain .................................. Sam Tucker
Mountain View (Tenn.) VA Medical Center, ......... Kristen Melton
Chaplain ............................................................... TBS

Wichita State University, chaplain ..................... Allie Foster

EXTENSION MINISTRIES
Cameron University, Wesley Foundation, Director, Lawton. ... Cydii Tillery
Web Ministry/Graphic Design: Alicia Galyon
Video Production: Nyla Wallin, Andrew Himes

Director of Communications: Joseph Harris
Editor: Holly McCoy / The DVD Library: Chris Schutz

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Moving to a new address?
Call 405-530-2075 or send an email to communications@okumc.org.

Sign up for Contact Digest, a free e-newsletter, at www.okumc.org.

Send news to editor@okumc.org.

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A UNIQUE PEDAGOGY

There are many avenues through which you will not want to miss out on learning about the world. You are especially invited to participate in this unique learning experience at Oklahoma City University, then you can go away equipped to change the world. Each year, untold numbers of people are impacted by this historic educational opportunity.

This year we will focus on our relationship with global ministries as well as deafnesses and home missionaries. Many special guests will be a part of our program, meaning you will not want to miss out on any of the excitement. If you have been saying for years that you were going to participate in Mission u, this is your year! Now is the time to get registered. See you in OKC very soon.

LEARNING TOGETHER FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD

By now, you are probably familiar with the mission statement of The United Methodist Church. Our church is to be about disciple-making for world transformation. How do we do that? There are many avenues through which this happens. One of those avenues is to be educated about the ever-changing nature of the world in which we live.

The task of Mission u is “learning together for the transformation of the world.” You are especially invited to participate in this unique learning experience at Oklahoma City University, then you can go away equipped to change the world. Each year, untold numbers of people are impacted by this historic educational opportunity.

This year we will focus on our relationship with global ministries as well as deafnesses and home missionaries. Many special guests will be a part of our program, meaning you will not want to miss out on any of the excitement. If you have been saying for years that you were going to participate in Mission u, this is your year! Now is the time to get registered. See you in OKC very soon.

A UNIQUE PEDAGOGY

The spiritual growth study focuses on the interaction of one’s interior spiritual life and the world in which we live. The geographic study highlights a particular country, exploring the faith, culture, and mission connections in the featured location. The special interest study focuses on areas of interest to those in the church. While a new spiritual growth study is offered every year, the geographic and special interest studies rotate every two years.

This year’s spiritual growth study examines major covenants throughout the Bible and what they reveal about God’s character and eternal love for us. It will enhance your understanding of how God works with us, in us, and through us. This year’s geographic study gives an overview of the three missionary conferences in The United Methodist Church, the contexts out of which they grew, and their current engagements: The Alaska United Methodist Conference, Red Bird Missionary Conference, and the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. For its final year, climate justice is the special interest study.

Study leaders, selected for their expertise in particular areas, are intentionally not called teachers at Mission u. They facilitate learning among participants using a variety of methods including small group discussions, reports, journaling, and intimate worship services by focusing on a common text produced by United Methodist Women.

128-YEAR HISTORY

In 2009, UMW executive secretary Harriet Jane Olson reflected on the history of the mission education program exemplified by Mission u today. Those involved with the humble beginnings could not have imagined the thousands who will participate this year.

The foundation was laid at the 1888 London Missionary Conference with the establishment of the World’s Missionary Committee. At a meeting in 1900, a committee was formed to provide “reliable information about mission.”

What would be included? Quite simply a history of mission and contextual study about mission with women and girls, with the focus being what was happening “on the ground.”

While the format has changed throughout the years, engaging the cutting edge of current events has been a hallmark of the mission education program since its inception.

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD

Oklahoma Conference global mission secretary Karen Distefano attended Mission u for the first time in 2015. When asked about how she made connections between her global mission focus with what happens at Mission u, she was quick to respond that mission is doing things “with” and not “for” people.

How does that happen? Distefano added that it happens in “a way that brings justice, dignity, and empowerment. For mission ventures to be successful, we must be educated about the issues confronting the people with whom we serve. We need to know the history, current circumstances, their goals, and hopes.”

This education focus is what is central to a Mission u experience. It happens “through well-crafted studies on a variety of present-day issues and challenges. They are presented in ways that allow participants to begin to understand very complex issues,” Distefano concluded.

Distefano added, “The classes were wonderful and the worship services, powerful. If anyone is considering going, go!”

Join us this summer as we learn together to transform the world.
A NOTE FROM THE DEAN
JO ELLEN REED

A fresh wind will continue to blow through Oklahoma Conference as we gather at Oklahoma City University for Mission u this summer. Learning together for the transformation of the world remains the unique experience gained at Mission u. Our learning equips us to impact lives and change the world.

For many of us, summertime will include some time away from our regular routine. We may make a trip or visit family, and hopefully we will attend Mission u. These are opportunities to think about our spiritual and physical posture, to practice taking an open stance, and to breathe deeply of the Spirit.

May you have a time of refreshment and re-creation in this season, and may we together welcome the breath of God as God is moving us in our work of following Jesus in the world — turning faith, hope, and love into action.

It will be time that reminds us to breathe and to let the breath of God blow in and through us — cleansing, refreshing, and re-creating us. See you in July.

WEEKEND PREACHER
REV. DERREK BELASE

Our Mission u preacher will be Rev. Derrek Belase, who last year was appointed as the Conference’s director of Discipleship. His primary focus is assisting our churches in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Derrek has a rich history with Mission u. In 2007, he began working with the former Cooperative Schools of Christian Mission, first as a youth leader in the Oklahoma Conference and then later as a regional study leader in various regional schools. Eventually, he was elected assistant dean and dean of Mission u in the Oklahoma Conference. He has also served as a planning team member, registrar and adult study leader.

Derrek has a beautiful family including his wife, Rev. Rebekah Belase, who was a former conference UMW communications officer and currently serves as director of Development Operations for Church World Service. They have two precious young daughters, Madison Ann and Elizabeth Grace.

STUDIES

LIVING AS A COVENANT COMMUNITY

This study examines major covenants throughout the Bible and what they reveal about God’s character and eternal love for us. It will enhance your understanding of how God works with us, in us, and through us.

GREG TENER

Rev. Dr. Greg Tener is currently serving as the superintendent in the Heartland District. He has been appointed there since June 2014. He entered the ministry in 1993 after working for SW Bell for 16 years. His student appointment was to Wilson-Loco. From there, he served the Wesley Foundation at Weatherford and the Putnam City and Poteau UMCs. In 2012, Greg was appointed as the superintendent in the previous Ardmore District.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from OCU, a Master of Divinity from Perkins School of Theology at SMU, and a Doctor of Ministry from Saint Paul School of Theology. His area of specialization for his doctorate was Wesleyan Spiritual Formation.

Greg and Judy Tener have been married since 1976. They have two adult children and three grandchildren.

GLENGA SKINNER NOBLE

Rev. Glenda Skinner-Noble is the visual art teacher at Prairie Queen Elementary, in Oklahoma City, serving 900 students a week. She began teaching in January 2014.

She was raised in the Lexington United Methodist Church. She earned a Bachelor of Art in Religion from Oklahoma City University and a Master of Divinity from The Methodist Theological School in Ohio. She was ordained an elder in full connection in 2001 and served Sunny Lane, Aldersgate-Tulsa, UCO Wesley Foundation, Harrah, and Cashion. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Art in Studio Art from Oklahoma City University in 2012. Glenda enjoys drawing with oil pastels, pencil, and ink; and sculpting primarily with wood and textiles.

She also enjoys the printmaking process using wood block and copper plate.

Her husband, Don, is an associate professor at St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee. They have two children who attend school in Oklahoma City: Sam, 13, attends Belle Isle Enterprise Middle School, and Lydia, 10, attends Putman Heights Elementary. They are an active part of the congregation at OKC-Grace UMC.

MISSIONARY CONFERENCES IN THE UNITED STATES

Overview of the three missionary conferences in The United Methodist Church, the contexts out of which they grew and their current engagements: The Alaska, the Red Bird Missionary, and the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conferences are a hybrid of home and international missionary work.

What does the future look like for these conferences? Broad-ranging conversations are taking place around this question. The General Board of Global Ministries and the missionary conferences are exploring best operational and structural options for maximizing mission and ministry going forward in these unique locations. These dialogues, different in each case, have begun and will take place across the 2017–2020 quadrennium. The objective is mutuality in mission partnership and collaboration, which provides the heartbeat of all productive mission within the United Methodist connection.

MERI WHITAKER

Meri Whitaker is a retired missionary of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. She served as a Church and Community Worker.

Meri is a graduate of Brockport State University in Brockport, N.Y., where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education. After teaching high school physical education for four years, she attended Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, where she received a master of religious education degree. She was ordained in 1984 and is a member of the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference.

She served in Anadarko, Oklahoma, with Kiowa and Wichita Indians, and in Lockport, N.Y., as the director of Christian education and outreach minister to the Tuscarora Reservation and Niagara County Jail. She returned to Oklahoma in 1985 as director of campus ministry at Bacone College and accepted the position as director of the United Methodist Cookson Hills Center, a mission project serving the Cherokee people in the Cookson area, in March 1987. She served there until 2016.

Meri is also a pastor for Canterbury Chapel United Methodist Church in Vian, for people in recovery from drugs and alcohol. The church has received attention and mention from two authors, George Hunt and Bishop Robert C. Schnase. Meri herself is author of an engaging book, “My Sister, The Father,” available in the United Methodist Women’s library.

Rev. Whitaker was appointed to the World Methodist Council in 1996. She was the recipient of the Harry S. Denman Award in 2002 and the Sequoyah County Citizen of the Year Award in 2007.
CLIMATE JUSTICE: CALL TO HOPE AND ACTION

This study will deepen your understanding and awareness of climate change and its impact on God’s creation. The study highlights justice, peace, and integrity of creation as important dimensions of partnering in God’s mission today. It offers participants biblical, theological, and ethical insights as the basis of their advocacy on climate justice in churches and in the public sphere.

MARK DAVIES

Rev. Dr. Mark Davies is the Wimberly Professor of Social and Ecological Ethics at Oklahoma City University. Davies is an ordained elder in the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church. From 2009 to 2015, he was dean of the Petree College of Arts and Sciences at OCU and was founding director of the Vivian Wimberly Center for Ethics and Servant Leadership. Prior to becoming dean of the School of Religion in 2002, he was associate dean of the Petree College of Arts and Sciences and chaired the department of philosophy.

Mark has published in the areas of Boston personalism, process philosophy and ethics, and ecological ethics. Davies serves on the United Methodist University Senate, which is an elected body of professionals in higher education created by the General Conference to determine which schools, colleges, universities, and theological schools meet the criteria for listing as institutions affiliated with The United Methodist Church.” He and his wife, Kristin, live in Edmond, and they have two daughters.

Mission Focus and Project

This year’s mission focus will be the Murrow Indian Children’s Home in Muskogee. Its mission is to provide a safe, nurturing environment, spiritual foundation, and cultural experience to Native American children in crisis, nurturing them spiritually, socially and culturally.

Mission u participants will also be able to donate items needed at the Murrow Children’s Home. Please bring any of the items below with you to Mission u. Packaging will take place on Saturday afternoon. You will find collection boxes near the registration area.

ITEMS NEEDED INCLUDE:

- Plastic Wrap
- Laundry Detergent
- Fabric Softener
- Mr. Clean
- Stain Remover
- Glass Cleaner
- Pine Sol
- Trash Bags (kitchen-size)

- Freezer Bags (gallon-size)
- Napkins
- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper
- Aluminum Foil
- Lysol Spray
- Sanitizer Wipes
- Pull-ups, 38 lbs. (for girls)
- Baby Wipes
- Lice Wipes
- Maxi Pads
- Regular Shampoo and Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Cotton Balls
- Q-Tips

study resources

Order online at www.umwmissionresources.org

or call 800-305-9857

BOOKS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE AT MISSION U:

HOWEVER YOU ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO READ THE STUDY TEXT BEFORE CLASS TO GET MORE VALUE FROM THE CLASS.

NOTE: Purchase your study books early and bring your Bible, too.

FUTURE STUDIES

2018: Seeking Health and Wholeness
  • The Missionary Conferences of the UMC
  • What about our money?

2019: Gospel of Mark • United Methodist Women’s History (special anniversary study) • What about our money?
Oklahoma Conference MISSION u
Adult Registration Form

- Weekend School, Friday-Sunday, July 21-23, 2017
- One Day Plus School, Sunday-Monday, July 23-24, 2017

Studies - Mark your 1st and 2nd choices:
- Living as a Covenant Community
- U.S. Missionary Conferences
- Climate Justice
- Female ☐ Male ☐ Couple ☐

Name ______________________ Preferred name ______________________
Address ________________________________________________________
City __________________ State ______ Zip __________
Email __________________ Phone ( _____ ) __________
Church __________________ District __________________

Emergency contact __________________ Relationship __________________
Contact phone ( _____ ) __________

Laity ☐ Clergy ☐ 1st Time Attendee ☐
Number of years attended ______________________

Insurance YES ☐ NO ☐
Insurance company __________________ Policy # __________
Allergies ________________________________________________

Parent Consent Form (print)
Parents must read and sign the permission slip below!

First name ___________________ Last name _____________________
Parent's cell ( _____ ) __________ Parent's work phone ( _____ ) __________

To whom it may concern:
The undersigned does hereby give permission for my child ___________________ to attend and participate in activities sponsored by the MISSION u on July 21-23, 2017. We (I) authorize an adult, in whose care the minor has been entrusted, to consent to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, surgical or dental diagnosis, or treatment and hospital care, to be rendered to the minor under general or special supervision and on the advice of any physician or dentist licensed under the provision of the Medical Practice Act on the medical staff of a licensed hospital, whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of said physician at said hospital.

The undersigned shall be liable and agree(s) to pay all costs and expenses incurred in connection with such medical and dental services rendered to the aforementioned child pursuant to the authorization. Should it be necessary for our (my) child to return home due to medical reasons, or otherwise, the undersigned shall assume all transportation costs.

The undersigned does also hereby give permission for our (my) child to ride in any vehicle designated by the adult in whose care the minor has been entrusted while attending and participating in activities sponsored by the MISSION u. I consent to the use of my child’s image or voice in photographs, audio and/or video recordings taken during the course of the event for the purpose of promoting MISSION u.

Youth participant’s signature _______________________________________
Parent / Legal Guardian signature ______________________________________

Child Registration Form
Study — Missionary Conferences
July 21-23, 2017 — Weekend only
Children’s School — first through sixth grades

Male ☐ Female ☐ Child’s name: ______________________

Name ___________________ Your relation to child ______________________
Date of birth ______/_____/______ Grade in Fall 2017 ___________
Address ________________________________________________________
City __________________ State ______ Zip __________

Child / full package per child ____________________________ $85.
Commuter package with meals ____________________________ $45.
Commuter package without meals ____________________________ $25.

WHAT TO BRING:
Bring Bible, notebook, pen & pencils, flashlight, casual clothing, jacket or sweater, swimsuit, comfortable walking shoes, rain apparel, twin-size bed linens, pillows, blankets, towels & wash cloths, and personal hygiene items. Leave your cellphones at home — bring an alarm clock!

Study — Climate Justice

Oklahoma Conference MISSION u

Scholarships available, with preference to first-time attendees
Deadline for registration: July 12. No refunds after that date.
Dependent care allowance with presentation of receipt ($25 per day max.)

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MISSION u.
Full payment is due with registration.

STUDY BOOKS (Also bring your Bible)
Study books should be purchased and read before class begins. Order online at www.umwmissionresources.org or call 1-800-305-9857. Books will also be available at Mission u.
SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Celebrated a first for its campus at Oklahoma City University on May 19: three people were conferred the degree of Doctor of Ministry during commencement.

In addition, eight people received Master of Divinity degrees at the ceremony, held in OCU’s Smith Chapel. Degrees were presented by the United Methodist seminary’s president, Neil Blair.

The three who earned doctorates were Samuel Powers of Edmond; Scott Sharp, Albuquerque, N.M.; and Semaj Vanzant Sr., Neptune, N.J.

They were first to apply for admission to the doctoral program when Saint Paul announced it for Oklahoma City, said Angela Sims, academic dean. The program began in January 2014. Saint Paul operates on two campuses: at OCU and at UM Church of the Resurrection, Leawood, Kan.

All three men have connections to the Oklahoma Conference.

Rev. Dr. Powers is senior pastor at Edmond-First UMC. He began serving in Oklahoma in 1996.

Rev. Dr. Sharp, senior pastor at Central United Methodist Church, Albuquerque, N.M., was an OCU campus minister and Oklahoma church pastor before moving to New Mexico.

Rev. Dr. Vanzant has become pastor of Second Baptist Church, Asbury Park, N.J.; he formerly pastored OKC-The Christ Experience UMC.

Delivering the commencement sermon, titled “What Difference Does That Make to You?,” was Oklahoma’s Bishop Jimmy Nunn.

He reminded the 11 graduates it’s “easy to take our eyes off Jesus” and advised them to “only follow Jesus, with our eyes fixed on him.”

Bishop Nunn told the Class of 2017 that they have selected a “difference-making vocation.”

“You are equipped. What difference is God calling you to make?”

Graduating with Master of Divinity degrees were:

- Adam Brinson, who is newly appointed pastor of Waurika-First UMC.
- Murray Crookes, an Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference clergy member, who leads W. Angie Smith Memorial UMC in Oklahoma City.
- David Hanigar, an associate pastor at Wickline UMC in Midwest City. His appointment also involves Wickline’s new ministry project at the former Douglas Boulevard UMC in Midwest City.
- Martin Rubin “Tino” Herrera of Norman, who is moving to Church of the Resurrection in Kansas to take a post in pastoral care. He has been an associate at Norman-McFarlin UMC.
- Brian Lampkins, an administrative pastor for Equipped, a non-denominational ministry in south Oklahoma City.
- Christine Noland, a lay member of Owasso-First UMC, who is entering a Clinical Pastoral Education program. She works as a CAT scan technician at Hillcrest Medical Center in Tulsa.
- Jessica Tanner-Higgins of Edmond, who is chaplain at Epworth Villa, a United Methodist-related retirement community.
- Jacob Tatarian of Edmond, an intern and lay member at OKC-Chapel Hill UMC.

In other news, retired Bishop Robert E. Hayes Jr. will teach a course in United Methodist polity in the spring for Saint Paul at OCU, Sims said. Oklahoma’s former episcopal leader has officially signed a contract to serve as Bishop-in-Residence at OCU.

Employment

Pianist: Tulsa-Lake UMC. Part-time. Email resume to McGinty05@sbcglobal.net or call 918-851-4184 and ask for Roy.

Church Business Manager: Tulsa-New Haven UMC. Part-time. 918-743-6491 or cindy.havlik@newhavenumc.org

Nursery Staff: OKC-Village UMC. Part-time. Must be 18 or older. Contact 751-8116 or vumcfamilies@gmail.com.

Pianist: Drumright UMC. Part-time. 918-352-2150 or drumrightumc@sbcglobal.net

Adult and Children’s Music Ministries: Norman-St. Stephen’s UMC. Part-time. Resume to ststephensumc@coxint.net.

Choir director: Moore-New Life UMC. Part-time. Contact Kathy Brown, revkathybrown@gmail.com.
Bishop urges churches to tell people

BY HOLLY MCCRAY

Across the days of the 2017 Oklahoma Annual Conference, United Methodists made a virtual journey with Bishop Jimmy Nunn — from where his pioneer ancestors settled on the Texas Panhandle’s caprock; to a church and a university each more than a century old, in Oklahoma City; and on to places as far away as Malaysia and Palestine, through Internet live streaming.

The stories told May 29-June 1 not only traced historic church pathways but also mapped new ones.

United Methodists must tell their spiritual stories, Bishop Nunn insisted as he preached and presided for the first time as an episcopal leader.

Storytelling helps answer the question “Why,” he said. The United Methodist Church has been too focused on what to do rather than why do it.

“Lead with a question — not a pontification — and tell your story,” he again advised in the Service of Sending Forth.

Conference leaders answered why in person and on video to about 1,150 delegates and guests at Oklahoma City University and OKC-St. Luke’s as well as 960 people watching the live stream.

**Pages from life**

Among the stories told was one about John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, when his heart was “strangely warmed” at a church meeting.

Charlie Ludden, with Project Transformation/Young Adult Mission & Service, said, “Anyone can serve, can reach out, can change a life. That’s what disciples are for.”

Helping people in need “go from despair to hope is to see the grace of God at work,” said Deborah Ingraham, director of Skyline Urban Ministry.

Office of Mission Director Jeremy Basset said that Volunteers in Mission “are not vacationers impersonating missionaries.” VIM representatives urged: pack a bag; go somewhere; help someone. You not only will help others but also build relationships that grow your faith.

“Why do we do what we do?” asked Pastor Marsha Purtell of Mangum. “Because that’s what we’re told in scripture to do.”

At least a dozen people responded to the bishop’s altar call in the Service of Ordination and Commissioning on May 31.

**Count on growth**

- In eight new congregations, about 1,200 people are worshipping regularly and 60 people have made professions of faith since January, reported Chris Tiger, director of New Faith Communities. In Ardmore, six groups of Home Church are meeting.
- New People New Places leaders reported 108 professions of faith as a result of grants supporting innovative ministries. The initiative “has been a courageous move on the part of the annual conference,” said Randy Shrauner, co-chairperson of the Annual Conference Council.
- As of Dec. 31, 2016, the Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation’s total assets under management reached an all-time high of $274.1 million.
- Camps in 2016 hosted more than 17,300 guests and netted almost $200,000. New mobile day camps will reach out in eight cities this summer.

**Why?**

Eight churches received the new One Matters award, from Discipleship Ministries, for moving from zero professions of faith to multiple ones.

*SeeAllThePeople*

- Cookson Hills Center helped its neighbors plant 250 gardens this spring.
- Oklahoma Methodist Manor serves over 400 people in that retirement center.
- George Howard, with the denomination’s Global Ministries, said Oklahomans gave $106,000 to disaster response, $96,000 to the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference, and $65,000 to support missionaries through the Advance.
- Circle of Care is raising $5 million to build five foster homes in the state. The Annual Conference Offering supporting the Circle totaled $26,190.05 as of June 8.
- Four people received the prestigious Harry Dennman Award for Evangelism: youth member Kailee McCrary, lay members Don and Nancy Whittaker, and clergy member Tiffany Nagel-Monroe. Pastor Linda Lusnia was presented the Frances Willard Award by the Commission on the Status and Role of Women. (Find more award news in the next issue.)
CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

— Holly McCray

Ministries of memory

Oklahoma’s Commission on Archives & History helped the audience look back and celebrate. Resolutions were approved to designate Boston Avenue UMC in Tulsa and First UMC in Oklahoma City as United Methodist Historic Sites.

Jerry Gill, a member of Stillwater-First UMC, received the 2017 Distinguished Service Award from the denomination’s Archives & History commission. Among his outstanding contributions in the field of history, Gill was instrumental in helping Stillwater-First become a UM Historic Site and has led Oklahoma’s commission. The presentation was made by Brian Bakeman, current chairperson.

A new video was introduced that helps tell the story of Methodism in the 1900s. “Gone with the Oklahoma Wind: Reuniting the Methodist Church North and South, 1844-1939” is directed by Elizabeth Anthony, a commission member from OKC-Crown Heights UMC.

Lower Apportionment

Looking ahead, Annual Conference delegates set the 2018 Apportionment total at $14,303,755. That amount is 1.37 percent lower than the current year’s budget. Also approved was a resolution from the Conference’s Board of Church & Society. “Addressing Environmental Challenges, Global Warming, and Climate Change” reminds United Methodists about the biblical call to care for God’s creation and highlights the correlated Social Principles.

From the resolution: “All people have the moral responsibility to (take) personal actions to reduce the environmental impact of our lifestyles and collective actions to reduce emissions of ‘greenhouse gases.’”

A delegate from Norman voiced his support, noting that he taught chemistry for 40 years at the University of Oklahoma.

The Church & Society board also distributed a statement paper. “Welcoming the Migrant — Immigration as a Moral Issue.” The handout urged churches to educate members through study and events; provide hospitality to migrants and refugees; and invite as a speaker Carlos Ramirez, the Conference’s associate director of Leadership and Innovation.

With their biological and adopted children looking on, Keith and Staci Howard tell their family story. Keith is the Circle of Care’s vice president of program services. They were interviewed by Office of Mission Director Jeremy Basset and Jeannie Himes, chairperson of the Mission & Service Ministry Team, flanking the parents.

From right, Sondra Sneed and Gerard Nsabimana worship during the Service of Sending Forth on June 1.

United Methodists must share their stories.

“We cannot buy land, appoint a pastor, put up a sign, and expect a church to spring up.”

He prayed in the Service of Sending Forth: “God, grab Oklahoma by the Panhandle and shake Oklahoma up by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Tough questions face delegates

The buzz of many small groups engaged in concurrent conversations filled the OCU gym on Tuesday evening (May 30) during Annual Conference.

After seeing a video about the denomination’s Commission on a Way Forward, delegates conferred over weighty questions posed by Bishop Jimmy Nunn.

• In our diverse and global existence, what is the shared mission/purpose of the Church?
• Is there a proactive way for us to live together in our differences that doesn’t presume we will resolve our differences? What would it be?
• What might be a form of unity that would empower us living together?
• What is our witness, and what can be our witness to the world in relation to our differences?

The Commission’s global membership is studying the Book of Discipline paragraphs about human sexuality and options to maintain the Church’s unity. As the bishop had requested, some delegates submitted written responses for their groups.

“Bishop, you didn’t want to make our first holy conferenceing easy for us, did you?” wrote one delegate.

Among other notes:

• The Church’s mission “hasn’t really changed since Jesus gave the disciples the great commission.”
• “Methodists need to get the message of love out there to counter the vision of judgment that so many have of Christians.”
• “We bring our history and context to all relationships and must be careful not to paint someone as an enemy.”
• “Worship styles show that we are a diverse people.”
• “Possible to have multiple Books of Discipline?”
• “Create a confederated affiliation.”
• “Our group is not as hopeful as the folks in the video were . . . It could be like a loveless marriage where the couple stays together for the kids.”
• “We are grateful we are not serving on the Way Forward committee.”

— Holly McCray
early on May 7, the day following Oklahoma City University’s graduation ceremonies, a handful of dedicated students, faculty, and staff gathered in the ticket line at Will Rogers World Airport to embark on a weeklong mission with Methodist Habitat on the island of Eleuthera, Bahamas.

Established in the wake of Hurricane Andrew in 1992, that ministry of the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas continues in its primary mission: rebuilding, repairing, and restoring homes for the needy and elderly.

The OCU team included six students and four staff members: Elizabeth Horton-Ware, director of religious life; Adam Ryburn, biology professor; Diana Blackmon, nursing professor; and Charles Neff, director of university-church relations and the team’s leader.

On the island, the team met Felicia Bethel, whose home is in the picturesque village of Cupid’s Cay. The aging grandmother of six had been unable to keep up with repairs, especially due to her failing eyesight and grieving the loss of her only son.

Dividing into three work teams, the OCU missioners went right to work. They replaced the shingles on the roof, replaced rotting soffits, repaired a room that had water damage, and repainted the entire exterior of the home.

Breaks were spent getting to know “Ms. Felicia,” the Bahamian workmen who were assisting, local residents, and the staff of Methodist Habitat. Evenings included fun and devotional time.

By week’s end, not only was the house in good repair, but also an incredible sense of community had grown within the team and between the missioners and islanders.

This was OCU’s fourth international mission trip since January 2015. Plans are in the works to return to Belize over winter break with as many as 40 people in three teams: construction, nursing, and education.

Cost for participants was kept low by a generous grant from the Woodworth Foundation.