



the Centenarian

MARCH 2006

The official Newsletter of Centenary United Methodist Church, "The Miracle on McLemore"

"...all that God is doing with us, and through us, and sometimes, in spite of us, here at Centenary!"

The Write Reverend

Wellness is worth it!

"Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb. I thank you, High God--you're breathtaking! Body and soul, I am marvelously made! I worship in adoration--what a creation!



Dr. Herbert Lester, Jr.

You know me inside and out, you know every bone in my body; You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit, how I was sculpted from nothing into something. Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you, The days of my life all prepared before I'd even lived one day. "

—Psalm 139:13-16, The Message

" . . . didn't you realize that your body is a sacred place, the place of the Holy Spirit? Don't you see that you can't live however you please, squandering what God paid such a high price for? The physical part of you is not some piece of property

see WRITE on page 5

New Members



Ms. Veronica Burows



Ms. Monet Clarke



Mrs. Cynthia D. Haley



Mr. Billy J. Renfro

Mr. LaKeith Humphrey

Mrs. Bobbie J. Pierce

Mr. Kevin Shields

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and much more!

The Shepherding Ministry

Shepherding is "Christ coming for people through people," This is what the Shepherding Ministry at Centenary endeavors to do. This ministry is now under new leadership. The Shepherding Ministry welcomes the new coordinator Less Doll Twillie and new Co. Coordinator Geraldine Reed. We know that they will do well in these positions.

Helen Brown has served as coordinator for the past two years. She did an excellent job and we thank her for her dedicated services. Erma Williams who was the co-coordinator for several years has given up this position to work in other areas of the church. She was a member of the group that started the Shepherding Ministry. We appreciate all that she did in helping us lay the foundation for this ministry.

Hats off to the outgoing and incoming leadership of the Shepherding Ministry.

—Janice K. Sampson, Advisor

Shepherding Sharing

Retirement

Congratulations are extended to Johnnie Cooper and Bonnie Turner on their retirement in January. Johnnie Cooper retired from Kroger after 37 years of service and Bonnie Turner retired from Social Security after 35 years.

Deaths

We extend our prayers and sympathy to the families of:

- Mr. & Mrs. Willie Perry on the death of their daughter.
- The Amanda Hill family on her death.
- Hattye Strong on the death of her husband Freddie Strong.

The P.A.C.E. Ministry

(People Achieving in a Christian Environment)

The P.A.C.E. Ministry is the newest at Centenary United Methodist Church. The first session was held in June 2005. This ministry meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month from 10:00 A.M. - 12:00P.M. The group engages in prayer and praise, exercising, sing-a-long, and the playing of a variety of games. Delicious and healthy choice refreshments are enjoyed at the end of each session. The P.A.C.E. Setters enjoy the fellowship as they chat and chew. They look forward to attending the sessions. Members of the group have expressed that they have gotten to know some of the members of the church better after interacting with them in the P.A.C.E. Ministry. We invite all members and friends who are not working during the time that the P.A.C.E. Ministry meets to come and join us. Please come on board with us, there's room for many, many more.

—Janice K. Sampson, Founder
Shepherding Ministry Advisor

Laity Leadership

Centenarians, lets work together as a team and make this year a "Banner Year" for Centenary. Lets all become spiritually fixed in 2006. Make sure that you use those spiritual gifts that the Lord has given you. We also want to strive hard to carry out the duties of our ministries. Please focus on the poem below during the month. What is your answer? Are you involved in a job or a ministry? This is an important point to ponder.

A Job Or A Ministry

Some people have a JOB in the church, other involve themselves in a MINISTRY.

What is the difference?

If you are doing it because no one else will do it, it is a job.

If you are doing it to serve the Lord, it is a ministry.

If you quit because someone criticized you, it was a job.

If you keep on serving, it is a ministry.

If you do it as long as it does not interfere with your other activities, it is a job.

If you are committed to staying with it even when it means letting go of other things, it is a ministry.

If you quit because no one praised you or thanked you, it was a job.

If you stay with it even when no one recognizes your efforts, it is a ministry.

It is hard to get excited about a job.

It is almost impossible not to get excited about a ministry.

If your concern is success, it is a job.

If your concern is faithfulness, it is a ministry.

An average church is filled with people doing jobs.

A great and growing church is filled with people involved in ministry!

Where do we fit in? What about us? If God calls you to a ministry, do not treat it like a job.

If you have a job, give it up and find a ministry. God does not want us to feel stuck with job.

He wants us excited and faithful to Him in ministry.

—Author Unknown

Your Singing Voice

Your singing voice is your personal musical instrument given to you by God. This unique gift is connected to your spirit, mind, personal experiences, and emotions. Using your voice to sing provides you with a way to communicate your knowledge and your feelings. As you develop your own singing voice, you will increase your ability to understand and to communicate the ideas and the moods found in the different types of music. In singing hymns and canticles (hymns whose words are taken from the Bible) we express the glory of the triune God, the grace of Jesus Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, the community of faith and a new heaven and a new earth. (The United Methodist Hymnal) In singing the hymnody of the African American religious tradition, we express the spirituals of the antebellum slaves, the prayer and praise hymns of the post Reconstruction era, and the songs of faith and practice in African American life. (African American Heritage Hymnal) In singing black gospel songs we express the teachings of Jesus and the Christian Church, the doctrine of salvation by grace, and the revelation of common life experiences. (Songs of Zion) Through your singing voice, you can participate in some of the church's greatest intellectual, cultural, and spiritual achievements.

Your active singing will also permit you to know the joy that comes from uniting together with others to create beautiful music. In performances, music connects our private selves and our public selves. In worship, music brings people together in a spiritual setting to share their feelings, their experiences, their joys, their hopes, and their faith for a better quality of life. "Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song." (Psalm 95: 1-2)

—Mary A. Hardy
President, Sanctuary Choir

Coming Attractions

Rust College Choir in Concert

The Rust College Acapella Choir will be in concert on April 2, 2006, at Centenary United Methodist Church at 4:00 P.M. This world renown choir is under the direction of our own extraordinaire, Mr. Zebedee Reynolds Jones.

Please mark your calendar and prepare to support Rust College.

—Billie Hansbrough

Black History Celebration

The Family Ministries of Centenary United Methodist Church will sponsor its annual Black History Program and "Soul Food" Luncheon on March 4, 2006, at 2:30 P.M. in the E.J. Cox Hall.

Dr. R. Meade Walker will be the guest speaker. Dr. Walker is Professor of Black History at LeMoyne-Owen College and Pastor of the historic Castalia Missionary Baptist Church.

Price for lunch is: \$8.00 adults

\$3.00 children 12 and under

Please plan to attend!

—Ann E. Willis

Children's Choir

Children's Choir rehearsals will begin in March. All children ages 5-11 are encouraged to participate. Please see any member of the Worship Committee for more information.

—Cynthia Haley

Visit www.centenarymemphis.com for information on more upcoming events!

the Centenarian

We are attempting to revitalize the Centenarian (newsletter). In order for this effort to be successful, we will need the cooperation of all Centenarians. We need volunteers to serve as regular reporters. James Haley, II, has agreed to produce the newsletter for us but we must get the information to him on time. The deadline for getting the information to him is the 15th of each month. We will strictly adhere to this deadline! Our goal is to get the newsletter in the mail so that it will reach each household before the first Sunday of each month. Information for the newsletter should be e-mailed to James Haley, II.

His E-mail address is: editor@centenarymemphis.com. In the subject line please type "Material for the Centenarian". If you do not use E-mail, please get your information to **Erma Williams, 9601 Mourning Dove Cove, Germantown, TN, 38139**. Please send your information exactly as it should appear in the newsletter. In an effort to save time and postage, we will use E-mail as well as U.S. Mail to get the newsletter to each household. If you use E-mail and would prefer to have your letter sent electronically, please send your E-mail address to James Haley, II. We welcome any suggestions, ideas, etc., and we are thanking you in advance for your support and cooperation.

—Erma P. Williams

Kudos

Acclaim or prestige as a result of achievement or position.

Kudos to:

Ann Willis for an anniversary celebration worth remembering, bravo Ann, it was awesome!!!!

Emma and James Stokes for their immeasurable, tireless, and unselfish work with the food pantry.

Kametris Wyatt for her outstanding leadership as chair of the administrative council.

Cynthia Haley for her vision for the children's choir.

Sherita Lee for her energy, sweet spirit, and giving the youth something meaningful to look forward to.

Robert Sampson, Jr. for his exceptional accomplishments as lay leader.

James Milam for services above and beyond the call of duty, maintaining and overseeing our beloved facility.

Minnie White for her phenomenal job as Sunday School Superintendent.

Be on the alert for more in our next issue - it is folks like these, and more, that make Centenary the great church it has become!

— Elizabeth L. Crawford

United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women are off to a great start for 2006! The leadership has attended leadership training and we have had our first two meetings of the new year. Our next big event will be our Annual Women's Day Celebration.

This is scheduled for March 26, 2006 during the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service. We are very excited about this event. All women will wear black with silver accessories.

We want the entire Centenary Family to join us as this promises to be a delightful treat for all. There will be a reception immediately following the morning celebration.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact our program coordinator and Vice President Mrs. Earnestine Toney.

The Best Things In Life Come With A



**United
Methodist
Women's
Membership**

Why Not Join A Circle Today?

Thank You!

From our Hurricane Katrina Families

Centenary Family,

From my family to yours we would like to send you a heartfelt thank you for all the support, prayers, hope, good thoughts, and gifts that your church family has offered to us. We are settling into the Memphis area very well and we know that your support has helped to carry us through this difficult time. Royale has adjusted to her new school and my Grandmother is finding peace with her new environment. I am working and excelling at my job with Holiday Inn, and know that the Lord will continue to bless us. We would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts. You have truly been a blessing! We will be forever grateful.

Tamekia & Royale Jacobs, and Velma Washington

Centenary,

I would like to let you know what a blessing you have been for me and my family. Being the caretaker for my family of "seasoned" citizens has been a challenge, but I am glad I can be here for them. We truly miss New Orleans, but your willingness to help us makes our stay here more comforting, and we are blessed to have you in our lives. Thank you for all of the help you have given financially, spiritually, and emotionally. Without your help our new beginning would not have been possible. The flowers that the Jack & Jill group and Denise Parker planted are growing beautifully. Many of you met my Aunt Rose and Uncle Menocal at service a few Sundays and I would like to let you know they are back in their assisted living home in New Orleans. The facility opened last month. Their life is getting back to normal and they are glad to be back. At 95 & 88 years old they needed to be back in a familiar place. As for my mother she is doing better, and recuperating with my brother in Nesbit, MS. Please keep her in your prayers. My Aunt Bun & Uncle Zoo are doing well and are going to stay here with me. My daughter in Lafayette (college student) and son living in Atlanta are adjusting to Memphis being their new home base. I decided to retire from the New Orleans school system, and I recently received a job with the Shelby County school system. I am very excited about this opportunity. Please keep us all in you prayers and again, THANK YOU!!

Bonita Bazil

UMYF Events

March / April Activities



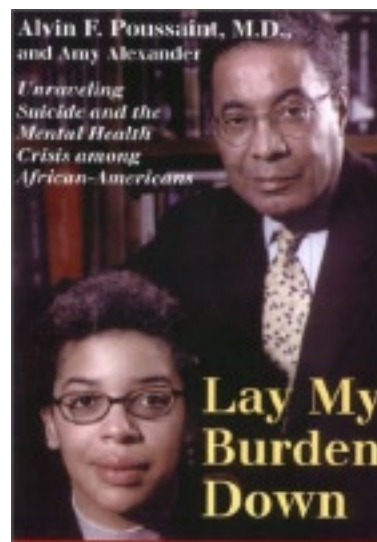
March 4 th	Lenten Bible Study for Youth – Noon
March 11 th	Lenten Bible Study for Youth – Noon Practice for Good Friday Service
March 12 th	Service Project: Breakfast @ Holy Community United Methodist Church, Smith Center. (Adult Volunteers Needed)
March 18 th	Lenten Bible Study for Youth – Noon Practice for Good Friday Service
March 25 th	UMYF Officers Meeting 11:00 AM Lenten Bible Study for Youth – Noon UMYF Meeting – 1:00 PM
March 31 st – April 2 nd	YOUTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE *parents please see Sherita Lee for registration packets
April 8 th	Lenten Bible Study for Youth – Noon Practice for Good Friday Service
April 9 th	PALM SUNDAY (Youth Lead Worship Service)
April 14 th	Good Friday Service (Youth Led)
April 16 th	EASTER MORNING BREAKFAST

WRITE from page 1

belonging to the spiritual part of you. God owns the whole works. So let people see God in and through your body.—1 Corinthians 6:19-20 The Message

Hadn't you noticed? I'm on a health kick, lock, stock and calorie counter! I'm hoping and praying to get as many of you as will to join me in this health kick. Far too few of us seem to understand that we are in the middle of a crisis; and you know like I know that when America has a crisis, Black America has a catastrophe. We are in the middle of a catastrophic health care meltdown. Lifestyle maladies like obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes are at epidemic proportions in America in general and in the African American community in particular; and we are doing little or nothing about it! We take the medication, we go to the proliferating dialysis centers, but we will not take the preventive measures we could and should take on the front end to stop these diseases. Why?

Alvin Poussaint and Amy Alexander, in their book, *Lay My Burdens Down*, and Korean-American theologian Andrew Sung Park, in his book, *The Wounded Heart of God*, suggest that the answer may be what Poussaint and Alexander call "post-traumatic slavery syndrome," or what Park calls "han." They both refer to what many people call generational curses, or, to put it more scientifically, genetically transmitted



predispositions to certain illnesses caused by unresolved issues associated with and/or derived from histories of racism, oppression, abuse and violence. Think I might be going off the deep end here? You might be right; but before you jump to any conclusions, join me each Sunday morning, beginning April 23rd at 8:00 a.m., to talk about it. **Wellness is worth it!!!**

Read The Write Reverend on the Internet!

<http://www.centenarymemphis.com/blog/>

Taking Stock and Giving Stock

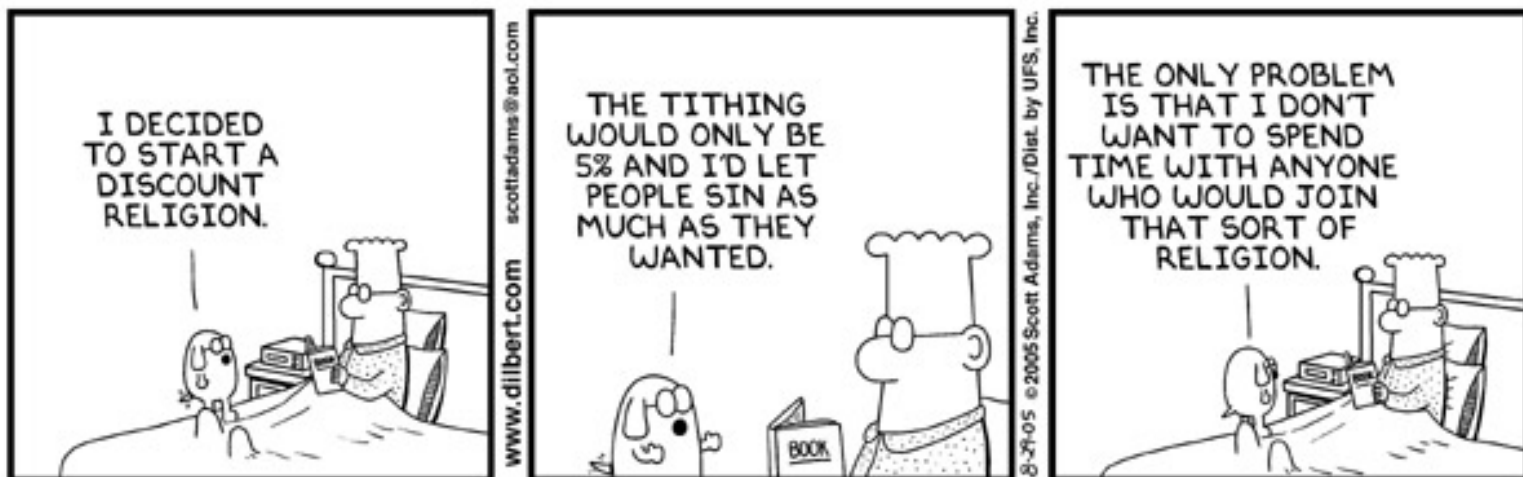
Building an eternal legacy by making lasting financial contributions to Christian organizations and ministries is no longer only the privilege of the wealthy. Everyday people from all walks of life give and leave gifts to their favorite Christian organizations by using a number of tools. One of these tools is making a gift of stocks, bonds, mutual funds, or other appreciated securities. Significant tax advantages for these gifts allow you to give more while staying within your budget.

Take for example Nancy who is a loyal contributor to a number of Christian charities. In spite of her generosity she always wanted to be able to give more but her budget would not allow it. Nancy also owns 145 shares of XYZ Corporation. Although the stock pays only a very modest dividend it has increased in value by more than 90% since she bought it 26 years ago. Because of the increase in value Nancy would have to pay a significant capital gains tax if she were to sell the stock outright. With the help of her tax advisor Nancy soon realized that giving the stock to a Christian charity held the potential for substantial tax and giving advantages.

Here is how it works. The donated shares of stock must have increased in value and have been owned by the donor for longer than a year. Donors who itemize their taxes are then entitled to a charitable income tax deduction for the full fair market value of the shares. The donor can deduct up to 30 percent of your adjusted gross income and carry forward any unused deduction for five years.

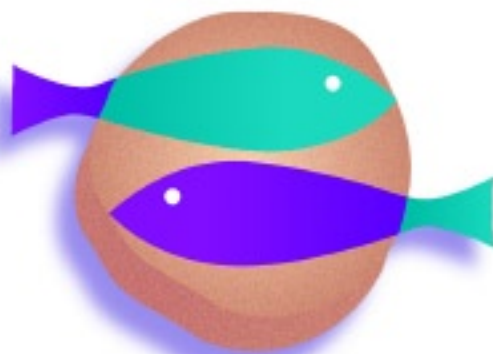
The actual transfer process is a simple one. You can transfer the stocks or other securities electronically or by mail. Consult your conference foundation, conference treasurer, or your financial adviser for complete details.

Jane King is a philanthropy consultant and author of The Giving Blog <http://bloggiving.blogspot.com>. Jane can be reached at janevking@hotmail.com.



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Do You Tithe? Tell Us About It!



tithe — The setting aside of one-tenth of one's income for God as is specifically noted in the Bible. Tithing has been the traditional minimum standard of giving for Christians. The United Methodist Church has taken the official position that tithing is the standard for United Methodists, and the practice of tithing is to be actively encouraged in every local church.

Source: A Dictionary for United Methodists, Alan K. Waltz, Copyright 1991, Abingdon Press.

Do you tithe? Please share your testimony with *Centenarian* readers. Be sure to tell us why do you tithe, what changes you observed in your life as a result of tithing and how you deal with challenges that might prevent you from tithing.

Email your testimony to stewardship@centenarymemphis.com or mail it to the church office to the attention of the Stewardship Committee.

African Americans must be involved in recovery, pastors say

A UMNS Report By Jeneane Jones*



As the nation celebrates Black History Month, two United Methodist pastors are finding a new sense of mission amid the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, and they are calling for African Americans to be more involved in the recovery.

Returning from his church's first tour of duty in New Orleans, the Rev. Kelvin Sauls is considering the impact of the devastation on his own community of Oakland, Calif.

"Being with the First Street United Methodist Church in the first weeks of the New Year gave me a better picture of what it is to be in community together," said Sauls, pastor of Downs Memorial United Methodist Church. "You can see people who can relate to Jim Crow, the civil rights movement. Our African-American community here in California and in New Orleans went through all that together. We need to say that 'we are here with you now.' Nothing can replace the ministry of presence."

A team of United Methodist volunteers from Downs Memorial went to First Street United Methodist in New Orleans, the oldest African-American United Methodist church in the city and one of the few that emerged relatively unscathed after Hurricane Katrina struck Aug. 29.

"First Street sits in the New Orleans Garden District," said the Rev. Lance Eden, pastor. "During slavery, the plantation owners had their estates in the Garden District up on the hill - the high side of the bowl - while their enslaved servants lived behind and below them. After emancipation, the area was built up but was still impoverished."

After Katrina, for nearly one month, the homes at the bottom of "the bowl" around First Street church stood in two feet of water. "Our church sustained water damage; we lost stained-glass windows and the steeple," Eden said. But Katrina helped redefine the historic church's mission, he added.

"We were a dying church, struggling to figure out what mission was," he said. "Katrina changed that. Now all you have to do is look around you and be willing to work."

Called to outreach

First Street's priority is outreach, Eden said. "On Thanksgiving Day, we fed 300 people. We've gutted more than 40 homes. The church is called to do mission; reaching out is what we are called to do. Before Katrina, we had 75 in worship. Now we have close to 175 and many of them are people who had not been to church before."

He has been living at the church since October. He and

most of the First Street congregation lost their homes in the hurricane.

"When I first came back, I slept in the church van. I needed to let people know that the church was still open," he said. "When I did that, they started coming back." After the church reopened, a Minnesota family provided Eden with a RV to live in, but his father and grandmother are now living in it while he stays at the church office.

"Bad things, good things have been working together for us," he said. "It's hard for me to complain. Our church is living out its mission. You can't help but be grateful."

'No one home'

Still, the road to recovery is anything but over. Sauls recalls how eerily the sounds of hammers echoed off buildings around the neighborhood while his team gutted two homes. "There's a stark sense of stillness. The people are not back. The lights are on in the streets, but it's an illusion. You see that no one is home."

According to an analysis released by a Brown University sociologist, the city of New Orleans could lose up to 80 percent of its black population if people displaced by Hurricane Katrina are not able to return to their damaged neighborhoods. Blacks and the poor were disproportionately affected by Katrina, according to the study, led by Brown Professor John R. Logan. The analysis concludes that the difficulty in moving back to the city could mean a massive loss of population, overwhelmingly among blacks.

New Orleans was more than 65 percent black before Katrina hit, but it appears most of the estimated 135,000 residents who have been able to return are white. The study found that if New Orleans' returning population was limited to the neighborhoods undamaged by Katrina, about half the white population would not return and 80 percent of its black population would not.

Sauls is on a mission to educate his congregation and the community to ensure that does not become reality.

"I am aware that African Americans have not been part of the recovery effort in the way our non-black brothers and sisters have been," he said. "It troubles me."

Eden has said that of the more than 60 volunteers to come through his church as part of recovery teams, fewer than five have been black.

While African-American United Methodist churches have stepped up to the plate to provide dollar support for relief, the face of African Americans in the trenches has been missing. Sauls believes for African Americans to remain absent from the front lines is to miss an opportunity to be in mission and also to be lulled into something ominous. "As Martin Luther King Jr. told us, we have to realize that injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere. What happens to one of us affects all of us directly."

Taking a stand

Poverty is preventing people from returning to New Orleans. The cost of gutting a home that has rotted from sitting nearly a month in water is between \$5,000 and 10,000. Federal Emergency Management Agency and Louisiana

see RECOVERY on page 8

RECOVERY from page 7

officials are pursuing the rebuilding of a smaller, less-populated New Orleans. But a question being asked is: How can a city rebuild with 65 percent of its population missing?

"We can't let New Orleans become an excuse for how local and federal and state authorities respond to 'the least of these' in similar disasters," Sauls said. The Old Testament Book of Esther is a prophetic voice for African Americans outside New Orleans, he said, because the story of Esther is one of a woman who hides her identity to live a life of privilege, and when the lives of her people are threatened, must take a stand and show her true identity to save them.

"So many of us have moved away from the oppression of poverty," he said. "We have moved into the palace, but are now being called on to speak on behalf of those living lives of devastation. Katrina offers an example of how poor people are often treated. The African-American church must raise a voice that mistreatment will not be tolerated: injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere."

Sauls says his mission in 2006 will be to continue bringing African Americans from the Downs Community to New Orleans to be in mission. The next trip is scheduled for April 6-12.

*Jones is the director of communications for the California-Nevada Annual Conference.

News media contact: Linda Green, (615) 742-5470 or newsdesk@umcom.org.

Centenary Photos



Ariel Ross and Mrs. Minnie White

As a third grader, Ariel received a Bible from the church.



Centenary
United Methodist Church

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