

# CONNECTION

## Getting your priorities straight

By Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe  
North Texas Conference

I want to share my excitement about an initiative that is starting as a grassroots



**Bishop Bledsoe**

effort in the North Texas Conference. Unlike previous efforts, this one began with a group of laity and clergy wanting to help make a difference in the lives of children.

Now, their enthusiasm is catching on and spreading like a wildfire. This initiative is called Imagine No Malaria, or, as our newly formed task force refers to it, "ZAPMalaria!"

One of the four main focus areas of our NTC Strategic Planning Team is the eradication of killer diseases around the world. This might seem too overwhelming to even consider. Then, we remember polio, a killer disease now almost wiped out. United Methodists and partner organizations can take up this latest challenge with high hopes for victory.

Our task force is planning new, exciting and fun ways for churches, large and small, to make a difference in the fight against malaria. We are by our very nature connectional, and this time we are connecting as part of a larger campaign called The Global Health Initiative. We have been named a leadership conference, which means that others will learn from what we do.

I am not surprised that we have been called to be leaders in this battle, but I am thankful that it is happening.

I am asking all of you, the caring people of the North Texas Conference, to join in the fight to save children around the world, especially those most at risk in sub-Saharan Africa.

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## Bishop announces leader appointment

By Dr. Joan G. LaBarr  
Editor

Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe has announced key leadership appointments for the 2010-11 conference year pending approval of the Strategic Plan report by Annual Conference June 6-8 in Wichita Falls.

In announcing the appointments, Bishop Bledsoe has expressed his appreciation for all who have worked so diligently to develop the plan that will set the NTC on a new course, one focused on the four focus areas of The United Methodist Church

and commitment to reach the mission field in the 20 counties of North Texas.

The goal is to be more effective in reaching and connecting with people in the mission field to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Bishop Bledsoe believes the leaders reflect the spirit of leadership that is foundational to the Strategic Plan. With the rallying cry of, "It's time to lead," Bishop Bledsoe has appointed the following key leaders in the mission. These lead appointed persons will work with lay leadership and all of the clergy and laity



**Dr. Boone**



**Dr. George**



**Rev. Gould**



**Dr. Guier**



**Rev. Gutierrez**



**Dr. Ozier**



**Dr. Patterson**



**Dr. Reed**



**Rev. Rosenberg**

in a quest to change and grow.

In making the appointments, Bishop Bledsoe also expresses his deepest gratitude to all who have provided leadership and worked to bring the conference to this place.

Four Directors will provide leadership for the new centers that will develop and be accountable for the ministry functions of the annual conference. An additional lead appointment will be that of Commu-

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## UM database for Haiti volunteers

The United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM), General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) and United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) have cooperated in the development of a national database for volunteers wishing to go to Haiti.

The [www.umrespond.org/Haiti](http://www.umrespond.org/Haiti) is available for potential volunteers to register their intentions, as well as lay out the specific requirements that must be met to be invited to participate on a team. All potential volunteers must have prior experience in Haiti.

The database will be forwarded each week to the UMVIM Jurisdictional directors, who will form teams once the

Methodist Church of Haiti issues an invitation.

South Central Jurisdiction UMVIM coordinator Debbie Vest advises that many teams will be needed for years to come. Any teams going to Haiti now are not VIM teams approved by Jurisdictional Coordinators or GBGM.

"While the desire to offer immediate help is universal among Christians, please understand that at this time prayerful waiting is the most faithful witness we can offer," she said.

Bishop Joel Martinez, interim general secretary of GBGM, repeats his earlier request that teams do not go to

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# INFORMAtion:

◆ **Rev. Page A Thomas** makes another contribution to Methodist Studies with the publication of **John Wesley's correspondence with women**. The database which includes 1,272 letters is arranged by date, searchable and easy to navigate. The massive project is in collaboration with Wesley Center Online, Wesley Center for applied Theology, Northwestern Nazarene University, <http://wesley.nnu.edu>.

◆ **The "Faith, Hope and Love" Easter Egg, design** will be the primary image for the **2010 NTC/Lent Easter inviting and welcoming campaign**. Each church is eligible to receive one and one half times its average worship attendance in oversize print cards or three times the average worship attendance in electronic card distribution. Contact **Ron Ray** toll free at 888-211-0273 or e-mail: [ron@thecrouchgroup.com](mailto:ron@thecrouchgroup.com).

◆ **Rev. Wally Chappell** will lead **The Intensive Journal Workshop** on Friday, March 12 from 5:45 to 9:00 p.m., Saturday, March 13 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm and Sunday, March 14, 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. at **Highland Park UMC**. Registration fee is \$155 for materials and meals paid by March 4. To register, please call 214--523-2231.

◆ Congratulations to **St. Luke Community UMC** as they officially launched a **second campus** located in a shopping center south of the intersection of I-20 and North Hampton Road in DeSoto on Jan. 24. The address is 1615 North Hampton, Suite 140. Rev. Derek Jacobs is campus pastor.

## Getting our...

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Our Lay Leader Richard Hearne, co-chair of our NTC "ZAPMalaria" team, with Rev. Judith Reedy, has written an article in this edition of the North Texas United Methodist Reporter explaining some of the great ideas that churches can use and adapt as they wish. The team has also developed a new website, [www.zapmalaria.com](http://www.zapmalaria.com), which you can visit for resources and ideas.

We can do this. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we can "ZAPMalaria" and usher in a new day of health and hope for all God's children

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◆ **Dr. Amy-Jill Levine**, the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville, TN, will be lecturer for the **2010 Perkins Lectures at First UMC, Wichita Falls**. The March 7-8 lectures are entitled, **"The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like a Story, The Parables for 1st and 21st Century Ears."** For more information, please call 940-766-4231 or visit website: [www.fumcwf.org](http://www.fumcwf.org).

◆ **Wesley-Rankin Community Center** introduced new development director **Rev. Sarah Squires** at a Feb. 4 reception at the home of Kay Fulton. **Rev. Squires has 25 years of experience to the Dallas area faith community**. For more information, please call 214-742-6674, ext. 113 or e-mail: [sarah@wesleyrankin.org](mailto:sarah@wesleyrankin.org).

◆ Longtime child advocate **Jane Donovan** will facilitate a **"Stewards of Children"** seminar April 8 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the **NTC Ministry Center**. For more information, visit [www.ntcumc.org/family](http://www.ntcumc.org/family), or contact **Rev. Wendy Curran, Holy Covenant UMC, Carrollton**, at 972-492-2432, or e-mail: [wcurran@hccumc.org](mailto:wcurran@hccumc.org).

◆ The third annual **Caring for Creation conference** will be held on April 16-18 at Mount Sequoyah and Conference. The keynote speaker is **Rev. Canon Sally G. Bingham** in the Episcopal Diocese of California. For more information please call 800-760-8126, or 479443-4531, e-mail: [programs@mountsequoyah.org](mailto:programs@mountsequoyah.org) or visit [www.mountsequoyah.org](http://www.mountsequoyah.org).

## UM Database...

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Haiti at this time. The first teams to go will be medical. Team members with the proper credentials will be invited to join these teams.

As of Jan. 27, a volunteer assessment team was being formed who will go to Haiti for a preliminary site visit to assess housing, transportation and resources for teams, project sites as addressed by the Methodist Church of Haiti, logistics of materials and detailed planning of resources so as not to burden the very delicate Haitian infrastructure.

## Bishop Announces...

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nications Officer, who will work through the bishop's office.

These appointments are:

- Rev. Dr. Keith Payne Boone, Director of the Center for Leadership Development
- Rev. Dr. Larry W. George, Assistant to the Bishop and Director of the Center for Missional Outreach
- Rev. Dr. James P. Ozier, Director of the Center for New Church Development and Congregational Transformation
- Rev. Dr. L. Marvin Guier III, Director of the Center for Connectional Resources
- Rev. Dr. Sheron Patterson, Communications Officer
- Rev. Paul A. Gould, Superintendent, East District
- Rev. Milton P. Guttierrez, Superintendent, North Central District
- Dr. Clara Reed, Superintendent, Metro District
- Rev. John C. Rosenburg, Superintendent, Northwest District

### Global Village

#### Team Leader Training

Thursday, April 15 • 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm  
NTC Ministry Center

The purpose of this training is to prepare a team leader to lead international mission trips with Habitat For Humanity's Global Village program. The ideal candidate will have significant international travel experience and experience in leading domestic mission trips is also recommended. Normally this training is held in the Chicago area, so this is a rare opportunity to attend the training in the DFW Metroplex.

Fee \$75 for materials and meals  
Registration: Charis Johnson, 214-678-2396

A way to help now is through monetary donations and assembly of health kits for distribution by UMCOR. Health kit collection points are in every NTC District. To find the designated sites go to website: [www.ntcumc.org](http://www.ntcumc.org), and select the "Bishop Issues Haiti Response Appeal" link on the home page.

Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe has issued a "Bishop's Appeal for Haiti." Donations may be made out to the North Texas Conference and send to the Treasurer's Office, P.O. Box 866128, Plano, TX 75086 with "NTC Haiti appeal, Fund 277" on the memo line.

For more information on the NTC Haiti Response, please call Rev. Marji Bishir, 972-526-5000 or e-mail: [bishir@ntcumc.org](mailto:bishir@ntcumc.org).