Rethinking Church

Local churches throughout the Louisiana Annual Conference are “rethinking” outreach and hospitality with new approaches within their communities.

The month of September was truly “Open House Month” at Loranger United Methodist Church. Above, Loranger UMC used banners throughout the community to publicize Open House Month. A group from Moses Chapel UMC, top right, is shown enjoying United Methodist Day at the Zoo ’09. Youth volunteers, right, helped out with yard cleanup during First UMC’s first annual community work day.

Loranger United Methodist Church, First UMC in Baton Rouge, and churches throughout the Baton Rouge District recently sponsored events and special Sundays aimed at attracting seekers, reaching out to local communities and increasing visibility for The United Methodist Church. Above, Loranger UMC used banners throughout the community to publicize Open House Month. A group from Moses Chapel UMC, top right, is shown enjoying United Methodist Day at the Zoo ’09. Youth volunteers, right, helped out with yard cleanup during First UMC’s first annual community work day.

Churches offer help and hospitality through events

_**BY BETTY BACKSTROM**_

Local churches throughout the Louisiana Annual Conference are “rethinking” outreach and hospitality with new approaches within their communities.

The month of September was truly “Open House Month” at Loranger United Methodist Church.

Every Sunday in this Baton Rouge District church featured a special theme or activity designed to attract seekers and to reach out to the community at large.

“Each week was sponsored by a different group within the church,” said Rev. John Deschner, pastor of Loranger UMC.

“These groups covered the cost of food and materials needed to put on the events we planned.”

On Round-Up Sunday, held Sept. 6, worshippers and visitors were invited to wear Western-themed clothing. The fun, relaxed service was followed by a cookout sponsored by an adult Sunday school class.

The following week was Music Sunday, which featured a hymn sing, a performance by the children’s bell choir and special music.

Public Servant Sunday, celebrated Sept. 20, was highlighted by a visit from local firefighters who brought equipment and vehicles to Loranger UMC.

“Everyone enjoyed visiting with the firefighters. It gave people a chance to thank...”

See Rethink, page 5
Bishop William W. Hutchinson, left, and Rev. Don Cottrill, provost, receive a plaque presented by Maribel Calvo congratulating the Louisiana Annual Conference for achieving the highest increase in church participation of designated giving in 2008 in the South Central Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church. Calvo serves El Mesias United Methodist Church and Hispanic ministries in Kenner and is chair of the Conference Board of Global Ministries. The award was presented during the Oct. 3 meeting of the Conference Ministry Team at The Wesley Center in Woodworth, La. Highlights of the meeting included discussions about the Town and Country initiative, plans for a conference-wide Rethink Church event, and the upcoming Rethink Evangelism program featuring Tony Campolo as keynote speaker. Members of the CMT broke into small discussion groups to talk about ways that the conference and local churches have met the needs set forth by the Four Foci targeted by the general church. Those foci include building new places for new people and renewing existing congregations; stamping out killer diseases of poverty by improving health globally; the development of principled Christian leaders for the church and the world; and engaging in ministry with the poor. In the area of ‘new places,’ the group lifted up three new church starts in the Baton Rouge District and the more than $30,000 that has been raised for new church starts through the ‘Doors of the Louisiana Conference’ poster sale; strides in improving global health through the deployment of LAVIM medical teams worldwide, the recent HIV/AIDS testing pilot held in Baton Rouge, and the free clinic housed at Mt. Zion UMC in New Orleans; conference initiatives like the the Academy for Spiritual Leadership, Discerner’s Academy and the Center for Pastoral Excellence;and ministry with the poor being done through numerous local churches involved in programs like Kid’s Hope.

Bishop William W. Hutchinson and Cabinet recommend that all pastors, churches and affiliated groups within the Annual Conference, and institutions of the Conference, follow the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines that are attached, and the instructions below. We further recommend that you implement “Action Steps to Keep Your Business and Employees Healthy” with an eye to protecting all those involved in the ministry of your church:

If you are in a household of a person with seasonal flu or H1N1 flu, do not attend church events until the fever has subsided for 48 hours.

If you are hosting guests (volunteer teams) from out of your community and one of them becomes ill with fever, first quarantine the individual, and then send them home as soon as possible.

Lay and clergy serving communion should visibly clean their hands with cleanser/sanitizer. This practice can be incorporated during the act of confession as a liturgical act.

Pastors who become sick with flu like symptom shall stay home. In the case of Bible study, committee meetings, etc., where the pastor is the primary leadership the event should be rescheduled. When the pastor is not the primary leadership, the event should carry on without the pastor. When the pastor is ill before a worship event, the lay leader (or other responsible leader) should be contacted to make arrangements for conducting the service. In the case of communion, the communion shall be rescheduled until a time when the pastor or other ordained elder clergy is available.

We recommend that you, your loved ones, and the members of your congregation, consult with their physicians to see if they can receive the HINI flu vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine.

Only 250 spaces remaining for Rethink Evangelism event

There are only 250 spaces left for those planning to attend the Rethink Evangelism Day, sponsored by the Council on Evangelism and the General Board of Discipleship with the support of The Foundation for Evangelism.

Congress on Evangelism 2010 slated Jan. 5-8 in New Orleans

The Congress on Evangelism 2010 will be held Jan. 5-8 at the Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans. “Restore, Rebuild, Renew” is the theme for this year’s congress, which is sponsored by the Council on Evangelism and the General Board of Discipleship with the support of The Foundation for Evangelism. The congress meets every January at different locations presenting motivational speakers and workshops based on evangelism.

Featured speakers for this year’s event include William Young, author of The Shack; Rudy Rasmus, pastor of St. John’s UMC in Houston; Bishop Minerva Carcano, Desert Southwest Conference; Kenda Creasy Dean, associate professor of Youth, Church and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary; Bishop William W. Hutchinson, Louisiana Conference; Jim Walker, Hot Metal Bridge in Pittsburg, Pa.; and Bishop Will Willimon, North Alabama Conference. Bishop Willimon will begin each morning with a study from the best seller The Wesley Study Bible.

Special Hispanic-Latino sessions will be offered for United Methodist leaders in the Hispanic/Latino ministry area, as well as those seeking to expand their knowledge of this growing population. Workshops include a variety of topics including Hospitality that Leads to a Return Visit, Building Bridges to the Kingdom of God, Making Sustainable Youth Ministry Happen in the World, Leadership Development and Small Groups for Small Churches.

Register online at www.rethinkevangelism.org or by sending the registration form to the Louisiana Conference Office, The United Methodist Church, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802; Attn: Rethink Evangelism Registration.
United Methodist Student Day offering slated Nov. 29

The United Methodist Student Day offering, scheduled for Nov. 29, makes it possible for the church to award scholarships and loans to deserving United Methodist students. Each year 10 percent of the funds go back to the annual conferences for merit scholarship awards. Annual conferences participating in the Rebate Program may award one or more merit scholarships to United Methodist students who reside in the conference and attend a United Methodist related college or university.

The General Board of Higher Education & Ministry celebrates that by December, the office will have awarded more than $6 in scholarships and loans to over 3,000 United Methodist undergraduate and graduate students.

A preliminary list of Louisiana Annual Conference student recipients of loans and scholarships is presented here. Listed by the local churches, they include: Michael Baham, Troy Brouillette and Joshua Frick from Aldersgate UMC, Slidell; Marissa Teasue, Asbury UMC, Bossier City; Jason Harris, NewSong UMC, Prairieville; Jomel Whittington, Trinity UMC, Baldwin; John Buttram, First UMC, New Orleans; Jessica Love, Christ UMC, Shreveport; Renwic Clivens and Simone Greene from Cornerstone UMC, New Orleans; Ellen LeCroix, First UMC, Alexandria; Elizabeth Ingram, First UMC, Baton Rouge; Victor Anderson, First UMC, Bossier City; Britney Wimer, First UMC, DeRidder; Tiffany Ringueaux, First UMC, LaPlace; Hannah Granthan, First UMC, Minden; Carrie Jones and Scott Myers, First UMC, Monroe; John Bramble, First UMC, Slidell; Leah Dark, Grace Community UMC, Shreveport; Megan Wilson, Thomas UMC, Kenner; Sara Gardner, McGuire UMC, West Monroe; Fonda Nero, Mt. Zion UMC, Clinton; Nerrissa Mitchell, Philips Memorial UMC, New Orleans; Emily Knox, St. Charles UMC, Destrehan; Jasmine Frank and Vince Lands, St. Mark UMC, Baton Rouge; Shelton Berry, Scott UMC, Port Allen; Amanda Klipsch and Jessica Lehman, St. Timothy on the Northshore UMC, Mandeville; Austin Rinehart, St. Andrew’s UMC, Sterlington; Xavier Myers and Abri Myers, St. Paul UMC, Shreveport; Kenneth Williams, Trinity UMC, Ruston; Renisha Converse, Wesley UMC, Napoleonville; and Kathryn Davis, Zachary UMC, Zachary.

Please give generously to the United Methodist Student Day offering on Nov. 29.

Bronx church and major league ball club ‘rethink’ the fight against hunger

It is a story as old as the Gospel parable of the rich man’s banquet and as new as the $1.5 billion sports palace where the New York Yankees are making another run at the championship.

Through a partnership with a small United Methodist church and an antipoverty think tank, the latest incarnation of Yankee Stadium — complete with 51 luxury suites, $2,500 box seats, a members-only restaurant, marinated beren and a concierge to assist with theater tickets or restaurant reservations — also is catering to the hungry.

The unsteady hot dogs, hamburgers, sushi and other food from game days are being packaged up and sent for immediate distribution to neighborhood feeding centers, such as one six blocks away at 166th Street near Yankee Stadium.

Neither will eradicate the poverty that exists in the southwest Bronx, not the church, which can fit 180 worshippers in the pews of a sanctuary built in 1913. Nor the ball club, which often has more than 50,000 fans on game day.

But together, these two institutions — the “little church with the big heart,” as one member calls it, and an iconic American sports franchise — are taking a small step to reach out to one another and narrow the gap between the economic haves and have-nots in their neighborhood.

In the glory days of October, as the Yankees pursue their 40th American League pennant and 27th World Series championship, Woodycrest United Methodist has its own dreams: expanding its ministries with a community center, senior citizen housing, day care.

A half-dozen blocks away from the glare of the baseball playoffs, a light of hope is shining a little brighter in the glare of the baseball playoffs, a light of hope is shining a little brighter in the

For years, both the church and the stadium reflected the mostly Irish and Eastern European middle-class neighborhood around it. In the late 1950s, the first ethnic minority groups began to move into the area. Within a decade, Woodycrest was a predominantly black congregation.

When Frankie Hailey moved from Liberty, S.C., to Highbridge in 1969, her aunt instructed her to join Woodycrest church. “That’s where you are needed,” she told her.

Hailey, now 66, quickly became a regular, taking on the role of organist a couple of years later. Back then, the “well kept” neighborhood included a thriving shopping district on Ogden Avenue with two supermarkets, a children’s store, furniture store and a number of other businesses. “We had just about everything in this neighborhood at one time,” she recalls.

In 2002, the Rev. Denise Pickett was assigned to Woodycrest by the United Methodist New York Annual (regional) Conference. Pickett started a Bread Basket program to feed the door.

The oldest of six girls, Pickett, 53, was devoted to her grandmother, Ruby Gantt, and her grandmother was devoted to Metropolitan Community United Methodist Church at 126th Street and Madison Avenue in Harlem. The entire family would travel from Brooklyn most Sundays to worship there. Administering to the spiritual and physical needs in Highbridge was ideal for the mission-minded New Yorker.

“Denise has a huge heart for reaching out to people who live on the margins,” says the Rev. James “K” Karpen, a fellow pastor who has known Pickett since the late 1980s, when they worked in camping ministries together. “She has a real gift when it comes to creating community in tough situations. Not everyone can do that.”

Woodycrest’s Bread Basket program, created about five years ago, offers a free hot meal and assorted take-home goodies each Wednesday noon. “The whole concept has since spread to 31 sports teams, including eight in the New York metropolitan area.

Being able to share this food has helped the church fulfill the commandment of Jesus to “feed my sheep,” a scriptural message that Pickett takes “very seriously,” according to Hailey.

A half hour before the service begins, Woods, dressed in a suit with a cross stud earring in one earlobe, offers an impromptu prayer. “We want to do the best that we can do for you, Lord, as we reach out to others,” he says.

While others across the nation tuned in, church members haven’t been able to watch the first two games of the playoff battle between the Yankees and the Minnesota Twins.

Shortly after the first pitch on Oct. 7, Pickett and her congregation began a three-night revival.
**TARP project offers disaster response opportunities for youth**

Last September, residents of South Louisiana braced themselves as Hurricane Gustav barreled along the coastline, hoping it wouldn’t be another Katrina. The eye of the storm came ashore in the coastal community of Cocodrie in Terrebonne Parish. Though Cocodrie is just 80 miles southeast of New Orleans and received its share of damage from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, residents claimed Gustav was the worst storm they had ever seen. During the height of the storm, Terrebonne Parish experienced winds at 110 mph and a storm surge of 12 feet. Less than two weeks later, Hurricane Ike brought more wind, rain, and flooding to the area.

Though the damage from these storms was especially severe, this was not an uncommon occurrence for residents of Terrebonne Parish. Year after year these families face the threat of another hurricane devastating their homes and changing the course of their lives. This threat became a reality for thousands of residents following the storms of 2008. Less than half of all residents of Terrebonne Parish carried adequate flood insurance to cover the damage done to their homes, and many of them would be unable to make the needed repairs on their own. In effort to provide the needed help, First United Methodist Church of Baton Rouge created Terrebonne Area Restoration Project (TARP). TARP was created to provide home repair and restoration at no cost to homeowners.

TARP provides the opportunity for teens to serve as the hands and feet of Christ while growing in their faith through devotionals and worship and meeting friends from across the country who also have a heart for service. Volunteers are asked to commit one week of their summer to our project to make a difference that will last a lifetime.

Last summer, over 300 teens from 14 states across the country traveled to Terrebonne Parish to serve. Through their 11,470 hours of service, 15 homes were restored. Yet the need still remains. From roofing to foundations and everything in between, homes and lives must be rebuilt; and TARP needs your help to do it!

TARP is now accepting registrations for the summer of 2010. The project begins the week of June 6 and continues through July 31. For more information, visit www.thebluetarp.com or contact Laurie Byland at (225) 383-4777 or laurie.biland@firstmethodist.org.

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**Event slated Oct. 25 celebrates construction of children’s home**

“Celebration for the Children”, a special event to celebrate the start of construction of the new Southwest Louisiana Methodist Children’s Home, will be held on Sunday, Oct. 25 from 4-6 p.m. This old-fashioned, camp style meeting and outdoor hymn-fest service will be held at the construction site which is located near the intersection of Highway 27 and Houston River Road, north of Sulphur. The celebration, which is open to the public, is hosted by the Lake Charles District.

Testimonies will be presented by former residents of the Children’s Home in Ruston, along with a brief message from Bishop William W. Hutchinson; during “Celebration for the Children” slated Oct. 25. The event celebrates the start of construction of the new Southwest Louisiana Methodist Children’s Home.

In the event of rain, the event will be moved to Henning Memorial United Methodist Church, 404 S. Huntington Street in Sulphur.

Lewing Construction Co., Inc. of Lake Charles began construction on the new children’s home July 23; completion is anticipated for the fall of 2010. A residential facility and an administrative building will be constructed on the 40-acre site. The home is designed to accommodate children ages 10-17.

The destruction of the children’s home in New Orleans by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita raised the need for an additional children’s home in southwest Louisiana. The dream became a reality with a sizeable financial gift from the Henning family.

For additional information, please call Doug Hall at (985) 860-5247 or go to www.lmch.org.
them for their service to the community,”
reported Rev. Deschner, who added that cook-
ies made by the congregation were present-
et to the men.
Perhaps the most remarkable celebra-
tion was Bible Study, held on the final
Sunday in September. Every person that
attended worship that day was given a
copy of the New Believer’s Study Bible
(NT). “These Bibles are very affordable,”
said Rev. Deschner. “They can be ordered
for $2.75 each at www.biblesatcost.com.”
Recipients were encouraged to give the
Bibles as gifts to others, if they felt they
already had enough for their own use.
Planners coordinated Bible Sunday to
coincide with the annual United Methodist
Men’s jambalaya fundraiser. “We were able
to publicize both events together and maxi-
mize the crowd,” said Rev. Deschner.
The church made a strong effort to
invite the public to this month-long series
of events. Special banners were made and
posted at the church and in several key
locations around Loranger. “We produced
flyers that were distributed at church and
through local businesses. A bulletin insert
was produced which promoted all the
events. The insert was printed on card
stock and members were encouraged to
give or mail the card to a neighbor or
friend,” said Rev. Deschner.
Coordinators believe that the month was
so successful because church members
took the time to extend personal invitations
to people they knew. “We encouraged them
to tell their friends, and they really made
the effort to do so. I really feel that because
groups in the church were so involved in
the planning and implementation of the
events that they felt ownership and took the
extra steps to make it a success. Comparing
this to previous attempts, the personal invi-
tation was much more effective than
avenues like direct mail. People want to
know that it is important to someone that
they visit.”

Methodist Day at the Zoo
The rain may have dampened the
ground, but it didn’t dampen the spirits of
those who enjoyed United Methodist Day
at the Zoo ’09. Held Oct. 4 at the Baton
Rouge Zoo, this district-wide outreach
event served as a pilot for future zoo days.
Collaborating on the planning were repre-
sentatives from First United Methodist
Church in Gonzales, St Francisville UMC
and Ingleside, Broadmoor, Neeley, First
and Jefferson UMCs, all located in Baton
Rouge. Balloons printed with the event
logo were handed out to visitors to the zoo
craft tables were set up in the spacious
pavilion located at the entrance of the facil-
ity. The pavilion provided a welcome
respite for 100 participants from the gentle
rainfall. Participating churches fellow-
shipped and visited with passing folks who
joined them at the pavilion.

First UMC’s FaithWorks
First UMC in Baton Rouge held its first
annual community workday on Saturday,
Oct. 3. Choosing from 14 different oppor-
tunities, 170 volunteers from the church
went to homes and non-profits agencies in
the community and surrounding area to
assist with a variety of projects.
Louisiana Conference NOW!

2009 W. T. Handy Convocation
Friday, Nov. 20 - Saturday, Nov. 21
Dillard University
2601 Gentilly Boulevard
New Orleans, LA 70112

To register contact
the Louisiana Conference Office of Multicultural Ministries
(225) 346-1646 or (225) 747-2753

Registration: $35.00
Make checks payable to
La. Annual Conference

For lodging, make reservations by calling the
Superdome Holiday Inn
330 Loyola Ave
New Orleans, La.
Call (504) 581-1600

Room Rate: $90 per night
(ask for group rate– W. T. Handy Convocation)

For information about the Youth and Young Adult component of the W. T. Handy Convocation, contact the Office of Multicultural Ministries.

The group Soul Fruit will be featured in concert the Saturday night of the Youth and Young Adult event.

User-friendly handbook details church’s mission, beliefs and structure

United Methodist Communications announces the publication of the 2009-12 edition of The United Methodist handbook, a 48-page, colorful publication filled with comprehensive information about The United Methodist Church and the ways it lives out its global mission. The handbook is available at no charge.

“This handbook is an invaluable resource for church leaders, members, and those who are new to the church,” said the Rev. Larry Hollon, chief executive of United Methodist Communications. “It captures the essence of what it means to be a United Methodist, showing who we are, where we’ve been, and where we’re going.”

Themed with the mission of “making disciples for the transformation of the world,” the 2009-12 handbook prominently features The United Methodist Church’s “Four Areas of Focus.” The focus areas are key ministries affirmed and adopted by the 2008 General Conference, which include: developing principled Christian leaders for the church and the world; creating new places for new people and renewing existing congregations; engaging in ministry with the poor; and stamping out the killer diseases of poverty by improving health globally. The handbook describes current needs within each area, and outlines the denomination’s strategies for meeting those challenges.

Additionally, new for 2009-12 are detailed maps of central and jurisdictional annual conferences that show more fully how our connectional church serves around the world. Content also includes the mission and beliefs of United Methodists, the church’s basic organization, and its history. Giving and online learning opportunities are highlighted, too.

Copies of the handbook are available at www.umcgiving.org, or by calling (888) 346-3862.

Join Bishop William W. Hutchinson and his wife Kay Hutchinson for
The Louisiana Annual Conference
Holy Land Classic 2010
Visit Jerusalem, Galilee, Bethlehem and Jericho
Departing January 12, 2010 for 10 days of Biblical Discovery
Price ranges from $2,248 to $2,398 depending on your city of departure
Travel to:
The Mount of the Beatitudes
The River Jordan
Nazareth, Jesus’ boyhood home
The cave revered as the place of Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem
The Garden of Gethsemane
The Via Dolorosa
Trip extensions available at the end of 10 days include:
Cairo and the Route of the Exodus
Wonders of Egypt and Luxor
Nile Cruise
Wonders of Jordan and Petra

For more information contact
Rev. Don Cottrill or Rhonda Whitley at (225) 346-1646
Register online via credit card or check at www.eo.travelwithus.com

Join Bishop William Hutchinson and the Louisiana Annual Conference for The Oberammergau Passion Play 2010 in Bavaria, Germany as part of a 9-day European Adventure (departs Aug. 24, 2010)

Watch the passion of Jesus in moving and stirring music.
Take part in this 370-year old tradition staged in the breath taking beauty of the Alps.
Visit huge abbeys and grand churches in the fellowship with other Christian travelers.
Travel to Germany, Austria and Italy, with options for trip extensions in Italy, Switzerland and Vienna/Prague.

For more information contact Rev. Don Cottrill or Rhonda Whitley at (225) 346-1646
Register online via credit card or check at www.eo.travelwithus.com

Rethink Church
The Louisiana Conference has seven districts with varying numbers of churches. Louisiana Conference has 26,000 pastoral charges. District scouting coordinators spend most of their time resourcing the churches that already have scouting units; they seldom have the time to help the other churches understand how scouting can enrich the lives of their youth and reach non-church members.

“Today we are making accommodations,” said Larry Coppock, director of scouting ministries and youth-serving agencies for the General Commission on UM Men. He noted that most general church programs effectively reach the 488 district superintendents, but the programs seldom reach the 26,000 pastoral charges.

The solution: a “Scouting Ministry Specialist.”

Patterned similar to the Men’s Ministry Specialist, a Scouting Ministry Specialist will help up to three churches understand the importance of scouting and help them launch Cub packs, Girl and Boy Scout troops, and Venturing crews. They will provide information about national awards, introduce churches to the God and Country series, encourage church leaders to attend regional and national training opportunities.

In order to become a Scouting Ministry Specialist, a candidate must provide proof of Youth Protection Training and/or take an online Sexual Ethics and Safe Sanctuaries course; show a record of scouting/youth ministry experience and submit registration of $10.

The Scouting Ministry Committee is an arm of the Nashville-based General Commission on UM Men.

For further information, contact LaNisha Sayles, at lsayles@gcumm.org (866) 297-4312 or the scouting website, www.gcumm.org/scoutingministyspecialists.

The Louisiana Prison Chapel Foundation (LPCF) is in the process of building a chapel in Washington Parish at Rayburn Correctional Center in Angie, La.

Currently, 11 chapels are fully functioning around the state providing an environment for faith and character based programs to grow and flourish.

United Methodists in Louisiana have been very generous in supporting LPCF and have been instrumental in making every one of the chapels a reality. The Baton Rouge District made the lead gift for the chapel at Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women, and churches in the Alexandria District played an important role in the building of the chapels at Aoyelles Correctional Center and Winnfield Correctional Center. Almost $400,000 has been raised for the Rayburn chapel. Another $100,000 is needed to complete the new building which includes a sanctuary, four classrooms and a chaplain’s office. The inmates at Rayburn have contributed nearly $7,000 themselves toward the project.

For more information, contact Cindy Mann at (225) 346-1646 or (225) 931-3664.
Disaster response ministry aids FEMA trailer residents

Nearly 3,000 people in Louisiana still live in FEMA trailers due to their homes being destroyed by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Louisiana’s United Methodist Disaster Recovery Ministry is now receiving grant funding from FEMA to assist almost a third of those people in moving out of those trailers and into a home of their own.

This pilot case management program, authorized through the Louisiana Recovery Authority, will target over 900 cases scattered throughout the state. Regional offices have been set up in Lafayette and in New Orleans to handle the workload.

Once case management is done, the Louisiana Housing Authority is committing $3.2 million for rebuilding homes for these clients.

The disaster response ministry, officially known as LA Conference of the UMC Disaster Response, Inc., has also been asked by Catholic Charities to take on nearly 500 clients for case management. These cases will be worked out of offices housed in First United Methodist Church in New Iberia. “Because our organization does such an effective job with case management, Catholic Charities asked us to help with these clients. Catholic Charities will be funding the effort while we provide the managers and expertise,” said Rev. Darryl Tate, director.

Advent candle lighting meditations available online

A set of brief meditations with scriptures, reflections, and liturgies that may be used in lighting the candles of the Advent wreath in worship at church or home is available online.

Each meditation uses one of the 2009 Lectionary readings for that day. The readings are divided into sections that can be assigned to various persons participating, including the children. Suggested hymns from both The United Methodist Hymnal and The Faith We Sing are provided as an option to conclude each meditation. A link to a new hymn written for each Sunday of Advent is also provided. Permission is granted to download, copy, adapt, edit, and reprint for home or local church worship with the inclusion of the copyright citation on each copy.

To access the meditations on the web go to:
http://www.gbod.org/worship/default.asp?act=reader&item_id=47983

It’s That Time Again!

Fall festivals, falling leaves, and of course, annual campaigns!

Enhance stewardship in your church this pledge season with “messages of faithfulness” from pastors in our Conference. Our new

Free Stewardship Sermon Booklet

includes 12 sermons plus other ideas for incorporating stewardship into your worship experience year-round.

Call and ask for Messages of Faithfulness or request it from our website!

(225) 346-1535 (800) 256-9317
www.umf.org