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Seven members from First UMC in Morris, Ill., spent about a week in Texas helping homeowners pick up the pieces following Hurricane Harvey. Photos courtesy Colin Monk.

*“People are so happy to have someone to talk with and hopefully we are giving them a little hope.”*



## Northern Illinois United Methodists help with hurricane relief

As Hurricane Harvey was taking aim at Texas, Colin Monk from First United Methodist Church in Morris, Ill., (FUMC) was ready to jump into action. Monk helps lead the church's Early Response Team (ERT) who are trained to respond in a disaster.

As soon as Monk received clearance from the Rio Texas Annual Conference, the seven-member team from FUMC headed out for the 15+ hour drive towards Houston on Sept. 1.

“They told us not to count on overnight accommodations and we would need to be self-sufficient,” said Monk which didn't stop them from going to the area to help. “We packed up the truck with all our supplies, food and tents.”

Once in Texas, the ERT team headed to Corpus Christi and then Refugio, a small community 55 miles north where nearly every building was damaged from Harvey.

“We tarped a lot of damaged roofs, cut and removed fallen trees and cleaned up debris under extremely hot and humid conditions,” said Monk.

Monk and others from FUMC first became ERT certified fol-

lowing a 2013 tornado which hit nearby Diamond, Ill., so they could be prepared if a disaster hit home. Since then they've helped victims of tornadoes in Coal City, Rochelle and Ottawa. Last year they traveled to West Virginia to help residents recover from disastrous flooding.

“The work is hard and rewarding,” said Monk who is also chair of the Grundy County Community Organizations Active in Disaster. “But even more rewarding is the relationships we build, meeting the homeowners, talking to them, and listening to their stories.”

The team helped one homeowner in Corpus Christi who rode out the hurricane hiding in her fireplace. “We helped her with some general cleanup and we did a lot of listening on her front porch,” said Monk. “The people are so happy to have someone to talk with and hopefully we are giving them a little hope.”

The team returned home on Sept. 10 tired but renewed in their faith turning their attention to Florida and where God is leading them next.

*continued on page 4 see, From the Cover: Relief*



**MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
THROUGH A DONATION**

- To make an offering to UMCOR to help those affected in the U.S. by natural disasters you can give to the U.S. Disaster Response & Advance #901670.
- To keep relief supplies in stock, give to Material Resources Advance #901440.
- To help those affected by disasters outside the U.S. such as the Caribbean donate to Disaster Response, International Advance #982450.
- Go to [www.umcor.org/Donate](http://www.umcor.org/Donate).
- If you or your church are interested in making relief kits please download the list of items here: [www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies](http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies)

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# Why? I Am a United Methodist . . .

*"The United Methodist Church became my home - no matter where I went."*



Rev. Lisa Kruse-Safford

**Rev. Lisa Kruse-Safford,  
Rockford District Superintendent**

I have been a United Methodist for exactly 30 years now. My father, a Lutheran preacher's kid, experienced a break with the church and consequently, I didn't grow up going to church on a regular basis. I was in college when that all changed.

My mother, Sharon Holmes, and her husband, Ron, invited me to attend church with them at Sycamore UMC. It was the influence and friendship of Paul Meyers that eventually got me through those doors. Once through those doors, my heart was God's!

I worshipped weekly, took Disciple Bible Study, was a part of a young adult group, taught Sunday School to a bunch of 5th grade boys, and provided leadership to the junior high and high school youth groups.

I remember on the eve of my 20th birthday, kneeling in the dark sanctuary late after a youth group meeting and telling God, "I've lived my life my way for the last 20 years. Now I want to live it your way."

I have sought to live out that promise as a faithful Christian within The United Methodist Church.

What I found in The United Methodist Church: the pervasive theology of grace, the emphasis on both personal and social holiness, the openness to ask questions and not be laughed at or judged, the theory and practice of the Wesleyan quadrilateral, and the emphasis on discipleship - all made sense to me. Faith was finally relevant in my life and the church became my spiritual home - and even more. The United Methodist Church became my home - no matter where I went. I have sought to live out that promise as a faithful Christian within the United Methodist Church. after your way."

As I went to Virginia to serve as a US-2 missionary...as I went to Wesley Seminary in Washington DC...as I went to my first appointment in Jarratt, VA...as I went to LaMoille, IL, to Poplar Grove, to Elgin and now to Rockford...everywhere I have gone, I have been at home, because my home is The United Methodist Church.

*"I appreciated its worship where songs, prayers, and the Word come together."*



Rev. Young-Mee Park

**Young-Mee Park,  
DeKalb District Superintendent**

When I was growing up (in the 60s, in Korea), my family moved around, and each time, we went to the church that was in our neighborhood. We did not pay too much attention to whether it was a Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, or something else. Christianity was a new faith which my mother's family embraced just a generation ago. And, for us, church was church. We did not think that denominational differences made any difference.

Several ministers were raised in my extended family, and they are Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists. I, myself, was a Bapti-Pres-Pentecostal until I found home in The United Methodist Church.

When I enrolled in Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, I still was not a Methodist, nor did I have a clear sense of call to pastoral ministry. I just had so

many questions about life of faith. However, it was then and there that I found the beauty and strength of Methodism, as well as the purpose of my life as a person of faith.

I rejoiced in the ability of The United Methodist Church to hold two seemingly paradoxical aspects of faith in tension and balance - personal piety and social holiness, work of mercy and pursuit of justice, divine grace and human responsibility. I appreciated its worship where songs, prayers, and the Word come together. Finally, I found it greatly powerful that the United Methodist Church appointed clergy without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age.

Thanks be to God! I am a proud Methodist striving to live my life as faithfully as I can, all for the sake of Christ Jesus, all to the glory of God's names, and all in the power of the Holy Spirit!



## *Bishop's Column: What's your call story?*

One year when I was a district superintendent in East Ohio, I asked all of my churches to have a clergyperson and a layperson talk about their call. Many congregations had never heard their pastor's call story before that church conference. The many ways that God works in and through our lives to call us into full-time Christian service is amazing! That year the church conferences were incredibly inspiring for us all!

The Northern Illinois Board of Ordained Ministry has designated Sunday, November 12, 2017, to be Day of Call. Every clergyperson is encouraged to share his or her call story with the congregation. I believe that sharing these stories of our call produces amazing results!

For instance, when I was the pastor of a local church in East Ohio, I had a clergy friend whose name is Sally. She was going to be visiting our church one Sunday and so we decided to do a "dialogue sermon." We called it "To Sally Forth." It was the telling of our call stories and how God had sent us forth to serve. (You may know that the word sally means to journey out from where one is.) Unfortunately I remember more about what happened in the midst of the sermon than I do about what we actually said. Sally didn't want to relinquish her notes so she placed them on a stand. The church didn't have air conditioning and it was really hot. In the midst of the sermon, a breeze blew through and blew her notes under the piano. She wasn't inclined to go under there and get them! We laughed all afternoon about what had happened because she had ended up preaching without notes which was the one thing she didn't want to do!

But out of that sermon, a woman in the church revealed to me later that she had been discerning a call to ministry but didn't know quite how to approach it. Our sermon opened the door for her, giving her language and permission to talk about it. She went to seminary and was ordained.

One of the things I learned during the course of the earlier mentioned church conferences that fall was that there wasn't much "sowing the seeds" for ministry going on in most

congregations. A consistent part of the story was someone, often a clergyperson, had said to them, "Have you ever considered ministry?" to them as a teenager or later in life. But clergy and laity weren't as likely to do that as they had in the past, according to our conversations.

Several times the parent of a teenager would say that he or she mentions ministry to a son or daughter but knows that if someone else would, it would go a lot farther, inviting others in the church who see something in his or her child to say something. I hope that as part of the NIC Day of Call both clergy and laity will look around and think about people—young and not as young—who you see in ministry.

But I also believe laity have a calling on their lives, too. God's call isn't just to full-time Christian service or even to do the work of the church. God's call touches on all that we do, all that we have, and all that we are. At one church conference, the pastor had a young girl about 14 years old share about how she perceived God was calling her. She was a beautiful, radiant young woman with long, curly strawberry blonde hair and a smile from ear to ear, even with her braces on.

She stood in front of a rather large group of adults and said that she didn't know exactly what God wanted her to do with her life, but she knew God had a claim on it. She wanted to live her life in such a way that she would always be open to what it was that God wanted her to be and do.

After we all regained our composure following her heartfelt and moving witness to God's call, I said the only thing that came to mind: "What she will be has not yet been revealed" (1 John 3:2). Answering God's call is always an adventure and we never know quite where it will take us.

How has and is God calling you?

~ Bishop Sally Dyck

(You can find a video of the bishop's call story at <https://vimeo.com/umcnic>)

# This I Celebrate!

By Rev. Martin Lee, Dir. of Congregational Development and Redevelopment

One of the key questions asked of participants in the Institute for Congregational Development is, "How many new people have you met this week?" In order for the church to reach new people, we have to go where people are. Pastor Mike Jones took this question to heart. He took a risk to cast a net for Christ, asking six people from his congregation to help him. Mike is pastor at Bethel UMC in Shannon, a small village in the Rockford District, population 757.

Together, they prepared to start a new Sunday worship service by the lake at Lake Carroll. Three generations of Omar and Jan Wilhelms' family stepped forward to offer their support in connecting with people in this new ministry setting. The service is held weekly at 8:30 a.m. Sunday morning from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

At the beginning, the group did not know whether anyone would join them for worship in this new setting. In preparation for initiating this ministry, Pastor Mike held prayer meetings. He posted a live stream on his Facebook so that others could join him in prayer. Week after week, more people responded to this prayer movement. At the first service, one woman asked, "Do you take Lutherans?" Janis Jones replied with a big smile, "Yes, all are welcomed here!"

I had the privilege to worship with them at Lake Carroll on Labor Day weekend. I saw people come with their lawn chairs, bringing coffee and donuts. The setting was so beautiful. It was a perfect day to worship outside in the glory of God's creation. I could have sung "How Great Thou Art" even without piano accompaniment. What a great day to worship God with so many of God's people. Eighty-two people attended this last outdoor service of the year. Pastor Mike invited everyone back for another season in the benediction, saying, "It has been great to worship with you all - see you next year!"

"We have been averaging between 80 to 90 persons in worship and 130 people attended on Independence Day weekend," said Jeff, Omar's son-in-law. Pastor Mike indicated that 600 of the 900 homeowners around the lake are not four-season residents. They come to Lake Carroll for recreation and relaxation. But they need not only physical refreshment but also spiritual renewal in their lives. "It's been wonderful to hear about this outreach ministry" said the Rev. Lisa Kruse-Safford, Rockford District Superintendent.

Pastor Jones said that in the near future he would like to hold ongoing worship services in this resort community. Through this powerful new ministry, Mike has had the opportunity to baptize one person in Lake Carroll.

Together we can make a difference!

This I Celebrate!



Bethel UMC started Sunday worship services by the lake this summer to reach out to seasonal homeowners in the area.

*"It's been wonderful to hear about this outreach ministry."*

## Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors championing for immigrants and refugees

The Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors (NIJFON) will celebrate with its 6th annual fundraiser on Oct. 22, 2017, between 4-7 p.m. at Two Brothers Roundhouse in Aurora. The annual fundraiser's new location this year is just blocks from the Aurora clinic.

Guests are invited to come Act for Immigrants and support the work of NIJFON as they continue to protect immigrants by providing free, high quality legal services and invite allies to learn about complex immigration issues and advocate for justice.

Tickets are \$60 and can be purchased online at [nijfon.org](http://nijfon.org) or by sending a check to NIJFON at P.O. Box 68892, Schaumburg, IL 60168.

At the event, NIJFON will honor the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), and NIJFON board member and immigration attorney Sara Dady with the Champions for Justice Award.

In its second year, the award highlights an outstanding contributor to the Northern Illinois JFON and its mission of providing free, high quality immigration legal services, education and advocacy on immigration issues. The first year the award went to founding board members Rev. Michael Mann and Rev. Dr. Lisl Heymans Paul for their efforts in starting Northern Illinois JFON.

This year the awardees have in common their outstanding dedication to immigrants and refugees through service, advocacy and education. ICIRR's mission is to promote the rights of immigrants and refugees to full and equal participation in the civic, cultural, social, and political life of our diverse society. Under extremely difficult circumstances, ICIRR led a coalition (including JFON as a member) that this year had some notable victories:

- With Healthy Communities Cook County (HC3) expanded health care access for the uninsured.
- With the Just Democracy Coalition, passed Automatic Voter Registration to ensure all voters have a voice.
- And with the Campaign for a Welcoming IL, passed the Illinois Trust Act that provides the strongest protections for immigrants in the country.

Particularly helpful, ICIRR also included NIJFON for the first time in the New Americans Initiative, which allowed them to provide citizenship classes to 92 people and citizenship and DACA services to 101 people.

"It's an honor to be recognized by NIJFON and share in these victories with you," said Lawrence Benito, CEO/Executive Director of ICIRR. "None of these campaigns would be possible without individuals daring to dream of a world more just, more accepting, more equitable. Individuals, and organizations like NIJFON, who across communities, faiths, and sectors, in their words and actions, empower others to find their voice and their calling as well."

Sara Dady is one of those individuals. An immigration attorney with the firm Dady and Hoffman, LLC, Dady hung up her shingle in Rockford when no non-profit immigration legal services and very few private immigration firms existed there. (Hers was the only one between Elgin and the Mississippi River!) Seeing that her office alone could not fulfill the need for immigration legal services throughout the Rockford area, Dady saw an opportunity to join the board of NIJFON in March 2012 and among her other achievements she advocated for opening the third JFON clinic in Rockford. As a board member, she not only provides financial support for the organization, she shares her expertise and leadership by offering Know Your Rights and Immigrant Ally Workshops in congregations and communities.

Dady was instrumental in connecting with ICIRR to highlight the need for the New Americans Initiative in the Rockford area and was a leader in the efforts to prevent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from renting detention space from the Winnebago County Jail. After extreme opposition led by Dady, other volunteers of NIJFON and allies such as the League of Women Voters and ICIRR, Sheriff Gary Caruana withdrew his proposal to the Winnebago County Board.

"I'm extremely honored to be recognized," said Dady when she learned of the award. "My personal highlight is the opportunity to serve with an amazing group of advocates dedicated to justice for immigrants!"

Please plan on attending the NIJFON fundraiser on Sunday, Oct. 22. For more information or to receive an order form you can download to send with a check, please contact

[susan.yanun@nijfon.org](mailto:susan.yanun@nijfon.org)



*"I'm extremely honored to be recognized."*

# United Methodists helping those devastated by Irma

By Kathy L. Gilbert, UMNS

UMNS- Filling coolers of ice, loading trucks with diapers and chain saws and cooking community “cleaning out the freezer” dinners are some of the ways United Methodists in Florida responded to their neighbors left devastated by Hurricane Irma.

Florida Area Bishop Kenneth H. Carter Jr. and a conference assessment team made a 325-mile roundtrip across the peninsula of Florida and along U.S. Highway 27 on Sept. 13 to pray with residents and listen to stories of survival and loss from Hurricane Irma.

“We heard testimonies of broken people who are already feeding hundreds in their communities. At times, it was honest and raw. At times it was healing and almost hopeful,” Carter said.

Michele Garrett, on staff at Suntree United Methodist Church in Melbourne, Florida, couldn’t hold back the tears as she talked about her church loading up a 20-foot truck to send to two United Methodist congregations in the Florida Keys.

Suntree has a special connection to Big Pine Key and Key West United Methodist churches. The Revs. John and Terri Hill, who lead those churches, are former pastors of Suntree. The Florida Keys were hard hit and people are just being allowed back into the area.

“I was bawling my eyes out when they closed the truck,” Garrett said. “Every single inch of that truck was packed. We had to put some stuff in the dining hall.”

Garrett said the outpouring of the community — mostly United Methodist churches in the area — was astounding since the only way they communicated the need for supplies was through Facebook.

“People wanted a way to express their love and support,” she said. “My house is fine. I barely lost power and I have zero damage.”

Giving was a way to be useful, she said.

Garrett told the story of one family who was on their way back to Miami when they heard about what Suntree was doing.

“They had evacuated to Georgia and were on their way back home. They pulled off the road and went to Target and dropped stuff off. They were part of the evacuation and they didn’t even know what they are going home to — but they made sure to donate.”

The church also has a huge ice maker and they gave out coolers of ice to anyone who came to the building.

Jan Marie Etzel, who is on the leadership team at Cornerstone United Methodist Church in Naples, Florida, is without power, though her home is undamaged.

She said her neighborhood of Ibis Cove Circle is diverse with many different cultures and ethnicities but until the storm, many did not really talk to each other.

Etzel manages the church’s large community garden, which includes 197 tropical fruit trees. And she had plenty of frozen vegetables in her freezer. When she saw her neighbor across the street fire up his grill, she and other neighbors starting bringing over food from their freezers.

“Everybody came over and other people brought grills. Instead of losing the food we used it to feed each other,” she said. “The meal was incredible because it brought us all together and the flavors were just amazing.”

Carter said he was in awe of the courage and faith he saw in people whose lives were devastated.

“We met with pastors and lay leaders. We prayed in English and Spanish. We saw homes surrounded by water and sanctuaries drenched by the flood. We stood with people who have no clean water, no electricity, no internet access and no air conditioning. Some have no immediate prospects for any of this,” he said.

The bishop and a conference assessment team traveled from Lakeland to Naples to Immokalee to Sebring back to Lakeland on Sept. 13.

“We basically followed the path of Hurricane Irma’s landfall onto the peninsula of Florida and its path along the U.S. Highway 27 Corridor, one of the most impoverished regions of our conference,” Carter said.

The assessment team included the Rev. Alex Shanks, assistant to the bishop; Pam Garrison, disaster response coordinator; the Rev. Clarke Campbell-Evans, director of missional engagement; and the Rev. Rini Hernandez, district superintendent of the South West district.

Etzel said she has been meditating on all that has happened since the hurricane hit. “I am grateful for the storm because it really teaches a lot of lessons.”

Gilbert is a multimedia reporter for United Methodist News Service. Contact her at 615-742-5470 or [newsdesk@umcom.org](mailto:newsdesk@umcom.org).



First United Methodist Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., is surrounded by floodwaters following Hurricane Irma. Photo courtesy of First United Methodist Church in Fort Lauderdale via Facebook.

## From the Cover: Relief



Crete UMC coordinated a cleaning bucket collection adding to the efforts in the Rockford District.



Pastor Terry McDorman (center), Rev. SoYoung Kim (right) of First UMC in Bensenville and members of the congregation light candles for the victims of Hurricane Harvey during a prayer service on Sept. 5 at Wood Dale UMC.

### Cleaning Bucket Collection

The Rockford District started a cleaning bucket collection effort through the month of September. Several churches including Pecatonica, First UMC in Belvidere, Thomson, Evans in Machesney Park, Christ UMC in Rockford, and others have donated items. Christ UMC served as a drop-off location and District Mission Coordinator John Stelter planned to deliver the buckets to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center in Chatham, Ill.

The DeKalb District Hub Cluster brought cleaning bucket supplies to their September meeting. Crete UMC also collected dozens of buckets with local businesses, as well as the Police and Fire Departments, donating supplies. Many other churches took special offerings for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). Kingswood UMC in Buffalo Grove, Ill., collected nearly \$10,000 dollars over three Sundays.

The Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC) also encourages monetary donations or supplies bought through DollarDays as one of the best ways to donate since they are shipped

### Prayers from Wood Dale

Wood Dale Community UMC held a Tuesday evening Ecumenical prayer service on September 5 to pray for those who have suffered great loss following Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, as well as for the first responders and volunteers who have been helping to bring hope and restoration to the residents of Texas and Florida.

Pastor Terry McDorman said when seeing images of the overwhelming devastation, rescues, and suffering it’s easy to feel helpless, but this is the time to ask ourselves what we can do to help.

“The first task is to pray,” said McDorman. “Then ask yourself

directly to MMDC at the Center’s bulk prices.

To find out more information visit [midwestmissiondc.org](http://midwestmissiondc.org). Monetary donations may also be sent to: MMDC at PO Box 56 in Chatham, IL 62629.

### Volunteers

The Texas Annual Conference is ready to receive volunteer teams to assist with Hurricane Harvey relief. The work consists mainly of cleaning out flooded homes and requires extensive physical labor. They prefer that at least one member of your team be ERT trained. Teams should bring their own protective gear and tools.

All members need proof of Safe Sanctuary training and clear background check from your local United Methodist Church. You will be housed at a host church in the conference. Team leaders can register their team at [www.txcumc.org](http://www.txcumc.org) or visit the Rio Texas Conference website [riotexas.org/harvey](http://riotexas.org/harvey). If your church is interested in ERT training, contact NIC Disaster Response Coordinator Rev. Christian Vosteen at [pastorcls@aol.com](mailto:pastorcls@aol.com).

what it is you can offer, maybe it’s a contribution to UMCOR, no matter how small, or maybe you can send food or maybe even go to the area yourself to help. We need to look at the disaster of these hurricanes as an opportunity to serve others.”

The congregation also lit candles in memory of the at least 60 lives lost in Texas and asked for continued prayers for those in the path of Irma.

For the latest disaster relief information, especially as we track Hurricane Maria, visit the NIC Disaster Response Facebook page [www.facebook.com/nicdisaster](http://www.facebook.com/nicdisaster)

# Responding to mudslides in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone continues to recover from a devastating mudslide triggered by torrential downpours and a series of heavy floods in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone on Aug. 14.

Sierra Leone's Office of National Security (ONS) estimated more than 3,000 people lost their homes.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) immediately contacted United Methodist partners in Sierra Leone and dispersed a \$10,000 emergency grant to The United Methodist Church in Sierra Leone.

The Pan-African Rural Health and Social Services (PRHeSS) ministry in Chicago founded by Dr. Samuel Kormoi and part of the NIC Rainbow Covenant as a Global Advance Project (#3021290) teamed up with the Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church to ship bulky donations they received shortly after the mudslide.

Kormoi then flew to his native homeland of Sierra Leone in September to bring much needed drugs and medical supplies.

"I spent my first week in Freetown, Sierra Leone working alongside the UMCOR team, and Sierra Leone Conference, headed by Mr. Alex Jusu," said Kormoi. "We were busy treating the wounded, attending to the sick and as difficult as it was, telling them about God's love for us, all His children. I felt so empty. I only wished that I could do more."

Kormoi says three weeks after the mudslide many orphaned children have been placed into homes of distant relatives, but said there are many more orphans yet to be cared for or adopted by families.

UMCOR reports that the government of Sierra Leone has established two temporary living settlements for the survivors of the mudslide who are now displaced. The supply of food and non-food items is ongoing with the help of various organizations.

UMCOR also reports that schools have reopened in the area, however, many children have not been able to go back because of lack of access to reopened schools. There is also an inadequate supply of school materials. Like any other disaster, it will be a long journey towards recovery, but UMCOR is committed to the long haul.

You can help by partnering with UMCOR and giving to Advance #982450 to

support their response to international disasters. Visit [www.UMCOR.org/Donate](http://www.UMCOR.org/Donate).

If you would like to support PRHeSS ministry visit [www.africanhopeanddignity.org](http://www.africanhopeanddignity.org) to donate or send a check to PRHeSS ministry, P.O.Box 1071, Homewood, IL 60430. Remember to write, "Disaster relief" in your memo.



Distant relatives are accepting orphans of the mudslide into their homes, but this picture shows orphans who are yet to be cared for by the nation or adopted by families. Photo courtesy Dr. Samuel Kormoi.

## Calling all for a day of call By Rev. Jeffrey Bross, Flowing Grace UMC

"Every local church should intentionally nurture candidates for licensed or ordained ministry, providing for spiritual and financial support" (Book of Discipline: Par. 247.8).

God is calling. Are we listening? Do we hear the call of God whispering in the night to follow? Do we understand the shouts of Christ sending us into the world to serve? Do we feel the gentle nudge of the Holy Spirit to preach and teach and serve?

I was someone who needed a lot more than a whisper, a shout and a nudge to finally respond to God's invitation to servant leadership in The United Methodist Church. I must have ignored God dozens of times and yet, God's patience finally won and the call became clear and I obeyed. Maybe we are like Saul, Simon, Samuel, Moses, Martha, Jacob or Abraham who need our names said twice to make us listen. God is in need of leaders, deacons, elders, educators, missionaries and so much more. Are we willing to hear and to respond?

The Board of Ordained Ministry is asking each church to celebrate a DAY OF CALL on Sunday, November 12. Pastors, share your own call story. Invite those who attended seminary out of your congregation to come back or send video testimonies to utilize in worship. Offer resources for those who might be hearing the call to leadership. Please see Bishop Dyck's own call story in her monthly column on pg. 2.

Invite those who might be hearing a call to ordained ministry to be prayed over in wor-

ship. Motivate the staff parish team to "enlist, interview, evaluate, review and recommend annually to the charge conference lay preachers and persons for candidacy for ordained ministry (par. 258.2.g.9). Go back into the history of the church and celebrate anyone who has gone into ministry out of your local church. Encourage all persons to listen to God's call in their lives, whether it is to ordained ministry or lay ministry.

If you have any questions, would like help with worship resources, or would like to share worship ideas, or call success stories, contact me, Rev. Jeffrey Bross, BOOM recruitment team chair, at [pyropastor@gmail.com](mailto:pyropastor@gmail.com) or call 630-239-2321.

God is calling. Are we listening?



Rev. Jeffrey Bross (front right) celebrates the charter of Flowing Grace UMC in Aurora in June 2014

## Why Water Matters Summit – November 16-18 By Dr. Gene Green, Co-Chair, NIC Committee on Native American Ministries

Water is in the news.

Lead-laced water flowed into the drinking glasses of Flint, Michigan residents causing a public health crisis. The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe continues to fight against the Dakota Access Pipeline and the threats to their water supply and the environment. The EPA discovered that many residents of East Chicago were drinking water with elevated lead levels and declared that the problem was likely system-wide. Multiple Chicago Public Schools are reported to have dangerous levels of lead in drinking fountain water.

Water is in the gospel. From Genesis 1 when God separated the waters, to Jesus' request to the Samaritan woman for a drink and his promise of living water, the gospel celebrates water as essential for human life and a symbol for eternal life.

Water is life. Degradation of peoples' water supply is a matter of justice.

This November 16-18, Native American and United Methodist leaders will convene the summit "Why Water Matters" in Minneapolis, MN. This collaborative event will provide theological foundations for environmental action, teach faith and community leaders to engage in direct communication with government agencies and commercial companies that oversee the care of bodies of water, offer tools for creating effective solidarity with Native American spiritual and tribal leaders whose sources of water have become threatened, and empower individuals to create an action plan for water advocacy and sustainability in

their local communities.

The summit will be held at Embassy Suites Airport, Minneapolis, MN. Keynotes and presenters include Bishop Sally Dyck (Northern Illinois Conference), Bishop Bruce Ough (Minnesota and Dakotas Area), Chief Arvol Looking Horse (Lakota Nation), Dr. Randy Woodley (Cherokee Nation), Lionel Little Eagle Pinn (Mikmaq Nation), John Hill (General Board of Church & Society), Rev. E. Michelle Ledder (General Commission on Religion and Race), Rev. Paul Perez (Michigan Area) and Laura Pfeffer (Wisconsin Conference UMW). In addition, Bishop David Bard (Michigan Area) and Bishop Frank Beard (Illinois Great Rivers Conference) plan to participate.

Visit [www.whywatermatters.org](http://www.whywatermatters.org) to learn more. The event is open to all UMC members and leaders as well as anyone concerned about water justice. Come to the Water!



# The Art of Renew - New Faith Community forming in Itasca

By Rev. Bob Butler

*The Itasca: Bethany church closed in 2017. The Cabinet in cooperation with the Office of Congregational Development and Redevelopment launched a new church start at the Itasca site and appointed the Rev. Bob Butler as its church planter on July 1.*

I was recently asked by friend on the mission field, 'What have you been up to?' The question stunned me because I didn't know where to begin. How much of the last year and half do I share and where do you begin? I told her after my visits to Haiti I wrote a book, worked in a local homeless shelter, substituted in an alternative school, volunteered at a healthcare ministry for the undocumented and launched a ministry for the 'none, done and undone' all around us. She wisely retorted, 'But what are you up to now?' I took a deep breath and offered a description of the continuing mission.

The truth is the most recent mission in Itasca began in the middle of 2015. I was wrestling with God about the ideas of denominations, culture and the Church (big 'C'). I understood the scriptural ideas, witnessed tradition in action, experienced the cultural divide and even reasoned with the writings of those much more intelligent than me.

Unfortunately, the decline in American Christianity continued to break my heart. It wasn't until a good friend would share that the shortfalls, rationalization and justifications for the lack of expansion of God's kingdom were in part the maturing process every leader must accept. However, I just couldn't and still can't. My entrepreneurial past doesn't let me because I've seen life's greatest problems as gateways or nexus points for real innovation.

Every successful cultural movement begins with solving a riddle the rest of humanity is wrestling with. Unfortunately, the Christian riddle is often masked in well-meaning attempts to solve ancillary issues instead of getting to the heart of the riddle:

Why has Jesus and His message become irrelevant to the majority of Americans?

As the apostle Luke shared almost 2000 years ago:

"...The kingdom of God is not coming with something observable; no one will say, 'Look here!' or 'there!' For you see, the kingdom of God is among you." (HCSB)

It's with this understanding that the latest United Methodist faith community, Bethany Community Center has begun to strive to become an incarnational community journey. The faithful remnant are in prayer. The neighbors are wondering. The rumors are flying and we have been calling people to come and participate in the renewal. We are even asking like minded community organizations to let us come and join them as we discover our way to impact others.

We've begun reaching out in meaningful ways to address the community's need for relevant connection. We are surveying the community leaders, the neighbors and even the young people. We are learning and trying to signal a new direction.

This new direction will take on many forms. It begins with signaling the change by offering to address three societal issues - sexual abuse, addiction, relational and spiritual poverty.

In September, we held a community work day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. to rejuvenate the Bethany facility. This is not about members coming together for a meal and cleaning some windows. It's about going on mission locally.

Also in September, author, professional counselor and national speaker, Julie Woodley held a one day seminar for those who have experienced or want to be trained in Christian counseling of those suffering from childhood sexual abuse.

In October, Bethany Community Center will begin Renew, a weekday program for those wanting to explore community, questions of faith, and spirituality over a light dinner.

On a Tuesday November 7, Tim Ryan, the author, spokesperson and A&E personality, will hold an awareness event for those individuals and families affected by the Opioid epidemic. On December 9, we will have Peter and Ester Pereira (India Missionaries) come to share about his Hope For Today ministries over an authentic Indian lunch. On Christmas eve, we will offer a traditional Christmas service.

To learn more about any of these ideas, join the mission or send support, check out our website at: [communitycenter.life](http://communitycenter.life) or go to our Facebook page by searching: church4therestofus.



Elgin District Superintendent Rev. Darneather Murph-Heath and Rev. Bob Butler stand outside the Bethany Community center and site of a new church start in Itasca.

# New camp takes youth outside their element

By Anne Marie Gerhardt

More than 90 Chicago area youth from the city and suburbs ventured more than a hundred miles from home this past August to experience a three-day overnight camp and many firsts.

This was the first time away from home and their families for many of the youth, first time sleeping overnight somewhere besides the comfort of their own bed, and first time camping in a rural setting.

This was also the first ever Chicago Southern District youth camp held Aug. 13-16 at the Northern Illinois Conference's Camp Reynoldswood in Dixon, Ill., which is situated on 170 acres of woods and meadows on the banks of the Rock River.

Seventeen-year-old Chloe from Faith United Methodist Church in Chicago said this was her first overnight stay alone and said it will prepare her for college next year.

"I like the experience I got from the camp," said Chloe. "I was able to meet new people and learn more about my Lord and Savior Jesus."

It was also the first time horseback riding, learning archery, canoeing, star gazing and making s'mores.

"We've made s'mores in the church kitchen on a stove before, but that doesn't compare to making them on an open fire!" said South Shore UMC's Rev. Adonna Reid who brought 18 youth from her Chicago church, many who participated in the Safe Haven summer program which provides a safe place for Chicago Public School students to go when school's out.

"We had 12 baptisms on that Sunday morning and then we got on a bus and headed here to Camp Reynoldswood," said Reid who stayed and helped chaperone. "It's been a really great experience for each of the campers and I think it's helped solidify relationships with the Safe Haven families."

The Rev. Timothy Biel, Jr. from St. Andrew UMC in Homewood also brought several novice campers and said it was a great setting for the youth to bond, have fun, meet new friends, and hear faith stories.

"I believe at this age the commitments these youth make are going to guide and direct the rest of their lives," said Biel. "I think it's im-



Youth horseback ride, one of the favorite activities, through Camp Reynoldswood's trails at the first Chicago Southern District summer camp.



Bishop Sally Dyck joined campers for the day with team building activities.

portant for them to hear the staff and counselors' testimonies and to see where they fit into the body of Christ."

Chicago Southern District Superintendent Rev. Jacques Conway championed for the District-wide camp for youth grades 4-12 in hopes of offering a new experience and opportunity to meet new friends from different backgrounds and cultures.

"It was really interesting to see the bonding among people from different sides of the city and suburbs," said Conway. "The youth came together right after they got off the school busses and started mingling with people they just met."

Nivon, a 12-year-old from Faith UMC in Chicago, said he never had a "real" camping experience and despite the pesky mosquitoes he said he had a great time.

"My favorite thing was canoeing," said Nivon. "I learned not to lean in the canoe or you will tip over!"

Churches and individuals helped raise money to provide scholarships for many of the youth to attend.

"Thanks to the many contributions we were able to buy t-shirts and make sure that any child who wanted to would be able to go," said Conway.

On the last day of camp, the youth were already asking, planning, and wanting to come back next year.

Bishop Sally Dyck who stopped by the camp to greet the youth and volunteers said the Conference's camps and programs offer so many wonderful opportunities for not only our churches but the whole area. Eighteen churches from the Chicago Southern District sent youth to the camp, but not all were members of a congregation.

"This particular camp is really exciting," said Bishop Dyck. "It gave many of these youth, some who never have been out in the country, a place to just feel free to safely be themselves, learn about Jesus, and learn that other kids go to church and have a good time."

For more information on NIC Camps visit [www.niccamp.org](http://www.niccamp.org).

# October Calendar News

## Protecting the Cookie Jar!

**October 21, 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon**

**Location:** Rochelle UMC, 709 4th Ave, Rochelle, IL 61068

A workshop on local church internal controls sponsored by the Northern Illinois Conference Council on Finance and Administration and the Board of Trustees

Did you know that financial fraud in local churches is on the rise? It is also widely underreported.

Financial fraud does occur in local churches, even within the Northern IL Conference.

While this is troubling news, there is also good news. Financial fraud is very preventable through accountability, transparency and internal controls.

In this workshop you will learn best practices to protect your church and its cash assets (and credibility) from fraud and abuse.

The cost for the live event will be \$10/person or \$20/ church for 2 or more people. The cost for the live streaming will be \$10 per church.

To register and more information visit [www.umcnic.org/th\\_event/protectingcookiejar](http://www.umcnic.org/th_event/protectingcookiejar) Questions about the event, please contact Harry Nicol by e-mail at [harry1005@gmail.com](mailto:harry1005@gmail.com).

## Book of Discipline draft review

The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters is requesting that each Annual Conference provide feedback to a draft of a General *Book of Discipline*.

General Conference 2012 mandated the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters with clarifying which paragraphs in Part VI of the *Book of Discipline* (Part VI: Organization and Administration) apply for all regions of the world and which paragraphs may be adapted by central conferences. The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters submitted a "Draft of a General Book of Discipline" to General Conference 2016. The draft is a partial fulfillment as it covers only chapters 1-4 and 6 of Part VI. General Conference 2016 received the draft with appreciation and confirmed that a consultation shall be held in all annual conferences of The United Methodist Church worldwide during the year 2017.

The NIC General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegation is hosting a discussion, facilitated by Bishop Sharon Rader in order to gather information on this draft. All are invited to attend on October 21 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The location TBD (possibly Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary). For more information please check the weekly NIC eNews and website at [www.umcnic.org](http://www.umcnic.org).

## Shift Training Series

Are you doing things the same old way and getting the same old results? The Shifts for Leadership training offers a better way. Discover the tools and methods to move your congregation into healthy church systems that create a new way of doing life together. Learn how to make the shifts from:

- Fellowship to Hospitality
- Worship as an event to Worship as a Lifestyle
- Membership to Discipleship
- Serve Us to Service
- Survival Mentality to Generosity
- Imagine the possibilities for your congregation

**First Workshop:** Helping Congregations Back Into the Game of Effective Ministry by Phil Maynard

**Date:** Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2017, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Location:** The Augsburg Room at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American (ELCA) Churchwide Ministries Center, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago

**Registration Fee:** \$20 (lunch and workbook, per workshop)

For more info visit: [www.umcnic.org/th-event/shift](http://www.umcnic.org/th-event/shift)

Questions contact: Laura Lopez 312-346-9766 ext. 724 email: [llopez@umcnic.org](mailto:llopez@umcnic.org)

Sponsored by the NIC Office of Congregational Development and Redevelopment.



Shannon Priddy, UMW President

## UMW Annual Celebration

**October 28**

All are welcome to attend the NIC UMW Annual Celebration meeting, October 28 at Grace UMC, 300 E. Gartner Rd., Naperville, IL.

"Bold Living: A Matter of Focus" is the day's theme. What does that mean? Come find out!

Our day starts at 8:30 a.m with registration and ends about 3:00 p.m. with worship.

Shannon Priddy, our UMW national president, and daughter of our own NIC UMW President Dottie Priddy, will be our special keynote speaker!

All attendees will have a choice of three breakout focus groups for more learning:

- Climate Health
- Women's Health
- Racial Sensitivity

Check out the NIC UMW website at [umwnic.org](http://umwnic.org) for the registration form and a flyer with more information about the day. Hope to see you there!

## Coming Up in November . . .

### Drawing Closer to God

**November 4, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

**Location:** Barrington UMC,  
98 Algonquin Road, Barrington

Drawing Closer to God, an annual event sponsored by the Spiritual Formation Committee of the Northern Illinois Conference, will be held this fall. Please mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend.

The day includes worship, a keynote address, and two workshop sessions. Lunch is included. There are opportunities for conversations with other people, quiet time, and labyrinth walking.

Our keynote speaker this year will be the Rev. Dr. Regina Davis-Bridges. Her presentation is "Spiritual Pathways: Drawing Closer to God Using our Own Unique Paths."

She will also offer a workshop "Prayer and Personality Type: Creating Your Own Individualized Plan for Spiritual Growth."

Other workshops are Praying in Color, Labyrinth Walking, Spiritual Journaling, and Biblical Storytelling as a Spiritual Practice. For more info and registration visit [www.umcnic.org/SpiritForm2017](http://www.umcnic.org/SpiritForm2017).



### EQUIP your church

### for transformation

**November 11, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

*TeamWorks: "Futurecasting"*

One session remains for a TeamWorks training hosted by the NIC Office of Congregational Development and Redevelopment with Dr. Craig Kennet Miller from Discipleship Ministries.

The fourth and final session will be at Belvidere: First United Methodist Church, 610 Bonus Ave., Belvidere, IL on Saturday, November 11, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

If you have questions, contact Laura Lopez at (312) 346-9766 x724 or [llopez@umcnic.org](mailto:llopez@umcnic.org).

Register online at [www.umcnic.org](http://www.umcnic.org).

#GIVINGTUESDAY



**Connect Your Passion  
with God's Mission  
November 28**

On November 28, 2017, United Methodists will once again come together to support the work of Advance missionaries and projects on UMC #GivingTuesday.

Consider supporting a project in an area you care about, such as food and agriculture, church development, disaster response and relief, education, health, economic empowerment, social justice, WASH/Water and Sanitation, women and children, and mission personnel.

Find UMC #GivingTuesday banners/ads, FAQs, impact stories, and links to videos and other resources to help you participate in the campaign and search for projects on the website at [www.umcmisson.org/giving-tuesday](http://www.umcmisson.org/giving-tuesday).



DYK???

## Did You Know “Boundaries have value”

By Rev. Arlene Christopherson, Assistant to the Bishop/Dir. Connectional Ministries

Every summer, newly appointed and assigned pastors in the Northern Illinois Conference receive Boundary and Ethics training. Every four years all those under appointment or assigned are required to take a “refresher course” in professional ethics and boundaries. This fall, all our appointed and assigned clergy will participate in mandatory boundary and ethics training.

This work comes out of a deep commitment to our Wesleyan value of “Do no Harm, Do Good and Stay in Love with God”. Professionals in business, medicine, law and many helping professions are held to a high standard in their interactions with clients, patients and customers. In some states the violation of professional boundaries and ethics is a criminal offense. Clergy likewise are entrusted with the most vulnerable among us – including children, older adults and people in distress.

We know from research and experience that the best equipped and trained clergy can still cross ethical or sexual boundaries if not trained and self-aware of their own needs and the power of their position as well as the impact of their actions. Boundary training is more than the don'ts of ministry, although a few simple rules are important. Boundaries are also about self-care, balance in our life and work, awareness of our own vulnerabilities and clarity in our role as pastoral care givers. Boundaries are about caring for ourselves physically and spiritually so we can be the best leaders possible in our ministry settings.

This year our boundary trainer will be Dr. Becky Posey Williams, Senior Director of Sexual Ethics and Advocacy for The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. Dr. Williams says “Healthy boundaries sustain all of our relationships and bring

joy to ministry. Understanding boundaries in the multiple ministry roles is crucial for healthy and safe faith communities. This workshop will encourage the awareness of power and vulnerability in ministerial relationships, explore dual relationships and the challenges they present, as well as the importance and necessity of self-care in establishing health boundaries. “

It's something we do not often consider as we turn to our pastor for leadership, counseling, teaching, church administration and support. Pastors are people too. Pastors have families and personal responsibilities. Pastors have good days and bad days. Pastors have demands we cannot see and may never know about. Pastors are asked to walk alongside us in times of deep distress and high emotion, work that can deplete anyone's reserves. All this reminds us that an effective pastor needs time to stay engaged spiritually, physically healthy, and emotionally grounded.

Boundaries work best when we know what they are and respect the roles and responsibilities of others. We place much expectation on our clergy to set healthy boundaries for ministry, but living out those boundaries takes partnership between clergy and laity. No one can be all things to all people.

Our churches are filled with dynamic, effective, spirited laity. We are at our best when we enhance the skills and talents of lay and clergy, one with the other. This is a boundary that leads to deep discipleship and the health of our churches. Healthy people, building healthy churches that in turn develop healthy new disciples.

Boundaries have value.



## October finance report

By Rev. Rob Hamilton, CCFA Chair

It's been a wild and crazy past month. The amount of suffering worldwide is often too much for me to process.

Hurricanes. Floods. Mudslides. Wildfires. Rescinding of executive orders.

At times I want to hunker down in the quaint little town of my appointment and shut the world off because in my neck of the woods the suffering is manageable here. But our global 24-hour news cycle and social network make such isolation

impossible.

In the midst of it all, I am reminded of why our connection makes living faithfully as a disciple of Jesus and leading the people under my charge to grow in their discipleship and transform the world while the world seems to be groaning possible.

I recently read in USA Today of how integral the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is to government relief and recovery efforts. I reposted the article on my church's social media of how proud I am that UMCOR is there and 100% of every donated dollar goes to relief - far exceeding nearly every other charity and non-governmental organization out there. I'm proud we can deploy so effectively because of our connectional system. I am also reminded that apportionment dollars fund the administration; ERT

training; the logistics and storage. I'm also grateful that as oppression and injustice rear its ugly head, the General Board of Church and Society provides me the needed resources to pray, resist, and be active in bringing about change. It's all supported by our connection of people and dollars and churches.

I'll readily admit how God has bound the people called United Methodist is sometimes uneasy, uncomfortable and even unbearable. Our connection is flawed, just as I am flawed. But our connection is good, just as God is good. The resources of the connection have helped me live faithfully as a disciple of Jesus seeking the transformation of our groaning world. The resources of the connection have also helped me lead God's people under my charge to respond to this wild and crazy month with their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. (And I can do all of that because of how our connection has called, educated, trained, and deployed me).

As we near the last quarter of the year and seek to respond faithfully to all the suffering that is going on in the world, I invite you to: remember our connection; celebrate our faithful witness; be honest about our shortcomings; work hard to support the mission of our shared connection; and lead our churches to be faithful in their financial support of our connection through apportionment giving so that the good news can be proclaimed with our prayers, presence, gifts, and service in our growing alt-fact world.

Rob Hamilton is the CCFA Chair and Senior Pastor at Rochelle United Methodist Church.

## Camps & Outdoor Retreat Ministries

Thank you local NIC UMC churches--clergy and laity--for another successful, fun and Christ-centered Summer Camp season.

We're extending our office hours during the off-season, and consolidating down to two telephone numbers for each camp as listed below:

Both Camp Offices will support the following Office Hours: 10 am - 2 pm, Monday - Tuesday - Thursday - Friday  
Both Offices will be CLOSED Wednesdays.

### CONTACT Information

**Camp Reynoldswood:** [info@reynoldswood.org](mailto:info@reynoldswood.org)  
Office #: 815-284-6979/After Hours #: 815-494-9118

**Wesley Woods Retreat Center:** [info@lakeretreats.org](mailto:info@lakeretreats.org)  
Office #: 262-245-663/After Hours #: 815-494-5970



### Reynoldswood Confirmation Retreat Rescheduled

We have rescheduled the Reynoldswood Confirmation Retreat to Friday-Saturday, November 17-18 because so many of our local churches told us the September date was just too early.

Please call 815-284-6979, or send an e-mail to [program@reynoldswood.org](mailto:program@reynoldswood.org) to register your group for the Reynoldswood Retreat.



### Wesley Woods Winter Ski Camps

January: 1/26 - 1/28, 2018      February: 2/23 - 2/25, 2018

More details coming ... check our website for more news and events at [www.niccamp.org](http://www.niccamp.org).

### Stay Connected

Sign up for the weekly NIC eNews & Appointment Announcements and Sympathy notices.

Visit [www.umcnic.org](http://www.umcnic.org) and scroll down to enter your email and name under “Newsletter”.

### Job Openings

For the latest NIC job openings, visit [www.umcnic.org/jobs](http://www.umcnic.org/jobs)

### Submit News

Please submit items at least two weeks prior to publication date. Include your name, address, email, phone number and name of local church. Space is limited. Electronic submissions are preferred with high-resolution attached jpegs.

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