

wesleyan life

THE MAGAZINE OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH



—MATTHEW 6:21

IT'S
All
GOD'S

STORIES OF
STEWARDSHIP



They were thinking about how to be good stewards of their resources after they went to heaven.

RON MCCLUNG

Nellie & Mae

"Nellie, I have set aside some money for you and it will become yours when I die," Mae said to her friend. "Well, Mae, actually I have set aside some money for you and when I die, it will become yours."

Nellie, a schoolteacher, had invited Mae, a widow, to live with her some years earlier. In their late 70s and early 80s, **they were thinking about how to be good stewards of their resources after they went to heaven.** When they did die and their resources came to the Wesleyan church of which they were members, the total amount was more than a million dollars!

After using a portion of the money to assist with a campaign to build a new sanctuary, the church decided to establish an endowment fund with the remainder, still a million dollars.

Jim Rathbun, a professional fundraiser, remembers visiting Mae and Nellie when he was quite young. In their home, he cut out pieces of cloth for quilt squares and prepared pill bottles to send to missionaries. Even then, he was impressed with the dedication of these two women.

For a time, as an adult, Rathbun served on the endowment fund board. According to the guidelines they had developed, the money can never go toward the operating expenses of the local church that controls the fund. It must go toward outreach endeavors or to new projects. At one point, when the church was not doing well, the board did vote to use some of the money to help fund an outreach pastor for the first year, and then cut back the percentage of assistance over the next two years.

On another occasion, when the church facilities

were expanding, the church board borrowed money from the fund, but then paid it back at a higher interest rate than the fund would have earned from the bank. Each year, the endowment fund board guards the principal amount to be sure it never dips below its original level.

Every year the endowment fund board receives requests for grants. They meet and consider each one. To date, the fund has given away nearly a million dollars, but they still have the original amount.

Today in Rathbun's fundraising efforts, totally unconnected to the endowment fund, he often meets with wealthy people. They are frequently surprised when he does not try to twist their arms to pressure them to give a certain amount. Instead he says, "My job is to help you get closer to God. So I would like you to pray about whether God wants you to invest in this project. If he does, great. If not, I will not pressure you." Of course, he hopes they will be generous, but his goal is to strengthen their walk with the Lord. In other words, he wants

Through prayer about their giving, they are becoming more fully devoted followers of Jesus.

their stewardship to enhance their discipleship. Through prayer about their giving, they are becoming more fully devoted followers of Jesus.

Ben Capshaw is another person who has been touched by the endowment fund. He once served as a children's pastor at the church that administers the fund. In more recent years, he was pastoring a church in Indiana that needed a new roof. He requested

The church voted to do just that and blessed local agencies in the community. Now the church has decided that at the end of each year, if they have exceeded their budget and all expenses are paid, they will give away the balance.

Through these efforts at improving stewardship, obedient Christians are becoming stronger disciples.

They are learning to pray about how to use their resources for God. They are growing in their understanding and practice of generosity.

And their faith is becoming stronger each time God answers prayer and supplies a need.

We should not be surprised. Paul told the Corinthians, "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

Their faith is becoming stronger each time God answers prayer and supplies a need.

\$3,500 from the endowment fund. Remembering Ben's service to the church, they gave his Indiana church \$10,000! Ben's church replaced the roof, completed some other projects, and still had money left over. Rathbun counseled Ben to give it away on the premise that you can't outgive God and that God loves a cheerful giver.



Inseparable

MATTHEW 6:21

While leading Wesley Seminary, I was privileged to design and teach a class titled “Money.” As students gathered the first day I began the class by saying, “I’m sorry if I misled any of you. You may have thought this is a financial class. More accurately, it is a discipleship course.”

The very foundation of stewardship is the reality that “God owns it all.” Everything we are and have is his: our time, gifts, resources, relationships, body. Everything.

Using the example of our bodies, Jesus queries his followers, “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies” (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

Discipleship is giving ourselves fully to God—no holding back. This full surrender is how we recognize his ownership and submit to his lordship.

I monitor the connection between discipleship and stewardship in my life. As a pastor, if I avoid or apologize for talking about money, do I avoid or apologize for other dimensions of discipleship—reading the Word, praying, loving my neighbor? Or do I broaden my view of stewardship to elude accountability for a specific area God’s Spirit may be addressing in my life? If God convicts me about my use of time, do I comfort myself that stewardship also involves money or physical well-being, and if I’m doing fine in those areas, I’m okay?

Jesus stated, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21). Where is your heart?

So, as you read about stewardship in the following pages, think discipleship! The two are inseparable. 🐦



DR. WAYNE SCHMIDT
General Superintendent
The Wesleyan Church

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Founders Orange Scott (1843), Seth Rees (1897)

Executive Editor Janelle Vernon

Creative Director Kory Pence

Assistant Editor Tricia Rife

Designer Julia Sprow

Designer Lyn Rayn

Digital Storyteller Aaron Fussner

Cover Illustration Julia Sprow

Contributors

Caryl Aukerman	Katie Long
Pete Benson	Ron McClung
Edgar Chacón	Mark Rennaker
David Drury	Wayne Schmidt
Marc LaPointe	Ben Ward

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Correspondence

For change of address give both old and new addresses. Address all editorial and advertising correspondence, subscriptions, and change of address to:

Mailing Address	Physical Address
<i>Wesleyan Life</i> P.O. Box 50434 Indianapolis, IN 46250-0434	The Wesleyan Church 13300 Olivo Road Fishers, IN 46037 Tel: 317.774.7907 Fax: 317.774.3924



www.wesleyan.org

communications@wesleyan.org

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For many in the church, stewardship is synonymous with giving, fundraising or capital campaigns. In reality, it's so much more!

Let's begin with its definition, like the following from Webster: "1: the office, duties, and obligations of a steward. 2: the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care."

Abraham Kuyper defines stewardship as: "Carefully and responsibly managing something entrusted to one's care," adding, "there is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry: 'Mine!'"

When we surrender fully everything we are and have, it becomes natural to be a good steward during seasons of much or little.

For me, stewardship is discipleship. It's total surrender to God of everything I am and have been given. When we surrender fully everything we are and have, it becomes natural to be a good steward during seasons of much or little.

One of the most popular biblical passages relating to stewardship is Matthew 25:14-30, known as the "Parable of the Talents" or the "Parable of the Bags of Gold."

The passage begins with, "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them" (NIV, 2011, emphasis added).

1

It's all God's

When we belong to God, everything we are and have belongs 100 percent to him. God is the owner; we are the manager, the steward. In Matthew 25, we are reminded that, "he entrusted his wealth to them." Psalm 24:1 says, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." Both seem pretty clear, wouldn't you agree? The key to discipleship and stewardship is constantly reminding ourselves that we are his. Therefore, everything we own and will own is his; every dollar, every hour, every talent, every dream, every gift, our family, our recreation, everything.

3

We will be held accountable

"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them" (v.19). The longer the master stays away, the easier it becomes to think of everything we have as being "ours" to do with as we choose. Often, that means sitting on or burying the entrusted gifts, talents, money. Most of us think of ourselves as the one "bag of gold" (the one "talent") person anyway, so it's almost like we think we're somehow off the hook. "God wouldn't expect much from me." Well, in Matthew 25, the owner (God) was furious with the servant because he "buried the gold in the ground." God calls him a "wicked, lazy servant (steward)."

2

We are stewards, managers, servants

"His servants ... entrusted his wealth to them ..." We need to carefully and responsibly manage. We are not the owners, but need to manage as if we were. At Beacon Capital Management, the company I co-own, we have appointed several managers over various departments. The managers realize the business does not belong to them, but also recognize their call, their responsibility on behalf of the business, to "steward" and "manage" these departments well. The people, the tasks, the budget – all are entrusted to them.

4

We are to be productive

Matthew 25 makes it clear that the stewards/managers were to put that which was "entrusted" to them to work and to produce results. To invest their gold, their talents, their time – not just hold tightly to it. Not worship or bury it, but use it. Put it to work. What resources has God entrusted to you to use productively? Money, musical talents, leadership gifts, time, relationships, a career, a family?

We live in a world seemingly obsessed with money, material possessions, status, careers, entertainment. It is easy to adopt a mentality of "holding on tightly" to these things and screaming, "Mine!"

True biblical stewardship (discipleship) is "letting go." Instead of screaming, "Mine," faithful stewards pray, "Yours!"

In my third year of college, my wife, Ginnie, and I agreed to pastor a small country church near campus. With two kids, college expenses, etc., the \$100 a week we were paid was stretched to the limit. Yet both of us had been taught that the \$100 belonged to God, and in full surrender to him, we needed at least to give \$10 (10 percent) to the church.

That decision was very difficult, because we could really use the money. But faithfulness was a matter of obedience and surrender and discipleship. God was, of course, faithful to stretch the remaining \$90 to do much more than we could have dreamed.

Stewardship is holding everything loosely, totally surrendering it to God and serving him with gladness of heart.

When we, 20 years later, began to experience unexpected wealth, that lesson was a strong reminder. If we hadn't learned to be faithful with a little, we wouldn't have been faithful with much.

Stewardship is holding everything loosely, totally surrendering it to God and serving him with gladness of heart.

God's Word encourages us to steward well what is entrusted to us until the Master's return. The Master will return. God's pleasure and blessing await his faithful stewards.



PETE BENSON

is founder and co-owner of Beacon Capital Management, LLC in Franklin, Tennessee.



HEAD OVER HEELS WITH *LAUGHTER*



I love to laugh. Whether it's a brief chuckle among friends or a full-out, tears streaming down the face belly laugh at a Tim Hawkins concert, I just love to laugh.

I wholeheartedly agree with King Solomon's observation that "A joyful heart is good medicine" (Proverbs 17:22) and believe it's a prescription that needs to be filled in the church on a regular basis.

When I came to candidate at Sweetwater Community Church, I felt myself falling head over heels in love with this congregation. We were made for each other. Why? Because they know how to laugh.

In Psalm 126, the psalmist describes the people of Israel's joy at a time when things were going well, saying:

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."

MARC LAPOINTE is lead pastor at Sweetwater Community Church in Bonita, California.



Did you catch that? "The nations" saw the hand of God at work in the joy and laughter of his people. Hopefully they will see the same in us.

The nations saw the hand of God at work in the **joy and laughter** of his people.

I live in San Diego, a military town filled with statues, plaques and memorials honoring our men and women in uniform. My favorite memorial sits in the shadow of the USS Midway – a group of life-sized bronze service men and women smiling, laughing and clapping as they look at a bronze statue of Bob Hope standing at a microphone. Hidden speakers play excerpts of Hope doing a standup routine at a USO concert in Vietnam. The military recognizes the value of laughter in difficult times. So should we.

The laughter of God's people is beautiful. It can reduce our stress, bind us together and soothe hurting hearts.

Laughter is a priceless treasure God has given us. As stewards of that treasure, we need to spend it freely and frequently. 🌿

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a lifetime of giving

KATIE LONG

Edwin Wissbroecker had a big view of God. As a cherished Global Partners missionary until his death at 91 in 2016, Wissbroecker served for more than three decades in Zambia, Africa, and continued to return there after he retired with his wife, Wilma, to Florida.

His whole life was about answering the call God had given him before he even knew Christ. After he finished his time in the military, Wissbroecker went to a church service with some friends. He had no idea what the word missionary even meant, but as he shook the pastor's hand, the man made Wissbroecker's calling clear. "This man is called to be a missionary."

Later, when two friends led him to Christ, God reminded him of this promise. Wissbroecker's response set the path to a lifetime of giving, financially and physically.

"If God ever wants me, he can have me." This attitude changed everything. Wissbroecker made spreading the gospel his life. He put all his resources into discipling people, making them stronger so they could disciple others.

"If God wants me, he can have me"

His life-long friend, Don Bray, describes Wissbroecker as "a principled person, taking biblical directives literally. He believed that you could not out-give God and this established a foundational way of viewing his stewardship."

Wissbroecker chose not to be defensive over his resources because he knew God was his supplier and would provide for all his needs. Genesis 28:15 repeated itself throughout his life and proved true even after his retirement from missions.

"I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Because he had a generous God, he could be generous too, and that showed in how and what he gave. Wissbroecker believed the money given to him had a purpose and that was the only way to use it. His wife and family continue his legacy of generosity through supporting missionaries with Global Partners. 🍀

He believed that you could not out-give God and this established a foundational way of viewing his stewardship.



Compelled by the need, my husband and I launched into full-time ministry almost 11 years ago, dragging our two young children along for the ride, with a third to be born two years later. Then reality collided with us.

Our children sometimes found it hard to adjust to the new culture, shaped by a former, ruthless communist dictator and years of Muslim rule. As our children's individual passions and talents emerged, we realized our son is very musical, our daughter loves ballet and all of our three children are ardent artists. In our new neighborhood, we had a lot of difficulty finding resources to encourage them in these endeavors and develop their God-given gifts.

In fact, we wondered at times if we had done right by our children in coming to this poverty-stricken, difficult place to minister.

And then a new way of ministry emerged for us. As we saw God answer prayers for us to find ways to fan into flames our children's interest in ballet, music and art, we realized that so many people in our neighborhood were in the same situation. We could see the sadness in neighbor children's eyes when they asked if they, like our children, could learn to do ballet, art or music.

two

BECAME

five



Ministry became about our whole family sharing their giftings and giving back to the community.

So, we bought pastels, paint and markers, and hosted classes in art and ballet. We prepared a Women's Day recital and saw the side benefit as more people became interested in the God we praised and served.

Then came the day when our son hosted weekly worship times where participants were encouraged to create songs as well, resulting in Albanian worship songs. Ministry stopped being only Mom and Dad serving, hoping our children would be positive about our ministry and one day learn to live their own, separate lives in Christian service.



CARYL AUKERMAN
serves as a Global Partners missionary in Albania.



Vision

Time to Heal



In 2013, Dr. Scott Addison was a partner in a family practice in Muskegon, Michigan.

He and his wife Sheila were active members of All Shores Wesleyan Church (Spring Lake, Michigan). Their personal lives were kept busy with raising three sons: Lewis, Teddy and Emmett.

As a busy, successful professional, Dr. Addison was not looking for more ways to spend his time. But it was at that time that Dennis Jackson, executive director of Global Partners, asked Addison to consider leading a major medical outreach through The Wesleyan Church.

Global Partners Health Network (gponline.org/GPHN) brings together healthcare professionals and students to share the love of Christ through global medical ministry. GPHN supports three Wesleyan hospitals—located in La Gonave, Haiti; Zimba, Zambia; and Kamakwie, Sierra Leone—and a number of clinics in places like Papua New Guinea, Myanmar and creative access countries. GPHN has pioneered Community Health Evangelism (CHE) outreaches in Haiti and Cambodia.

When Addison was offered the role of director of Global Partners Health Network, he saw the convergence of his entrepreneurial wiring, his desire to be involved in the global mission and the opportunity to use his medical training.

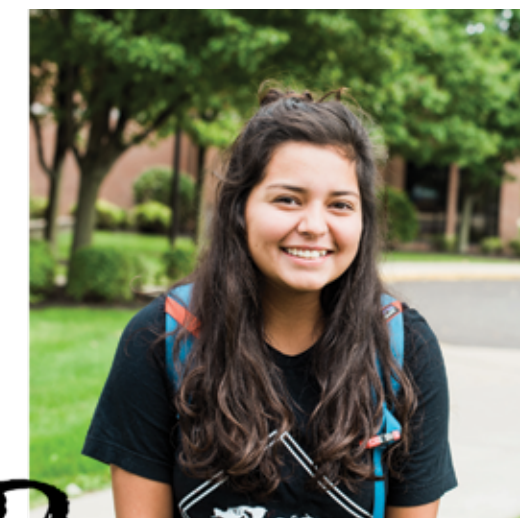
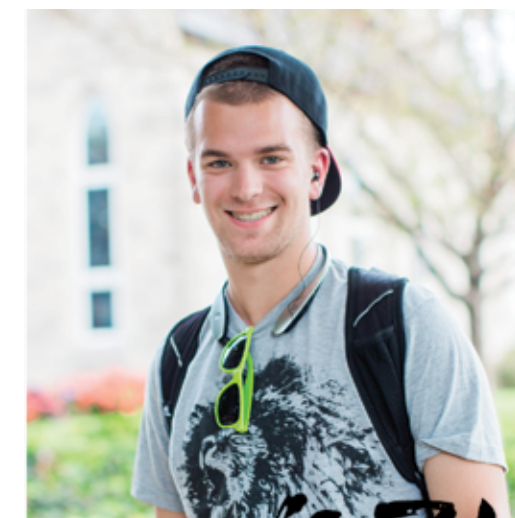
How does he manage these multiple priorities? Addison admits it's an ongoing journey of finding balance. However, he has worked with colleagues to structure his practice schedule so that he can devote one full day each week to Global Partners.

Addison clearly sensed God leading him into this role. This assurance has helped him to persevere through times when the demands seemed overwhelming. He has been presented with other opportunities for engagement along the way. Taking time to listen for God's leading has helped him filter the God ideas from the merely good ideas.

Addison challenges other professionals from all walks of life to consider how they may steward their time for maximum impact.

"You got one shot on earth," he says. "You want to do what you can to advance the kingdom. Whatever it costs to get yourself in a position where you're really using your gifts to serve God is well worth it."

BEN WARD serves as Asia Area director for Global Partners.



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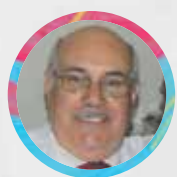
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LLENANDO UNA NECESIDAD



EDGAR CHACÓN

El Dr. Edgar Chacón es el Superintendente del Distrito Hispano del Suroeste de la Iglesia Wesleyana.

Dr. Edgar Chacón is district superintendent of the Southwest Hispanic District of The Wesleyan Church.

La mayordomía tiene un fundamento: Todo es de Dios (Salmo 24:1-2; 1 Crónicas 29:11-12), esa es la clave. John Maxwell dice: "Mayordomía es utilizar las habilidades que Dios te ha dado, para administrar los recursos que Dios te ha dado, para obtener los resultados que Dios te ha preparado."

Entender y practicar estos principios abren la puerta a la dimensión del señorío de Cristo, la verdadera adoración y práctica de una fe viva, que produce vida plena.

Quisiera utilizar la parábola del Buen Samaritano para así examinar nuestras motivaciones y las de nuestras iglesias. Aquí, Jesús inserta en la historia, intencionalmente, a un Samaritano a quienes los judíos odiaban. Pero veamos las diferentes actitudes:

- 1 El ladrón:** "Lo que tienes yo lo quiero y te robaré" actúa bajo la premisa de la avaricia y codicia.
- 2 El Sacerdote y el levita:** "Lo que tengo es mío y no lo comparto," por su vocación religiosa dada por Dios, se esperaba que fueran sensibles a la necesidad del herido, sin embargo decidieron no hacerlo. Es decir, fueron egoístas.
- 3 El samaritano:** "le pertenezco a Dios, lo que tengo es de Dios, por lo tanto lo utilizo para llenar una necesidad," con sensibilidad misericordiosa, decide usar sus habilidades, su tiempo y recursos para socorrer al necesitado, teniendo una buena actitud de mayordomía. Con esta actitud, el samaritano actuaba como un buen mayordomo, basado en la obediencia la fe y la adoración, ya que todo acto de servicio a Dios es auténtica adoración.

De igual manera, podemos reflejar este ejemplo a la luz de la iglesia de hoy en día. ¿Cómo está mostrando tu iglesia una buena mayordomía? ¿Está recordando tu iglesia que TODO es de Dios? Como al Sacerdote y Levita, se nos han dado un sin fin de recursos para bendecir a otros. Al igual que el Samaritano, utilicemos todo lo que se nos ha dado para ser obedientes a Él así como para aquellos que no conocen del mensaje transformador del Evangelio. ¡Seamos fieles mayordomos para que el Señor nos siga bendiciendo cada vez más! 🌿

FILLING A NEED

Stewardship has a foundation: Everything is from God (Psalm 24: 1-2, 1 Chronicles 29: 11-12).

That is the key. John Maxwell said, "Stewardship is to use the skills God has given you, to manage the resources God has given you to get the results that God has prepared for you."

Understanding and practicing these principles opens the door to the dimension of Christ's lordship, true worship and the practice of a living faith, which at the same time produces a full life.

I would like to use the parable of the Good Samaritan to examine our motivations and our churches. Here Jesus intentionally inserted a Samaritan whom the Jews hated. But let's look at the different attitudes:

- 1 The thief:** "I want what you have, and I will steal yours." He acted under the premise of greed.
- 2 The Priest and the Levite:** "What I have is mine and I do not share it." Because of their God-given, religious vocation, they were expected to be sensitive to the need of the wounded, but they decided not to do so. They were selfish.
- 3 The Samaritan:** "I belong to God, what I have is from God. Therefore, I use it to fill a need." With compassionate sensitivity, he decided to use his abilities, his time and resources to help the needy, having a good attitude of stewardship. With this attitude, the Samaritan acted as a good steward, based on obedience to faith and worship, since every act of service to God is true worship.

In the same way, we can reflect this example in the light of today's church. How is your church showing good stewardship? Is your church remembering that everything is from God? As were the Priest and Levite, we have been given endless resources to bless others. Like the Samaritan, let us use all that God has given to us by being obedient to him as well as by being compassionate to those who do not know of the transforming message of the gospel. Let us be faithful stewards so that the Lord may continue to bless us! 🌿

Giving God YOUR ALL



Collectively,
the five Wesleyan
colleges and universities
steward the lives of more
than 18,000 students annually.
Each school is different. Each student
is different. Each discipleship opportunity
is different. But the mission is the same—
transforming lives through the hope and
holiness of Jesus Christ. Following is a
glimpse of how students are being
discipled at Wesleyan Church schools.



*The men's basketball
team is building a
team of 3rd in a
culture of 1st.*



I am 3rd
Indiana Wesleyan
University



"IAM3," or "I am 3rd" is a top pillar of the Indiana Wesleyan University men's basketball team. The team's blog site describes it as "Building a team of 3rd in a culture of 1st." Head Coach Greg Tonagel and his coaching staff consistently remind the team that they are third. The concept is simple: it's God first, others second, yourself third.

From the beginning of the recruiting process, coaches tell prospective students what the team is about. While many are receptive, some are not. And that's okay. Players know the team is one that will pursue Jesus and love people. The team spends significant time praying, dreaming and seeking God together—even ministering locally through various avenues and going on regular mission trips to communicate the gospel.

Ben Carlson, a senior from Palatine, Illinois, says "I am 3rd" has changed his life forever. A former lukewarm Christian, he knows he's given God his all this past year—academically, relationally, physically, mentally and spiritually.

"This is a program that doesn't just believe in growth, but in transformation," said Carlson. "I began to pray that I would no longer be seen, but God would be seen in everything I do."

Assistant coach, Jeff Clark, said the team is intentional about seeking God's guidance in all they do and is quick to point out the team is made up of imperfect guys.

"I am 3rd to us is not a catchy slogan," said Clark. "It's the heart of what we're trying to accomplish with our program. We are not perfect, but we learn greater depths of it each year." While the coaching staff and players want to win, they know they have a greater purpose.



IWUHoops Blog
iwuhoops.net/blog



Obligation or Calling

Kingswood
University

John Lamos grew up in a family of pastors including his dad, grandfather, aunts and uncles. It seemed obvious he would follow in their footsteps. However, Lamos ran from God's call.

"I hesitated about going into a life of ministry because I felt I was doing what everyone expected me to do," Lamos said. "I decided out of my own story with God as opposed to saying 'yes' by default. God put [in me] a passion to love people with his heart that only came from him and not from following a family calling."

After earning a B.A. in ministry at Kingswood University that included an internship as creative arts pastor at Kings Church, Quispamsis, New Brunswick, Canada, Lamos joined the staff serving full time in the same role. He oversees campus worship, media and productions.



I hesitated about going into a life of ministry because I felt like I was doing what everyone expected me to do.

Lamos embraces Lead Pastor Brent Ingersoll's vision to be led by the Holy Spirit and to say "yes" to God, even when seemingly impossible.

He has repeatedly witnessed people entering the church and experiencing the love of Christ for the first time.

One teenager showing interest in the creative side of Sunday morning services was asked by Lamos to help with media. "He's a teenager whose heart has been set on fire for God's kingdom," Lamos said. "It is seriously a gift to watch him fall deeply in love with Jesus."

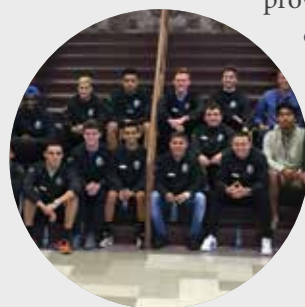
Tangible Examples

Southern
Wesleyan
University

The men's soccer and the women's mentoring program teams helped launch a mentoring program between Southern Wesleyan University volunteers and Walhalla High School students. The program's goal is to provide support, inspiration to

continue a college education, and witnessing Christ to the high school students and the Seneca and Walhalla communities. Interactions have included a campus visit and soccer clinic.

"The SWU mentoring program has given our athletes a chance to see what it is really like to play college-level sports," said Miguel Resendiz, Walhalla High School soccer coach



Learn more
swu.edu/article/swu-involved-in-high-school-and-community-outreach-at-walhalla/

and SWU alumnus. "This tangible example gives our athletes confidence that the dream of college sports is not out of reach with hard work and dedication."

Opening a community outreach program in Walhalla and Seneca involving Welcome Wesleyan Church and several other churches is also planned. The Latino discipleship program, "La Ruta," started by Dr. Raul Chavez-Negrete, SWU associate professor of business, and Walhalla High School board member, will focus on helping the Latino/Hispanic population, young women and generational poverty.

Oklahoma Wesleyan
University

About 15 years ago, a group of Oklahoma Wesleyan University students expressed a desire to create an entirely student-led worship environment at the university.

Posture of worship

Today, OKWU's Spiritual Life team helps run ALTAR, a student-led chapel service occurring Sunday nights throughout the school year. Typically, ALTAR consists of worship,

a brief message from a student, prayer, communion and other activities.

ALTAR's intent is to begin each new week in worship before returning to the busyness of homework, practices and classes. Students are given a chance to remind themselves of what's ultimately important: to be in intentional community with God and their peers.

"The thing I love about ALTAR is that it is all student-led," said Sam Thomas, Spiritual Life team member who worked as an ALTAR worship leaders coordinator.

"The students who are speaking know exactly what we're all going through as college

students. It's a great community environment where anyone from campus can come and have some quality worship time with their peers. It's also a great platform for anyone who wants to go into ministry because they can get experience speaking or leading worship."

The thing I love about ALTAR is that it is all student-led.



Campus Life at OKWU
okwu.edu/residential/campus-life/



God can use anyone

Houghton College

Jaclyn Algier's plan when she arrived on the Houghton College campus was simple: play volleyball. A generous scholarship motivated her to enroll even though she "wanted nothing to do with the religious aspects of Houghton College campus."

I thought a person had to be all put together nicely before they could be a Christian.

"I thought a person had to be all put together nicely before they could be a Christian," Algier said, "but when my teammates started sharing some personal things and we began to pray, seeing those prayers being answered was intriguing."

The transformational moment came on a team mission trip to Nicaragua. She recalls going only "because I wanted to play volleyball, visit a new country, work at the orphanages and just spend time with my teammates."

Algier cried all 10 days of the trip, her heart moved by "people with their hands in the air, tears running down their faces, knees bent on the dirt floors, praising God with all their hearts." These people

"had nothing, yet I had everything ... I lacked nothing yet they were happier than I was."

From that point on, she was on fire for God,

baptized at Houghton Wesleyan Church. Algier worked at a Christian camp and went to Costa Rica with Push the Rock to engage in sports ministry at dangerous prisons.

Algier followed a call to Ecuador with One Mission Society after her 2015 graduation and is teaching at an elementary school in North Africa through English Language Institute/China (ELIC). She is determined to impact the students through education and sports ministry. Although Algier never intended to become a disciple and share the gospel, she now embraces that charge wholeheartedly.

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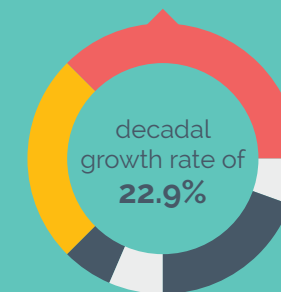
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2017 Marked with Growth and Change



Worship Attendance



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Suroeste • Greater Ohio • Mountain
Plains • North Carolina East
• Shenandoah • Western New York



Baptisms



Conversions

32,141

the fourth largest
total on record



District Superintendent Elections

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Rev. Wesley Smith | ▶ | Northwest District |
| Rev. Peter Moore | ▶ | Atlantic District |
| Dr. Billy Wilson | ▶ | Mountain Plains District |

Eastern New York-New England
District changed name to:

Northeast District



Read Full Article
wesleyan.life/2017-growth-and-change

"These stats – along with stories of transformed lives, churches and communities – give us cause for celebration," said General Superintendent Dr. Wayne Schmidt. "And we do celebrate every time a disciple makes a disciple and a church multiplies itself until The Wesleyan Church has a transforming presence in every ZIP code."



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Apples to Orchards

Becoming a giving and sending church takes ministry to another level.

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." This is what Jesus said to his disciples in John 20:21, and it has become the inspiration for a church's identity and name in Plano, Texas, where nearly 300,000 souls live. Sent Church, as the congregation renamed itself, is in the greater Dallas-Fort Worth metro area (often referred to as DFW). Within this sprawling 13-county area of Texas that more than seven million people call home, DFW is a place the people of Sent Church are not just home in, but are sent to and sent from.

Pastor Dwight Nash emphasizes the missionary calling of every believer in Sent Church saying, "It's our privilege to be missionaries

(Sent Ones) for Jesus, whether we have to cross an ocean or an alley or a cubicle to tell someone of his love and forgiveness."

As Sent Church trains up people to be sent, it has short-term, mid-term and long-term goals in mind. Sent Church has been establishing leadership buy-in, developing leaders and apprentices for new small groups and churches and helping a steering team determine the preferable outcome to their vision of sending in the DFW area and beyond.

Next year's goal is for everyone in leadership to grow and multiply/reproduce. Of this leadership replication, Nash says, "The discipleship and leadership training engine of 2 Timothy 2:2 are the keys to beginning and furthering a movement."

Sent Church has planted churches before, but this intentional leadership development opens up all kinds of new possibilities for multiplication. Sent Church envisions a dramatic increase in small groups, leadership capacity and developing several new church plants and training models. Two dozen new church plants of all sizes in many locations, and just as many new small groups that ideally

will become seeds of new church plants themselves are long-term goals.



It's our privilege to be missionaries **(Sent Ones)** for Jesus, whether we have to **cross an ocean or an alley or a cubicle** to tell someone of his love and forgiveness."



Reflecting on what God is multiplying out from Sent Church, Nash says, "We used to only think about apples and trees, but now we envision orchards of churches coming from this one, small seed called Sent Church!"



DAVID DRURY
is an author and serves as the chief of staff for the international headquarters of The Wesleyan Church.



Building a Thriving Future



“Not sure how, but I’ve got to get my church involved,” Randy Yaryan thought. He had just learned about the Thrive Financial Initiative (TFI), a new program from The Wesleyan Church Education and Clergy Development Division. TFI brings the denomination, district, local church and pastor together in collaborative ways to address pastors’ economic burdens and provide financial management tools for a pastor and congregation.

Through years of ministry at minimal salaries, Yaryan accumulated sizeable debt from his and his kids’ education, loans from worn-out vehicles he used for ministry and bills from other expenses just to provide a home for his family. Working second and third jobs to make ends meet eroded his outlook for ministry and strained relationships with the people he was called to serve. Yaryan suffered. Ministry suffered.

TFI gave Yaryan hope his situation might be reversed. He shared the project with the Winchester Union Street Wesleyan Church family, finding them receptive to the idea.

“I found a church willing to help its pastor. They just didn’t know I needed it or where I needed it,” Yaryan said. When he affirmed he had some debt concerns, that was enough information for his church leaders.

Without knowing all the details, laity started brainstorming ideas for raising funds to reduce his debt. The pastor and lay leaders began working together to complete financial education projects that helped them become better stewards. Many took the opportunity to minimize personal debt. The church also tackled some of the congregation’s debt. What started as support for the pastor soon grew into a collaborative project freeing pastor and people from some of the economic shackles limiting ministry focus and ability.

Growing freedom allowed the church to turn attention from problems toward possibilities. Yaryan acquired a home that might provide rental income, but the house needed renovation. He started making repairs alone, but soon had a team of helpers. Church members volunteered time and tools. They networked in the community to find materials and supplies. Room by room, the house, the church and the future took shape.

Amazing futures sometimes emerge from a simple question: “What if?” While working on Yaryan’s rental home, the pastor and laity learned that someone in the Winchester community needed help. A man widely known for serving kids through the local YMCA and youth sports leagues lived in a home covered in broken siding, rotted doors and shattered windows. “What if . . . ?”

A church once mired in debt and a doubtful future has begun to turn into a kingdom force in its small community, one nail, one board, one person at a time.



MARK RENNAKER

is a pastor, associate professor of leadership and serves as The Wesleyan Church denominational director of the Thrive Financial Initiative.

Yaryan and Union Street Wesleyan Church took the lead. They built a coalition of community churches. They organized with the YMCA. They networked with local merchants to collect donations, materials and volunteer-work schedules. The youth at Union Street donated \$1,000 to the project.

Yaryan and his team launched the work in August 2017, living out the grace and generosity of Christ. A church once mired in debt and a doubtful future has begun to turn into a kingdom force in its small community—one nail, one board, one person at a time.



TFI operates through a simple proposition: thriving clergy help create thriving congregations, which help support thriving communities. The economic challenges pastors face often exist at the center of reasons why they fail to thrive. But it’s not really about the money. It’s not about pastors accumulating material wealth. It’s about removing impediments and creating conditions that help pastors function fully in the calling and gifts of God.

Through a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment, God has blessed The Wesleyan Church with a pathway to address the economic challenges faced by our clergy—Thrive Financial Initiative.

wesleyan.org/tfi

learn how you, your pastor and your church can engage in the Thrive Financial Initiative

HOPE FOR PASTORS

You can learn more about the beginnings of TFI by reading *Hope for Pastors: A Collaborative Approach to Clergy Financial Health* available from Wesleyan Publishing House.

<https://magento.finelink.com/wphstore/retail/bkc730.html>





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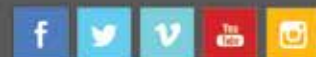


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- Children and Youth Specialist



HUMANS OF SURRENDER

BY TRICIA RIFE

"Nobody cared. I was tossed out like a piece of paper," said Perry, a homeless man in Manhattan, Kansas.

Perry's story is just one of many told by Humans of Surrender (HOS). An initiative of Brett Awbrey and Adam Herbert, both members of Westview Community Church in Manhattan, Kansas, HOS shares stories of the brokenness of people who then find hope and redemption through Jesus Christ. The stories cover the spectrum of humanity, from homeless people to company CEOs.

The idea for Humans of Surrender was born in 2014 as Brett contemplated what it means to truly surrender one's will to God. HOS is modeled after Humans of New York, a photoblog consisting of stories that display humanity in a pure form. There is one major difference, however. Stories with Humans of Surrender depict the hope found in Jesus.

"There is not a human being on the face of the earth who doesn't have a story to tell or isn't broken," said Awbrey. "Common ground for all of us involves sin, brokenness and pain."

Each story features examples of the human condition: pride, fear, ego, doubt, lust, betrayal, anxiety, bitterness and anger, followed by how the story subject found hope in Christ.

While the stories found at HOS illustrate redemption, Awbrey, an entrepreneur, and Herbert, Westview youth director, stress that those featured aren't perfect people.

"We don't want to give the illusion that through Jesus we're perfect," said Herbert. "Surrender is something I do hundreds of times a day. When we submit ourselves to his grace, we are healed – true spiritual transformation takes place."

Everyone has a story and God can use each one to make his name known.

The goal of Humans of Surrender is to produce 6,000 stories by 2019.

Awbrey and Herbert want to empower others to tell their stories.

"People are reserved in being transparent and sharing their stories," said Herbert. "It's okay to be broken." 🌱

! Learn more
humansofsurrender.com

LEGACY CHURCH PLANTING

Wesleyans Provide Hurricane Relief and Recovery

! Read more relief updates
wesleyan.org/news

The Wesleyan Church, World Hope International and Poured Out united to provide relief and ongoing recovery for victims impacted by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

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Renuevo: Renewal, Relationships and Relaxation

More than 500 Hispanic and multiethnic people gathered at Indiana Wesleyan University for the Hispanic family camp, Renuevo 2017, in July. Renuevo will be held again June 22-24, 2018, at Southern Wesleyan University.

Sierra Leone Emergency Response Effort

World Hope International coordinated an emergency response effort with the Sierra Leone Office of National Security (ONS) in response to deadly mudslides and flooding in Freetown, Sierra Leone, on August 14.

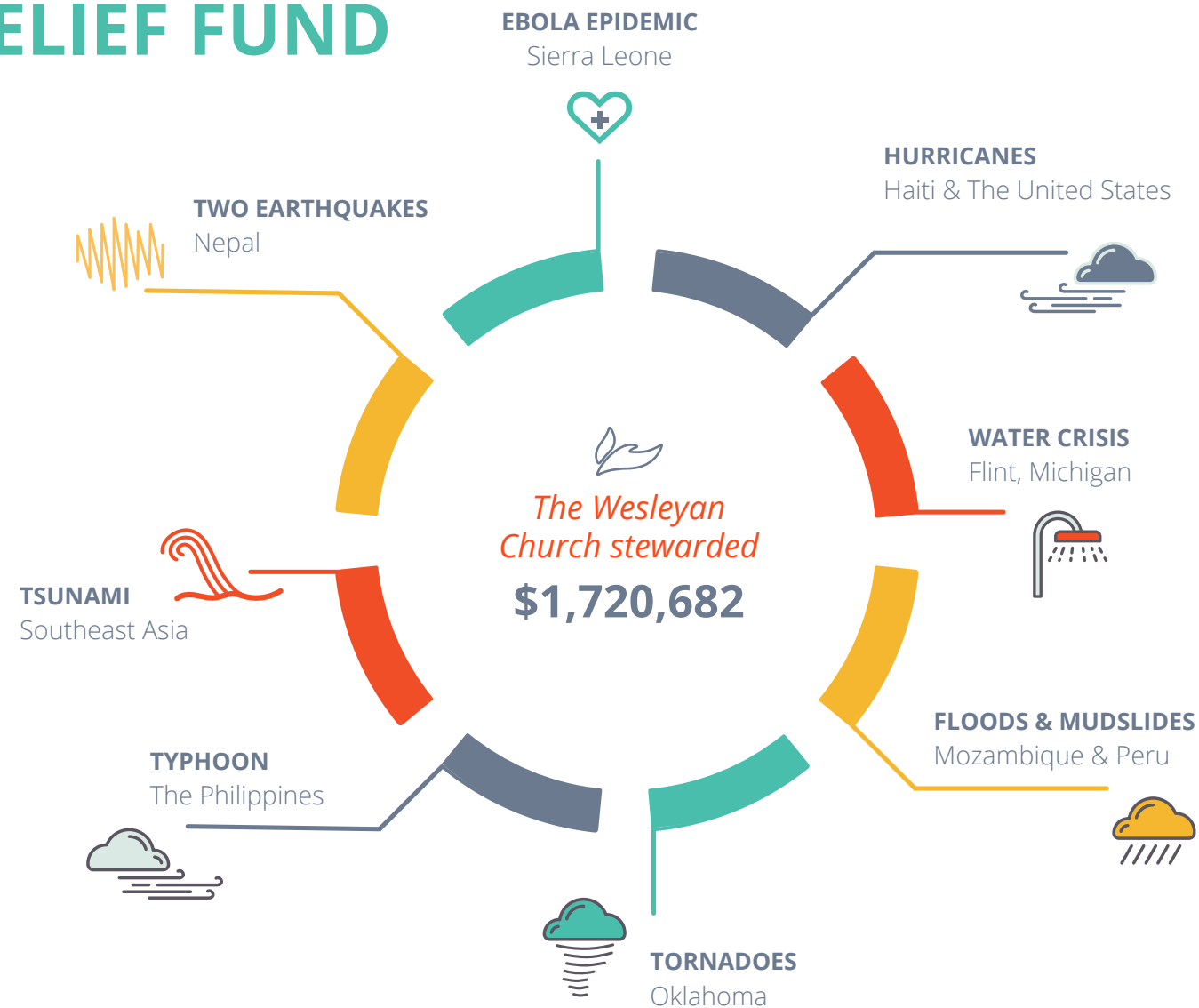
! Full story
wesleyan.org/300

Ecuadorian Pastors Make History

History was made for The Wesleyan Church of Ecuador on May 12 when Gustavo Viejo, Nino Medina, Diana Esteves de Cruz and Juancarlos Cruz became the first ordained Wesleyan pastors in the country.

! Full story
wesleyan.org/6574

WESLEYAN EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND



IT'S MORE THAN NUMBERS.
Each dollar represents a donor,
a deliverer and a recipient.

In the past five years, the Wesleyan Emergency Relief Fund has responded to 11 domestic and international disasters. Prompting calls for contributions were two earthquakes in Nepal, a tsunami in southeast Asia, a typhoon in the Philippines, tornadoes

in Oklahoma, floods and mudslides in Mozambique and Peru, a water crisis in Flint, Michigan, hurricanes in Haiti and the United States, and the Ebola epidemic in Sierra Leone.

Involved in WERF services were Global Partners, World Hope International, Poured Out, districts, congregations and individuals. Humanitarian aid networks spanned communities, countries and continents.

Each WERF entity worshiped God by serving others, assisting with funds, personnel, equipment, supplies, medical care, construction, communication and prayer. Because of people's immediate and generous response to WERF, lives were transformed physically and eternally.



Celebrating and Partnering with Poland Churches

Wesleyan churches in Poland are using Facebook Live and auto repair to meet their neighbors and help with real-life problems like car trouble and interpersonal conflict.



Full story
wesleyan.org/6575

Caribbean Wesleyan College Celebrates Dual Accreditation

The Caribbean Wesleyan College (CWC) community gathered for a thanksgiving service to celebrate the school's full accreditation with the University Council of Jamaica, along with its full accreditation with Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association, achieved in 2011.



Full story
wesleyan.org/6515

Safe Families are a Church Priority

The Ransom Church was the first in South Dakota to become a Safe Families church. Eight churches in Sioux Falls now volunteer with Safe Families for Children.



Full story
wesleyan.org/6497



"Together We Can Do It!"

A dream became reality in Bogota, Colombia, when 14 members of the first Wesley Seminary (Bogota) cohort received master of divinity degrees on July 15. Seven students graduated with undergraduate degrees.



Full story
wesleyan.org/6517

General Superintendent Responds to Charlottesville

On August 12, violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, received national attention. White supremacists and counter-protesters clashed during the "Unite the Right" rally, organized to protest against removing the Robert Edward Lee sculpture in Emancipation Park.

Following are excerpts from a response by General Superintendent Wayne Schmidt:

"I denounce any behavior couched as Christian that dehumanizes people and elevates one group over another.

"Our doctrine as Christians and history as Wesleyans in particular compels us not to be silent or inactive, but to engage in love. I call on all Wesleyan churches to pray for our nation, Charlottesville, and for pastors and community leaders on the front lines risking their safety there."

"I also encourage all Christians to grow in their discipleship by forming relationships across ethnic lines.

"In my own life, I have found these relationships to grow my own soul, and also grow my perspective and empathy for how others experience these matters. God uses these relationships, and our discipleship becomes more holistic if we reach across such lines."



Full story
wesleyan.org/6587

Prayer for Charlottesville

On August 13, the first of 21 days of previously-scheduled focused prayer was held in Cornerstone Community Church, a Wesleyan congregation in Charlottesville.



Full story
wesleyan.org/6601

Remembered



EMMETT, DR. STORER

Dr. Storer Emmett, 84, died August 25. Emmett served as a missionary with Wesleyan World Missions (now Global Partners) in Haiti, Sierra Leone and Zambia. He also served as director of Wesleyan Medical Fellowship (now Global Partners Health Network). He is survived by his wife, Wilma.

Full story: wesleyan.org/wesleyan-missionary-medical-doctor-passes-away

CANN, REV. ENOS

Rev. Enos Cann, 93, died July 25. He pastored in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maine, Virginia and Canada. His wife, Erma, survives.

FARLEY, REV. DALE

Rev. Dale Farley, 84, died July 1. He pastored in New York and Michigan. His wife, Helen, survives.

FLICK, REV. JAMES

Rev. James Flick, 88, died June 11. He pastored in Colorado, Kansas and Oklahoma. His wife, Nina, survives.

HAMEL, REV. MARK

Rev. Mark Hamel, 63, died July 13. He pastored in Kansas and Nebraska. He was co-pastoring First Wesleyan Church in Wichita with his wife, Marcelle, who survives.

HINSHAW, REV. E. DWAYNE

Rev. E. Dwayne Hinshaw, 69, died July 26. He pastored in North Carolina and was serving as an assistant pastor at First Wesleyan Church in Burlington. He is survived by his wife, Janeice.

KUEHNER, REV. TOM

Rev. Tom Kuehner, 54, died July 22. He pastored at Victory Highway Wesleyan Church in Painted Post, New York. His wife, Deb, survives.



LEROY, REV. DAVID

Rev. David LeRoy, age 64, died September 6. An ordained minister with the Atlantic District, he served as district superintendent of the Dakota District from 1993 to 1997, and of the Atlantic District from 2007 to 2012. He also pastored

in the Atlantic and Central New York districts. He is survived by his wife, Joanne.

Full story: wesleyan.org/former-district-superintendent-passes-away

MARTIN, REV. ERNEST, JR.

Rev. Ernest Martin, Jr., 36, died June 25. He pastored at Graw Bone Wesleyan Church in Nashville. His wife, Linda, survives.

Full story: wesleyan.org/indiana-south-pastor-killed-in-car-accident-6442

OOCUMMA, REV. DINAH

Rev. Dinah Oocumma, 90, died August 27. She served as an assistant pastor at Cherokee Wesleyan Church in North Carolina. Her husband, Woodrow Welch, preceded her in death.

PARK, JOSEPH

Joseph Park, 86, died August 24. He served as a printer for Wesley Press, now Wesleyan Publishing House. His wife, Edna, survives.

RAMPEY, REV. M. PAUL

Rev. M. Paul Rampey, 89, died June 24. He planted Belton Wesleyan Church in Belton, South Carolina, and pastored several other churches in the state. His first wife, Marian, preceded him in death. He is survived by his wife, Martha.

SHEPHERD, REV. EDWARD

Rev. Edward Shepherd, 84, died July 15. He pastored in the Shenandoah District. His wife, Gladys, preceded him in death.

WILSON, REV. VELMA

Rev. Velma Wilson, 83, died May 6. She pastored with her husband, Rev. Ted Wilson, for 60 years. He preceded her in death.

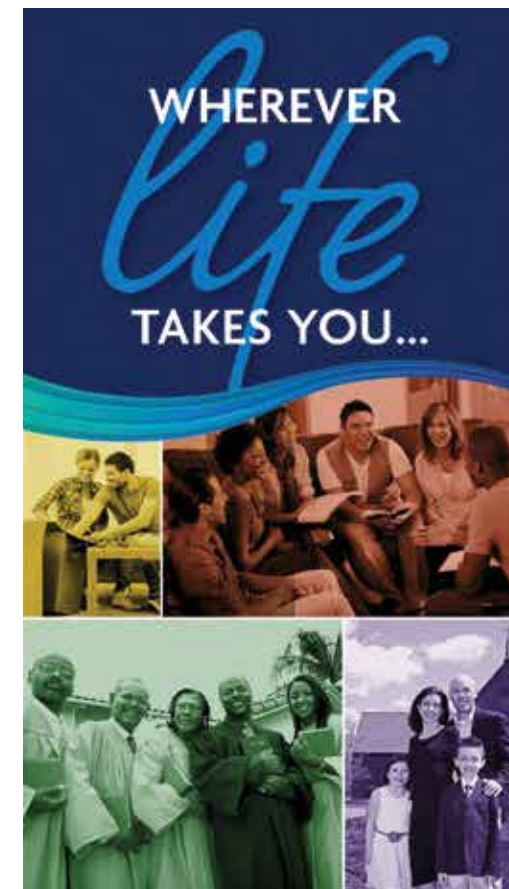
WITHEROW, REV. DANIEL

Rev. Daniel Witherow, 41, died May 11. He served as pastor of Grace Wesleyan Church in Zanesville, Ohio. His wife, Sara, survives.

YAZZIE, REV. BEN

Rev. Ben Yazzie, 76, died June 27. He pastored Dineh Wesleyan Church in Keams Cannon, Arizona. His wife, Bettie, survives. 🙏

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rev. Lona Johnston passed away in Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada. We apologize for the previously-published error.



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— Wes Dupin, Founder and Lead Pastor of Daybreak Church

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