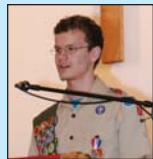


# THE MISSOURI CONFERENCE REVIEW

an edition of the United Methodist Reporter

Leading congregations to lead people to actively follow Jesus Christ



## Scouting

Scouts and churches work together to benefit youth. **2A**



## Deals

Resources sell quick at UMW Assembly. **3A**



## Service

Congregation takes to community to serve. **4A**

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Two Sections, Section A



## Orphanage continues to develop with church support

The Carolyn Belshe orphanage wasn't created – it evolved. But when you look at its development and service, you can see the work of the divine, through many different people who have served as the hands and feet of Christ. The orphanage and the people behind it continue to evolve to meet the needs of God's children in Mozambique.

When Carolyn Belshe was

working as the administrator of the Chicuque Rural Hospital in Mozambique, she encountered orphans of families lost to war. Belshe was in Mozambique as a General Board of Global Ministries missionary before the peace accord was signed. Mozambique endured a civil war that lasted 17 years. Children were born in war and grew up in war.

"Many children had no concept

of what life is like without war," Belshe said.

These orphans were brought to the hospital for medical reasons after enduring the horrors of war, but had no where to go when discharged. After fostering a few children on her own, and permanently adopting three of them, she knew there must be sustainable

See Orphanage, pg. 6A



Above: Carolyn Belshe speaks to Victoria Chifeche and Lidia Radio at the Missouri Conference Center. Top: Children enjoy the new playground at the Carolyn Belshe Orphanage.

## Movement begins to plant many Simple Churches

Picture a church. Maybe you envision white siding and a steeple, or stone walls and stained glass, or maybe a modern auditorium, with stage lights and high-tech sound. What you probably don't envision is someone's living room. But the Ozarks North District is rethinking church, and will soon begin the process of launching several churches, which may be just the beginning of a movement to bring new people to Christ.

"This is a renewal of our Wesleyan spirit," said Ozarks North District Superintendent Bart Hildreth. "We're returning to our core Wesleyan values."

House churches have recently been featured in major secular



Marsha Vincent

publications like Newsweek. Cokesbury is currently featuring two books on house churches in its "Good Books" publication. The house church movement hasn't gone unnoticed by

Missouri Conference Director of Congregational Development Director Bob Farr.

"I've seen sporadic success in house churches around the country, mostly in non-denominational churches on the East and West Coasts," Farr said.

This led to Farr buying a few books on house churches, and considering how it could work in Missouri. It seemed like house churches could be a solution to a prevalent challenge.

"The most under-served (by the church) population in Missouri is in rural areas, but we can't

afford to spend \$300,000 to plant a new church that is only going to attract 50 people," Farr said. "Our model for planting new churches doesn't work in rural areas. We need to have something different."

Hildreth looks at his mostly rural district and agrees.

"If we ignore this movement, we are limiting ourselves in our option of churches, and it's to our own peril," Hildreth said. "I don't see this replacing traditional churches, but giving United Methodists one more option for making new disciples of Jesus Christ."

A network pastor in the Ozarks

North District will be trying to start a dozen or more of these "Simple Churches" in the next year. To fill this role, Hildreth turned to Marsha Vincent, a part-time local pastor at Sleeper UMC. He asked her to pray about it.

"Every time I prayed the Lord opened the way," Vincent said. "When I thought I couldn't do something because of 'this,' the 'this' went away."

As a pastor, Vincent recognizes that churches are struggling to make new disciples of Jesus Christ. She loves the idea of keeping

See Simple Church, pg. 3A

# Conferring Together

John Wesley's *Journal* describes the first Conference of Methodists this way:

"In June, 1744, I desired my brother and a few other clergymen to meet me in London, to consider how we should proceed to save our own souls and those that heard us. After some time, I invited lay preachers that were in the house to meet with us. We conferred together for several days, and were much comforted and strengthened thereby.... This I did for many years, and all that time the term Conference meant not so much the conversations we had together, as the persons who conferred."

The agenda for the first Conference in June of 1744 was as follows:

1. What to teach
2. How to teach, and,
3. What to do. That is, how to regulate our doctrine, discipline, and practice?"

Conference began as simply conversing and conferring, and the word *conference* came to mean the people who themselves *conferred*. You and I are *Conference* when we confer together about our common mission. Over the past 266 years since that first gath-

ering, a Methodist Conference has evolved to mean many things. The more spiritual aspects of our gathering include our worship and song, our focus on our mission, our learning and training and encouraging one another. We welcome new people to ministry and mourn the passing of those who now cease from their labors. As the years went along, the organizational and governance purposes of conference grew stronger and we focused more on credentialing, common rules, deploying clergy, pooling resources to provide for joint ministry. In some places, conference has become a meeting driven by the business aspects of our common life, with a focus nearly entirely on budgets, apportionments, pensions, insurance, policies, rules, and structures similar to a corporate board or shareholders meeting.

While many of these later elements are essential for our mission, I've often wondered how we might recover more of the original purpose and content of conference. How do we *confer* in a manner that builds us up and strengthens us for ministry? How do we learn from one another, and encourage

one another for the mission of the church? How do we leave renewed, refocused, reminded of our mission, re-equipped for ministry, and re-animated by the Holy Spirit for the work God gives us? When these questions lead us in our preparation for Conference, then Conference reasserts itself as the spiritual center of United Methodism.

As I look at the agenda of this year's gathering of the Missouri Annual Conference in Springfield, I feel like we may be closer than we've been for a long time to the original intentions Mr. Wesley had for Conference. The emphasis is on worship, learning, teaching, practices for ministry, spiritual practices, renewing, praying, and equipping ourselves spiritually for our mission. The theme is "Growing Deeper—Deepening the Spiritual Life for Leadership in the Church."

What's the buzz about Annual Conference this year? Sometimes people ask that as they seek to know what controversial issue or divisive subject we will debate. If your definition of Conference is limited to votes, budgets, reports, amendments, petitions, and debates, then you may be disappointed this year. However,



## THE BISHOP'S *Journal*

BY BISHOP ROBERT SCHNASE

Bishop Sharon Brown Christopher will lead the Conference through Tables of Grace. Michael Slaughter, pastor of Ginghamburg UMC, will be teaching on the theme of his book, "Change the World." I'll be teaching a session based on "Five Practices of Fruitful Living."

Mr. Wesley's first conference had no votes and approved no budgets. The early Methodist leaders debated how best to fulfill the mission of the church. They prayed for one another. They learned. They found strength in communion and purpose, and they recommitted themselves to the work of ministry in Christ's name. Michael Slaughter, Sharon Brown Christopher, Robert Hayes, Joe Castillo, Emanuel Cleaver, and all our other preachers, teachers, workshop leaders, pastors, lay leaders, and youth who will share their stories, their best practices, and their encourage-

ment—that's the buzz of annual conference this year.

"Growing Deeper—Deepening the Spiritual Life for the Leadership of the Church." The theme captures so much of Mr. Wesley's purpose for conference. Are we willing to gather with other laity and clergy, open our hearts to the Holy Spirit and our minds to new ideas? Are we willing to place ourselves in a situation that may change us and change how we do ministry? Are we willing to allow God to transform us so that God can transform the world through us?

Grace and Peace,

Robert Schnase, Bishop Mo. Conference of the UMC

## Scouting relates closely to church

The sanctuary at New Horizons UMC was nearly full on a Monday night on May 24. Most of the attendees were dressed identically. The gathering wasn't worship, but it certainly didn't lack ceremony. Creeds were recited, and they even lit candles. It was a boy scout meeting, and it had as many boys and young men gathered together in a church as you could find anywhere in the Conference on that night.

But it wasn't just a meeting; it was a court of honor for Paul Schnase receiving his rank of Eagle Scout. Paul is the youngest son of Missouri Bishop Robert Schnase. His older brother Karl received his Eagle Scout rank at New Horizon UMC four years earlier.

New Horizons is the chartering organization for Boy Scout Troop 7 and Cub Scout Pack 7. Many United Methodist Churches have a close relationship with scouting. Churches often are the organization that charters a troop.

Rev. Kevin Shelton, pastor of Community UMC, Paul's home church, was at the Eagle Court of Honor. Community UMC doesn't

have its own scouting program, but once a year Shelton conducts a God and Country scouting program. It usually meets once a week for six weeks.

"It's a great curriculum for teaching about faith development, and involves a lot of active learning," he said. "We will usually have 10 or 12 kids involved. Some of them don't go to church, and this is some of the only exposure they have to Christian teaching."

Scouts pledge to be reverent toward God, and faithful in their duties. One of the adult leaders, Melissa Gerardy, mentioned in her speech that scouts should do a good deed everyday.

"So many people in our world need a kind word or kind smile. If scouts do it, maybe others will also," she said.

Fewer than 2 percent of scouts advance to the rank of Eagle Scout. It requires 21 merit badges, experience in a leadership position and a service project that is helpful to a church or school.

Dan Pierce was scout master for part of Paul's time in scouts. He is convinced that boys derive

many benefits from participating in scouting.

"The kids learn to follow a moral code, and have fun doing it. Scouts gets them outside in nature, and helps them develop leadership skills," he said. "It's also great for the father-son or mother-son relationship."

During his speech, Paul recounted that in his 13 years of scouting, he had participated in campouts ranging from the beaches of south Texas to the Missouri River, including an overnight campout on an aircraft carrier. He expressed gratitude for all of the opportunities that scouting afforded him that he otherwise would not have had.

"My experience in scouting has made me more confident, better able to provide for myself, and has led to many friendships," he said. "I know there have been hundreds of volunteers along the way, and appreciate being a recipient of their kind support."

At the conclusion of the ceremony it was noted that New Horizons pastor Tom Adams is retiring (for the third time) and



Paul Schnase receives his Eagle Scout award.

will be leaving the church. He was presented a badge for being in the Mic-O-Say tribe, a native-American themed honor society of scouting that Adams was inducted into in the late 1940s when he lived in Trenton.

"The Methodist Church and scouts were a big part of my life growing up," Adams said.

Bill Deuel, a New Horizons member, is the senior assistant

council commissioner for the Great River Council of the Boy Scouts, an area that includes 33 Missouri counties and approximately 10,000 scouts.

"I really like seeing churches charter scout troops and packs, because for about 50 percent of the boys, that is the only exposure they will get to a church," he said.

For more information about scouting, go to [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org).

## Simple Church continued from page 1A

things simple.

"When things get complicated for me, I just have to go back to the scripture," she said. "This idea of simple church is the church of the scripture; it's the ancient church of Acts."

Vincent, Hildreth, and Farr, along with Missouri Conference Treasurer Kendall Waller and new-church planter Rob Barringer, all recently went to Arlington, Texas to experience Mission Arlington, a network of 294 simple churches. Up to 5,000 people participate in the home church network's worship services. Some are in homes or apartments, others meet in businesses.

"The one I went to had about 60 in attendance," said Hildreth. "It was in an apartment building that had an entire apartment designated as space for this church. A wall was taken out to make enough room for everyone to worship together. The three remaining rooms were adult Sunday school classrooms, and the apartment next door provided classrooms for the children."

Sometimes in Arlington the apartment owners will give the apartment space to the church, because having a church on premises tends to lower crime and contribute to a sense of community among the residents.

When Farr visited Mission Arlington, he was impressed with how the church was making inroads with the most under-served population in that community.

"They were reaching people in urban apartments. Our churches have never been successful at reaching people in apartments. Never," he said.

The thing that was most significant to Vincent about Mission Arlington was its simplicity.

"It is very relational, and very authentic," she said. "Every Sunday they are just taking God's word to people who don't normally hear it."

She plans to have the Missouri simple churches embrace that same concept.

"If you don't speak church-ese, it can be daunting to go into a

building full of people speaking this church language," Vincent said. "Our simple church pastors are going to be in the mindset of missionaries, speaking the gospel to people in a language they can understand."

Vincent doesn't see simple churches as ever replacing traditional churches, but views them as a way to bring more people to faith.

"This is just another arm of the church," Vincent said. "We're all about the same thing: making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. This is just another option for people who are not in church to be part of what we are doing for God."

Hildreth likes the mission of taking church to the place where the people are, as John Wesley did. He wants unchurched people to know that worship doesn't have to occur in an ornate sanctuary with polished marble.

"For someone who said he would submit himself to be more vile, I think this would make him smile," he said.

Vincent intends to help launch 15 simple churches by the end of this year, and with a target average attendance of 10.

"I love our church in Sleeper. It's an awesome church," she said. "But we have about 90 members and 60 in attendance. We can't give up half of our people to start a new (traditional) church. Simple church is an amazing opportunity for a church like Sleeper to birth a new church."

Vincent can envision simple churches meeting in homes, libraries, coffee shops, restaurants or banquet halls.

"We're going to keep it simple, and not put any kind of parameters on where we meet," she said. "If Jesus could worship on the banks of a river, we can worship in a coffee shop."

The simple churches in the Ozarks North District may use videos from Schweitzer or Wesley UMCs in Springfield. They also may use video sermons series from nationally known preachers, like Rev. Adam Hamilton and Rev. Mike Slaughter, or even pastors

outside of United Methodism, like Bill Hibel of Willow Creek or Rick Warren of Saddleback Ministries. Using DVDs instead of live streaming video would allow the congregations to pause the service at certain points so they could interact with each other. Farr notes that importing high-quality worship into a simple church gives people the opportunity to experience excellent music and worship in a small setting.

"When you have surround sound in a living room, the worship service sounds pretty good," Farr said.

Because they have much lower salary and facility expenses, the churches will be able to keep most of the budget for programming and mission. But the churches will be connectional.

"From day one, these churches will be expected to pay apportionments," Hildreth said.

The offering will be part of every worship service. From the offering, 18 percent will go to apportionments, 30 percent will go to support the network pastor and 52 percent will be used by the simple church for local mission.

Other plans for simple churches are under development. Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kan., is beginning to experiment with planting house churches that are a satellite of their main campus, and experience worship through a video. Farr and District Superintendent Steve Cox participated in a trial run of one of these churches in St. Joseph.

Farr said he has no idea if simple churches will work in Missouri, but believes they are worth a try. Hildreth is hopeful, but not overconfident.

"I don't know how this will go, but I know what will happen if we don't try: nothing," Hildreth said. "We've got to do something to reach out for Jesus Christ. This is just one more way to go about it."

For more information about simple church starts, e-mail Vincent at [marshav@socket.net](mailto:marshav@socket.net).



## Assembly 2010 was good place to buy resources

To relate women and shopping sounds pretty sexist. But in the Discovery Hall, the lines speak for themselves.

"Man, I should have been selling something," said Randy Loechner of Epworth, as he looked enviously at the long lines of women in front of booths selling a product. His informational booth with free brochures, was well received, but wasn't exactly the hot-spot of Discovery Hall. "The places with things for sale are packed."

Shopping often gets spoken of as a vice, with women being portrayed of making excessive purchases of things they don't need. But in Discovery Hall, shopping can be a virtue.

Alice Staley from Bloomington, Illinois was waiting at the end of a very long line to buy some books for her UMW reading program. She first came to the UMW Assembly on a scholarship in 1978, and has been to everyone since. She has served the UMW on the local, district, conference and jurisdictional level.

"When I come to Assembly, I

experience a greater sense of mission and purpose," she said.

Mary Alice Knewston from the Kansas East Conference had also been to the UMW Assembly before, so she knew there were deals to be had, so she came prepared.

"I drove here this year, so I have plenty of room to take things back," she said.

She also had a wheel chair, which she filled with books for her UMW reading group. Most of the books were older books, and many were reduced to \$1 or three for \$5. They had cost about \$15 when they were first out.

Linda Hash from Alton UMC in southern Missouri had been to the UMW Assembly in Anaheim, California. Although they still had a four-hour drive, she and Cathyann Rave and Diana Clary happily made the trip to St. Louis. They were browsing Discovery Hall, gleaning information, but weren't as intent on making purchasing as some. They were more present for the experience.

"Having it this close was a great opportunity," Clary said.



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# Older women show great dedication to churches

*We hear a lot about the need to develop younger congregations, and no one is arguing that point. We would be remiss, however, not to occasionally give a tip of the hat to some of the extreme dedication the oldest among us have shown.*

## Perfect Attendance

Jo Ann Smith is a faithful church member. On May 9, Mother's Day, Jo Ann missed church for the first time in almost 74 years (3,826 Sundays, to be exact). She broke her hip in a fall while playing soccer with her grandson on Saturday. She tried to convince the surgeon to let her go to church on Sunday to keep her streak alive. Of course, the doctor insisted that the surgery go as planned. So on Sunday Morning, when Jo Ann would have been in church, she was in surgery instead. Smith is a new member of the Clinton



**Joan Smith and her grandson Trent**

United Methodist Church and has had a rather sordid history with other United Methodist Churches. The first church she belonged to was destroyed by fire when she was a young girl. The next church merged with another and moved to a different location. The next church closed, as did the next.

"We at Clinton UMC hope that as Jo Ann's streak of 74 years of perfect attendance ends, so will her streak of being a part of vanishing churches," said pastor David Maggi.

## 100

On the same day that Smith broke her leg, Miss Carrie Wachter, a member of Glasgow United Methodist Church and a resident at Golden Living Center, celebrated her 100 birthday. Miss Carrie was born when William Howard Taft was the 27th president of the United States. She served 30 Pastors, first at the Evangelical United Brethren church and then First United Methodist church after the merger in 1967.

Miss Wachter was the Librarian of the Lewis Library of Glasgow, the oldest continually operating library west of the Mississippi, for 48 years and the current Children's Reading Room is named in her



**Carrie Wachter**

honor. She is active at the church's monthly Communion service, fifth Sunday church service and the weekly bible study at the Center. Miss Carrie advises others to "exercise because it keeps your body in use" and to live a Christian Life and to do good unto others.

Miss Carrie enjoys sitting in her rocking chair along-side her sister, Miss Dorothy Wachter, a retired 2nd grade teacher, who is 98 years old. Dorothy is also a faithful member of Glasgow UMC.

## Award Winner

Newhouse founding commit-

tee member and active United Methodist Church member Dortha Mae Olsen is a recipient of the 2010 Sunshine Peace Award, a prestigious award established to honor the vital role that workers in the domestic violence field play within communities. Both Mrs. Olsen and Newhouse will receive \$5,000 gifts from the Sunshine Lady Foundation in honor of the award.

"Dortha Mae has dedicated much of her life to helping women escape domestic violence. She has been intimately involved in the life and growth of this urban core shelter since three neighborhood faith communities founded it in 1971. She has served as a volunteer, a member of the agency's Board of Directors, a chaplain, an avid supporter of all special events and projects, and as a generous friend and donor," said Leslie Caplan, Newhouse President. "We are excited and happy for Dortha Mae—we know how much she deserves this honor."

Mrs. Olsen recently celebrated her 90th birthday at Newhouse. Current and former Newhouse board and staff as well as Dortha Mae's friends and family attended, donating gifts to Newhouse in honor of Dortha Mae.

The Sunshine Peace Awards are



**Dortha Mae Olsen**

presented by the Sunshine Lady Foundation, founded by Doris Buffett, sister to investor Warren Buffett. Ms. Buffett established the Sunshine Lady Foundation in 1996 and to date has provided over \$100 million for various projects including scholarships, fellowships, and to assist women, children, and families in need.

Founded in 1971, the Newhouse mission is to break the cycle of domestic violence by providing tools that allow women to make positive choices and lead self-sufficient lives. In 2009, Newhouse sheltered 943 women and children. [www.newhouseshel-ter.org](http://www.newhouseshel-ter.org)

# Hundreds participate in church service day at Living Word UMR



On May 2, 425 volunteers (180 family units, 113 kids and 312 adults) and 850 hands from Living Word United Methodist Church in Wildwood came together for one worship service at 9:00 a.m. and participated in the Go! Get Dirty! All Church Service Day. The 24 service projects included: building a retaining wall at

Kingdom House; serving a meal to Burmese refugees at New City Fellowship; organizing storage of donations at the St. Louis Crisis Nursery; grounds beautification and landscaping of two Angel's Arms Foster Homes in West County; planting and cleaning the church nursery at Centenary United Methodist Church in St.

Louis and litter clean up and city/park beautification at Anniversary Park and the Wildwood Trail in Wildwood and more. To learn more about the service day and ways that you can get involved in on-going mission and service projects go to [www.living-wordumc.org](http://www.living-wordumc.org) and click on the "Needs Pool".



# VBS co-op helps churches bring God's love to children

By Sarah Fotopulos  
Aldersgate UMC, Nixa

It began, as most brilliant ideas do, with the thought, "There must be an easier way." Six years ago, four ladies, each in charge of Vacation Bible School at their respective churches, got together to begin a VBS co-op. Their initial goal was simple: to divide up the monumental task of making the hundreds of decorations and props each church would use and share them. "Why reinvent the wheel when so many other churches use the same curriculum and will need the same resources? Why not pool our talents and share the results?" said Pam Foster, Director of Children's Ministries at Aldersgate UMC in Nixa, MO, and one of the original members of the Springfield-area co-op. "It just makes sense." Foster credits Pam Pyatt of Wesley UMC and Janet Hill of University Heights Baptist Church, both in Springfield, for initiating the co-op which she and Debbie Randell of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Springfield were quick to join. "We already knew each other from a children's ministry leaders group where we would meet and share ideas," said Foster. The VBS co-op was a natural outgrowth.

Over the last five years, the Springfield-based co-op has grown from four churches to 10 representing denominations across the spectrum. Last year, they even had to turn away other prospective members who wanted to join

too late in the VBS season. "We found four or five churches in a group is plenty. Otherwise, the amount of materials you get are just overwhelming," commented Foster. To keep the group manageable, the 10 churches agreed to split into two groups of five. Each group was organized to ensure all materials were available to every church when needed and no one had to drive unreasonably far to deliver or retrieve the decorations.

Planning begins every year in early March. At the initial organizational meeting, dates for all the member church's VBS weeks are established and a routing list is created based on chronological order. (In the event two churches plan to have VBS the same week, they are either put into separate groups or the church with the most seniority in the group has first dibs, but all member churches are committed to helping each other so the co-op works for everyone.) Once the dates are posted, the decorations list is divided up among the members of the group. Each church is responsible for labeling each deco-

ration they provide and also including an inventory list. A notebook is compiled of each church's inventory with

a place to make notes in case an item arrives damaged or is missing. The notebook, along with the routing list and the entire set of decorations and props are delivered to the first church on the list, which then assumes the responsibility for passing all the items along to the next church. After the conclusion of VBS at the last church, all the churches in the group pick up their items.

One big advantage of the co-op is financial. Small churches that do not have a large budget for VBS are particularly helped by sharing the expense of decorations. But the bigger advantage, even for sizable churches with a more expansive budget, is how the greater pool of props helps build enthusiasm among the whole congregation. "How can

you not be excited when you walk into church on Sunday morning and see the entire lobby has been transformed into a bayou, complete with a crocodile, dock and trees draped with moss?" said Rev. Dennis Miller, lead pastor of Aldersgate, of his church's experience with Group's Crocodile Dock VBS. And the excitement increases participation. "What I love about our VBS is the incredible involvement of the whole church, whether it is in bringing donations for craft supplies and snacks or actually volunteering to help with the kids who come. It is a great outreach to our community. Every year we have new families God brings to us through VBS."

To start a VBS co-op in your area, Foster recommends first surveying other churches nearby to find out if they typically use the same brand of curriculum each year. Some churches pick and choose based on the subject matter offered by different publishing companies while others always use a particular brand. If several churches agree on a curriculum and hold their VBS weeks at different times, invite them to participate in a co-op, but

remember to start planning early! Many churches conduct VBS as soon as the first week of June. To ensure everyone in the co-op has plenty of time to prepare their portion of the decorations, holding the initial organization meeting the first part of March is ideal. One new idea Foster's co-op incorporated to enhance communication was creating a group on Facebook. Members of the co-op could join the group and receive meeting reminders, share ideas and suggestions, and even post pictures of their decorations so others could see the finished product.

Limiting participation to four or five churches in the immediate geographic area is also a good idea, Foster explained. Having too many members or involving churches hours away makes both communication and transportation more difficult. It's also best not to include any irreplaceable items. The sheer volume of use makes it likely some things will experience wear and tear or even be permanently damaged. "But above all, be flexible and remember VBS is about sharing God's love with the children who come, not about prize-winning decorations," Foster advises.



## Orphanage continued from page 1A

program set up to help meet the needs of orphans in their community, and she started working with the United Methodist Church in Mozambique to make that happen. The orphanage was originally established at Teles, in a former leper colony that had been abandoned during the war. Later it was moved to the Cambine Mission Station, so the children wouldn't be so isolated and they could take advantage of the schools and medical services that are available there.

The last time Carolyn Belshe was there was during Annual Conference in 1993. She was compelled to leave Mozambique when she became very ill, and was not able to return as a missionary because her health conditions prevent her from getting medical clearance. She continued to be actively engaged in the facility, though. In 2009, the former Teles Children of War Orphanage became established as the Carolyn Belshe Orphanage in honor of her work.

"I'm striving to get local people to understand that orphans belong to them, and they need to provide for them," Belshe said. "The orphan is God's special call. Churches can bring children up in the ways of the Lord and bypass the negative influences of society. They can be shaped by the church, and be a reflection of the church."

Although caring for orphans may seem like a given, Belshe was surprised to learn that it's seldom a priority for the church. She's gathering information and writing what she can now, as her research has found very little has been written about the role of the Methodist church in supporting orphanages as a denomination, even though many individual churches have followed that call.

"Orphans are not mentioned in the Book of Discipline. That just bowled me over," Belshe said.

Most humanitarian projects in Mozambique are run by the Women's Society, an organization comparable to the UMW that exists in every church there. On April 28, the Mozambique Women's Society coordinator, Rev. Victoria Chifeche, and president of the Women's Society Lidia Radio both came to the Missouri Conference Center to discuss their ministries in Mozambique.

Chifeche told how Missouri Conference churches have had a large impact on the orphanage. Cassidy UMC in Nixa and Ashland UMC made contributions for playground. Platte Woods UMC recently funded a new dining hall, art center and multipurpose room.

"Children didn't know how to sit in a chair and eat at a table – now with a dining hall they know," Chifeche said.

Chris Sams of Platte Woods UMC has been organizing people to support the Carolyn Belshe Orphanage since he visited it about three years ago. He has formed an organization called the Mozambique Orphanage Fund. The organization is focused on raising awareness and funds so they can improve living conditions, food supplies and education at orphanages in Mozambique.

"We learned that the children from the orphanage often struggled when they entered school, so the orphanage hired four teachers to work on early childhood development," Sams said.

Sams said once they feel the basic needs have been met at the Carolyn Belshe orphanage, they look forward to providing assistance to other Mozambique orphanages as well. The organiza-



**These pictures show the new learning center at the Carolyn Belshe orphanage.**

tion has a goal of raising half a million dollars to create a self-sustaining endowment.

Belshe is encouraged when she sees people like Sams taking up the cause.

"Folks like Chris who are so spirited and can see the hope are vital people," Belshe said. "I'm old, and I'm running out of time. I'm in the last chapter of my life, and I'm trying to figure out ways to make things sustainable. I'm pedaling as fast as I can, and I know others are also."

The Mozambique Orphanage Fund now has a Web site at <http://cbof.ezweb123.com>, which provides information about the orphanage, takes donations and sells hand-made purses.

Other churches around Missouri Conference have already been supporting the orphanage. Some, like Aurora UMC and Midway-Locust Grove UMC, have contributed quarterly for many years. Woodlandville UMC, a small open-country church in the Mid-State District, has established an endowment that provides support to the orphanage. Belshe estimates that about 50 churches in the Missouri Conference support the orphanage, even if it's just a few dollars sent from a UMW group.

"To see this is so heart warming," Radio said when she was in Missouri. "To see you all and thousands of others so involved with the children, it's one of God's mysteries."

The orphanage currently has 52 people in its care, ranging from infants to young adults who are transitioning into living independently.

At age 70, Belshe is working on a doctorate in ministry at Saint Paul School of Theology, with her studies focused on the child in

poverty.

"I feel so blessed to be here. It's a very dynamic program," she said.

When classes are over this summer, Belshe will journey back to Mozambique and spend a few months there. Because she is not going as a missionary and she is not anyone else's liability, she doesn't need medical clearance to travel there. She intends to return by January to resume her studies at Saint Paul. She speaks frankly about her own serious health issues and her mortality.

"We all walk daily in our faith. If I go and do not come back, that's okay," she said. "If I do get to come back, that's okay, too. Walking with God is the important thing. I go where he invites me to go. I don't blunder out in busy intersections, but I go where I am called."

Belshe said she was called to service in Africa when she had a dream at age seven, and again at 15, but she didn't get there until she was 50. She now works with a sense of urgency.

"I can't just sit here and reminisce about my times there," she



said. "When they took me out when I was very ill, I left behind 18 million people facing malaria and other dangers who didn't have the option of leaving."

Belshe hopes she can go to and return from Mozambique several times, so she can complete her coursework and further help the orphans of the country. She doesn't want to be a martyr, but is accepting the reality of her condition. She has prepared the appropriate documentation, whether her life ends in the U.S. or Mozambique.

"I don't want to die, but if I do, I hope the church leadership can express to the people there that I was there to do God's work," she said. "When we walk with Jesus Christ, we should do as best as we can to take care, but we go with him, and wherever we may be in the end, so be it."



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# Conference Calendar

Date	Event	Location	Phone #	Contact
6/4/2010	2010 Annual Conference Child Care	Grace UMC	(573) 441-1770	Mike Harrison
6/4/2010	2010 Annual Conference Session	Springfield Expo Center	(573) 777-1217	Mike Harrison
6/13/2010	Youth Workcamp Sikeston	Sikeston	(573) 291-9122	Bev Boehmer
6/18/2010	Early Response Team (ERT) Training	Blue Springs First UMC	573-474-7155	Jeff Baker
6/20/2010	Youth Workcamp-Memphis TN	Memphis, TN	(573) 291-9122	Bev Boehmer
6/27/2010	Youth Workcamp-New Orleans	New Orleans	(573) 291-9122	Bev Boehmer
7/5/2010	Youth Workcamp-Jefferson City/Columbia	Jefferson City	(573) 291-9122	Bev Boehmer
7/8/2010	SC Convocation of Archivists	Central Methodist University	(660) 248-6240 /6602486279	John Finley/Joy Flanders
7/10/2010	BOM Psych Testing	Conference Center	(573) 777-1213	Jenny Gragg
7/11/2010	Youth Workcamp-Cherokee Nation, OK Week 1	Oklahoma	(573) 291-9122	Bev Boehmer
7/18/2010	Youth Workcamp-Cherokee Nation, OK Week 2	Oklahoma	(573) 291-9122	Bev Boehmer
7/23/2010	Missouri Conference School of Lay Ministries	Central Methodist University	(573) 441-1770	Mike Harrison
7/25/2010	Youth Workcamp-Colorado Week 1	Colorado	(573) 291-9122	Bev Boehmer
7/29/2010	Cooperative School of Christian Mission	Central Methodist University	(660) 647-2354	Nancy Mountain
8/1/2010	Youth Workcamp-Colorado Week 2	Colorado	(573) 291-9122	Bev Boehmer
8/5/2010	Willow Creek Leadership Summit, August 5-6	Living Word UMC	(636) 821-2800	Kelly Vincent
8/14/2010	Certified Lay Ministry- United Methodism Polity and Doctrine	Conference Center	(877) 736-1806	Mike Harrison
8/14/2010	UMW Conference Mission Team & Finance	Conference Center		Carol Renfro
8/25/2010	Midnight Oil	Christ Community UMC-Joplin	(573) 441-1770	Tammy Calcote
9/11/2010	Mission, Service & Justice Ministry Teams	Conference Center	(573) 474-7155	Max Marble
9/17/2010	Inside the World of Teenagers with Chap Clark	Manchester UMC	(573) 441-1770	Mike Harrison
9/22/2010	Midnight Oil	Community UMC	(573) 441-1770	Tammy Calcote
9/25/2010	United Methodist Women Annual Meeting	Jefferson City First UMC	(816) 628-5520	Carol Renfro
9/27/2010	Midnight Oil	Church of the Shepherd	(573) 441-1770	Tammy Calcote
10/1/2010	BOM Psych Testing	Conference Center	(573) 777-1213	Jenny Gragg
10/7/2010	Fall Walk to Emmaus	Baptist Hill Camp	(417) 739-5008	
10/16/2010	Festival of Sharing	Missouri State Fairgrounds	(573) 474-3332	Terri Williams
10/23/2010	Certified Lay Ministry-Five Practices of Vital Congregations	Conference Center	(573) 777-1217	Mike Harrison
2/5/2011	Mission, Service & Justice Ministry Teams	Conference Center	(573) 474-7155	Max Marble
5/13/2011	United Methodist Women Spiritual Growth Retreat	Rickman Center	573-636-8149	Shari Scott
9/10/2011	Mission, Service & Justice Ministry Teams	Conference Center	(573) 474-7155	Max Marble
10/15/2011	Festival of Sharing	Missouri State Fairgrounds	(573) 474-3332	Terri Williams
2/4/2012	Mission, Service & Justice Ministry Teams	Conference Center	(573) 474-7155	Max Marble
9/8/2012	Mission, Service & Justice Ministry Teams	Conference Center	(573) 474-7155	Max Marble
10/20/2012	Festival of Sharing	Missouri State Fairgrounds	(573) 474-3332	Terri Williams

**VISION: GROWING, FRUITFUL,  
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LIVES THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.**

If you read the *Missouri Conference Review* online and no longer want to receive your paper copy, e-mail [lsanders@moumethodist.org](mailto:lsanders@moumethodist.org).

## Job Postings

### Worship Leader - Lebanon First UMC

Lebanon First UMC is seeking a worship leader who will be responsible in leading worship in our 11a.m. contemporary worship service, assisting in worship service music selection, and in the recruiting and training of praise band members. This is a part-time position requiring a minimum of five hours per week for rehearsal and worship. E-mail [pastordavid@lumclebanon.com](mailto:pastordavid@lumclebanon.com).

### Organist/Accompanist - St. Marks UMC, Florissant

St. Mark's UMC in Florissant is accepting applications for an organist/accompanist to share and implement the mission and vision of St. Mark's UMC through our music ministry. They would accompany the traditional choir and traditional congregational singing at our 9 a.m. service and be available to plan music and play at weddings and funerals as needed. Accompany the choir at rehearsal once a week and play at special worship services. The position is salaried part-time. E-mail [expeditor66@att.net](mailto:expeditor66@att.net).

### Pianist/Keyboardist - St. Paul UMC, Fayette

Growing and active church with multiple devoted choirs and musical ensembles is in need of a dedicated pianist/accompanist. Familiarity with the church is not a requirement, SINNERS WELCOME!. Rehearsals three times a week and Sunday morning worship required. Reading music is not a requirement, playing by ear a plus. The church is located in Fayette, MO 300 E. Davis St. We are prepared to offer competitive salary. Interested musicians should contact Pastor Andre Fulton at 660-890-4479 or [st\\_paulumc@att.net](mailto:st_paulumc@att.net).

### Director of Children and Youth - Holden UMC

Duties: Lead weekly youth meetings, supervise some after school activities, Teach Sunday School Class. Qualities desired: strong faith, good communication, organizational skills and desire to help young people grow in faith. 20 hours per week. Good pay for right person. E-mail [patmkelley@att.net](mailto:patmkelley@att.net).

# Team helps raze church in Haiti

By Bob Jeppson  
Woods Chapel (Odessa)  
and Wesley Chapel Kingsville

On May 17, 2010 our UVMIM work team of twelve, led by Nick Elliott from the Southeast Jurisdiction Conference, arrived on time in Port au Prince, Haiti, the poorest nation in the western hemisphere. Upon clearing immigration and customs the results and images of the devastating earthquake began to unfold. We were among the first United Methodist work teams to begin serving the Haitian people. We had a work task, but our purpose was to serve the Haitian people. As United Methodists we are serving the Methodist Church of Haiti. We are working at their direction and prioritization

The devastation is almost impossible to describe. It is akin to describing the awe of the Grand Canyon in words and photos and yet both fall woefully short. To fully comprehend you have to witness it yourself, though this UVMIM trip is not for everyone. I have been with several teams serving in disaster areas in the past and I can assure you, you have never seen anything like this. It can take a huge emotional toll. Everywhere you look there is damage and human suffering. You see tents, often fields of

tents, which are housing displaced families everywhere. Even if a building has been deemed safe, the emotional impact has people afraid to return inside for fear of becoming another victim of another earthquake.

After spending the night at the Methodist Guest House in Petitionville, our team traveled to Petit Goave which is south and west of Port au Prince. The trip took 2 ½ hours though it was only about 70 miles away. Petit Goave is the town where an Eye Clinic was located and destroyed. The clinic was where a UVMIM team was serving at the time of the earthquake and a member of that team died. We took time one afternoon to visit the site and pray. It was a very solemn sobering time, no one spoke when we returned to the vans as well as during the ride back to the guest house.

Our base was the Methodist Guest House in Petit Goave. Though not structurally damaged, the guest house was restored by the team before us. There had been a fire as a result of a broken propane line during the earthquake. Pastor Maude, the superintendent of the circuit, was our host. The circuit is equivalent to our districts. Our project for the week was in Fond Doux which is a small village about another 30



minute drive west of Petit Goave.

Most teams come to build; build churches, build homes, build schools, build clinics etc. Our team was given the responsibility to tear down the church building in Fond Doux. When we first saw the church we thought we were at the wrong location. At first glance everything seemed fine. We then discovered the front wall was separated, leaning and about to fall as well as other structural damage that was not apparent at first sight. There is no place to rent a Bobcat or other implements of destruction. There is no Lowes or Home Depot where you can go for supplies, tools or even use the bathroom. We arrived at the work site with 5 shovels, 2 picks, a sledge hammer, a hacksaw, a wheel barrow, a rope and our work gloves. It wasn't that we were ill-prepared, we had plenty of tools. We just didn't need them for this task. Together with five Haitian workers we dismantled the church in Fond Doux and got the site ready for a new church building. It was hot (95 degrees) and we worked in the sun.

Though we had plenty of drinking water, the heat took its toll. Some days we returned earlier than planned to the guest house due to the heat. It should be noted the un-air conditioned guest house did not always have

electricity. Generally the government's power would come on around 6:00 pm and hopefully stayed on through the night. Our showers were trickles of water fed from a holding tank on the roof. One night we returned only to find we had no bathing water at all. Our motto was: "If you wanted the comforts of home, you should have stayed at home". The food was great. We had two Haitian cooks who prepared Haitian dishes as well as some Haitian food that had been a bit Americanized. We were well fed. It was good to eat the local cuisine.

A huge blessing of the trip was the Haitian people and specifically the children. Our work site often had 50 to 80 people, most of which were children. Team members held a type of VBS though this was not really in the original plan. The kids are like kids anywhere. They like to laugh, play games, are fast learners and they love to be loved. It is very hard to look at a child who is undernourished, has ring worm, is barely clothed and has no shoes. A couple of times team members were approached by a parent asking them to take a child home. You can only imagine the love it must take for a parent to make that kind of request. As a note for future teams, expect this and realize

there is nothing you can do. It is also difficult to have a person say to you they are hungry or thirsty. We tried to provide fresh drinking water for all as well as some sacks of rice and crackers as a temporary fix. The rice was given to the local pastor to distribute on a need basis. The local pastor is best to determine this need.

On Sunday before we left we worshiped under a tarp with the Petit Goave Methodist Church. Their church building is damaged. The service lasted for about two hours though the time went fast. I had the opportunity to deliver a message of hope. This was done through an interpreter. I knew what I wanted to say and I hoped the people understood the same through interpretation. Personally, this was a huge honor, a privilege as well as very humbling.

I have been asked, "Would you go back"? I would in a minute. Though you are among people in severe poverty, the devastation is beyond description and the living conditions are uncomfortable at best; there is an enormous need and one that does not get met without personal sacrifice, both emotional and physical. The people of Haiti were challenged through their poverty before the earthquake and now that challenge is magnified exponentially.



Bob Jeppson is shown here with Haitian children.

## Disaster training to be in June

Early Response Team (ERT) training is specialized for teams responding in the early stages of a disaster following the emergency response phase. Topics for this

training include debris cleanup, spiritual and emotional care, chainsaw safety, etc. Training will be held June 18 (6:30-9:00 pm)-19 (8:30 am-4:00 pm) at First UMC

in Blue Springs, MO. The cost per person is \$20. Please pre-register at [http://www.umocm.com/vim\\_events.htm](http://www.umocm.com/vim_events.htm).