



NORTH NEWS

North District
Of the
Arkansas
Conference
Of
The United
Methodist
Church

Volume 2 Issue 2

February 1, 2012
Editor: LaDonna Busby

“OLD BATTERIES AND OTHER TOXIC WASTE” *A Message from the District Superintendent, Reverend Charles T. Settle*

Inside this issue:

Apport.	2
District Lay Leader Message	3
Prayer Concerns	4



Have you ever noticed how difficult it is to get rid of things we neither want nor need? Many years ago, Mary Anne and I moved into a home

where there was an old battery, left by the previous owners, in our garage. I wanted the sanitation workers to take it off with the other trash, but they refused. “No,” they said, “batteries are considered toxic waste and we don’t want them in the landfill.” It’s good to know that our officials are working hard to keep our dumps clean.

I knew a fella who couldn’t get rid of an old riding lawn mower. Nobody wanted it for parts or anything. The man took the mower to his church and left it parked on the back street. It was stolen in a matter of hours! I wonder if that would work with an old battery.

We carry other kinds of toxic wastes, emotional, spiritual, and physical. They are very difficult to get rid of as well. Some of the things we want to get rid of the most seem to be the hardest to drop. Like the anxiety about the future. Like the lack of physical exercise. Like the fear of losing what we have, instead of having faith for what we may gain. Like the ancient emotional hurt which should have been dealt with long ago but keeps am-

bushing true happiness. Like the recent hurt or mistake that needs forgiving before it festers into a toxic cesspool. Like the anger or bitterness that hovers just under the surface, waiting for the moment of explosion. Like the hypocrisy of trying to be someone we know we are not, nor ever will be. If we are honest with ourselves, we will admit that there are a number of things in our lives of which we need to be rid, things that clutter our emotions, contaminate our souls, and squeeze God and joy out of our hearts.

The Good News tells us, that though we may have given up on ourselves, God hasn’t given up on us. God doesn’t say, “No, I don’t want that toxic waste in my dump!” Instead, God invites us to bring our personal toxic waste to repentance, prayer, and worship to hear the Lord Jesus Christ say, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens (toxic waste), and I will give you rest.” There is no better invitation than that as we approach the season of Lent!

Oh, I was wondering, is there a chance any of you need an old battery?

Peace,
Charlie



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
WORKSHOP
FEBRUARY 18
AT
FIRST UMC
IN BATESVILLE
TO REGISTER
GO TO:
www.arumc.org
CLICK ON
EVENT REGISTRATION
AND THEN
ON LINK FOR
THE EVENT!

FINAL 2011 APPORTIONMENTS REPORT

Conference year 2011 is over at last! The North District ended up at **94.14%** paid in—this is down a little over 1% from 2010. In the “unofficial” competition between the 9 districts, we came in 2nd behind the South Central District - which makes me very proud! The Conference finished with a total 88.4% payout, also down almost 1% from last year. Thank you all so much for helping to make sure the ministries of the District and the Conference continue to bless the people of Arkansas. As of 1/12/12, the following congregations have paid 100% of both Conference and District Apportions (**new to list this month are bolded in red**):

Alpena	Asbury	Ash Flat	Bald Knob
Bear Creek	Bellefonte	Bergman	Bethesda Campground
Bradford	Calico Rock	Camp	Cave City
Cedar Grove (Yellville)	Cedar Grove (Floral)	Central Avenue	Cherokee Village
Concord	Corinth	Cornerstone	Damascus
Desha	Diamond City	Dogwood	Ellis Chapel
Emory Chapel	Evening Shade	Everton	Fairfield Bay
Fairview	First, Batesville	First, Beebe	First, Heber Springs
First, Mt. Home	First, Newport	First, Searcy	Floyd
Forrest Chapel	Garner	Griffithville	Guion
Harmony	Hazel Edwards Mem	Holiday Hills	Horseshoe Bend
Jamestown	Jasper	Judsonia	Kensett
Leslie	Mammoth Spring	Marshall	McRae
Mount Pisgah	Mount Pleasant	Mountain View	Norfolk
Oak Grove	Oak Ridge	Oil Trough	Omaha
Omaha	Pangburn	Pleasant Plains	Powell's Chapel
Quitman	Rose Bud	Russell	Saint James
Saint Paul's , Harrison	Saint Paul, Searcy	Sharp	Shirley
Sidney	Southside	Spring Creek	Stoney Point
Swifton	Tuckerman	Umsted Memorial	Valley Springs
Valley View	Viola	Wesley	Wild Cherry
	Wiseman	Yellville	

We are also pleased to acknowledge the following churches for having paid 100% of their 2011 District Apportionments as of **1/25/2012**:

Bull Shoals	Clinton	Cushman	First, Harrison
Hardy	Melbourne	Moorefield	Pleasant Ridge Salem

This means that less than 1% of the District Apportionments remain unpaid for 2011—what a major accomplishment for all the entire District. I always tell the other District Administrative Assistants that I serve the very best and most generous and loving churches in the whole Conference. Thank you for proving me right once again!

LaDonna Busby, District Administrative Assistant & Treasurer

Plato's Allegory of the Cave

**FROM
THE
LAY LEADER**



An allegory and a parable are basically the same thing.

Both are a

word-picture which uses an image or story to illustrate a truth or lesson. It creates a mini-drama in picture language that describes the reality being illustrated. Jesus used some 50 plus parables to teach His disciples lessons and principles that demonstrated the differences in self-centered existence and servant-hood to God. *"Plato's Allegory of the Cave"* paints a very interesting picture that he applied to the theological education system of his time. It can also be applied to some of us who would like to live a Christian life but encounter difficulty understanding and adopting the lessons of Jesus and the will of God.

I would like to briefly describe the scene Plato paints for us in this, his most famous, allegory.

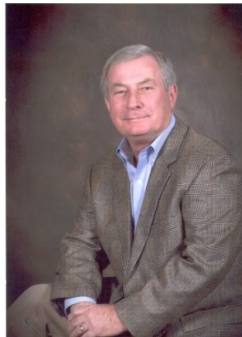
There is a cave so dark you cannot see your hand in front of your face. There are a number of people shackled, seated, and looking at one huge wall. They cannot see anything but the wall. They have been there all their lives, they know nothing different. Behind them are stone figures of men, animals, trees, and other things sitting on a low wall. Behind the figures is a huge fire which casts shadows of the figures on the wall the shackled people are watching.

To these people the wall is reality. Like many people in our world today reality is hostility, vulnerability, and mistreatment. They are the lost, the least, and the needy. To them men are vague grayish things that dance around and accomplish little. The world seems to be a place where there is a lot of random activity whose meaning, if any exists at all, is far beyond the comprehension of the people watching

Then one day a person is set free of the

shackles. He turns around to see the other side of the cave. He sees the figures and the fire and understands that this must be true reality. Stone figures whose shadows dance on the wall because of the fire behind them. So now he understands that the gray dancing shadows were not reality, this stone gathering and the fire is genuine reality. In our allegory this could represent the material world. He is no longer in great need because the glitter of the world has come to him. He thinks this must be the way things are meant to be, the survival of the fittest. The power to make sure he is in control and gets what he wants.

Then this person sees a thin sliver of light away from the fire. He thinks, "This is the whole world that I see here before me, what could this tiny bit of light mean"? He moves toward the light and it gets brighter and brighter until it is more than he can take in. He stops to get his bearings



and is afraid to continue. If reality is the cave the fire and the statues, what does this light mean? How can it be better than what I already possess? He fearfully continues to the opening of the cave and steps out into the sun and suddenly grasps the meaning of everything. He sees flowers, animals, water, and clouds. The detail of every single thing is unbelievable. He experiences God's reality. And he knows only God could have created the sun and oceans and loving people. God must be the source of everything beautiful and worthwhile.

Let us imagine for a second that we are this person who has discovered God's reality in our world. At one

time to us the activities of people and organizations were only grayish figures on a dark wall. They meant nothing to us and we had no relation with them except they seemed to be real. Then someone sets us free and points us in the direction of love and charity. We find peace and love and well-being.

I can see myself sitting under a shade tree, listening to the birds singing, looking at the beautiful blue sky, at peace with my soul and with God. I think I will just stay here forever. After all, I have been through some rough places to get out of the cave and to where God wants me. He loves me and does not want me to be stressed and anxious about the future. Oh, I forgot, He also loves the people left in the darkness of the cave, where I used to be. But they have their own reality. That is all they have ever known. They don't know anything different so why should I go back and stir up the status quo? But in my heart I know that God did not bring me to His reality just so I could wallow in my own good fortune. He brought me here to show me how much better life could be for the people in the cave if I helped them find God.

Christians cannot stand on this plateau of God's grace and love and forget the people in the caves that have not seen the light of God's reality.

Charles Long

North District Lay Leader

North District

North District UMC
PO Box 2415
1655 Neeley Street
Batesville, AR 72501

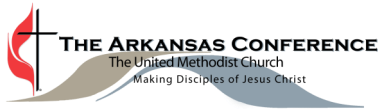
Phone: 870.793.5247
Fax: 870.793.5248

E-mail: northdistrictds@yahoo.com

Sending this newsletter with a prayer for YOU!

Address label goes here

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ



The North District sends prayers and condolences to Reverend Kathy DeBusk on the death of her mother, Mrs. Imogen McAfee Glass. Mrs. Glass died December 29, 2011 in Columbus, Kansas at the age of 85. Please continue to lift Kathy and her family in prayer.

As a point of information, whenever a North District pastor (currently serving or retired), pastor's spouse or surviving spouse, child, parent or spouse's parent dies, the District sends a memorial in honor of that person. Memorials in 2011 were sent to Methodist Family Health (Children's Home) or to Mount Eagle Retreat Center. We are pleased to be able to remember these folks in this small way.—LaDonna



How blessed am I to be a part of the North District! I want to thank you for your generosity this past Christmas. I was over-whelmed and humbled to be thought of so kindly. I will continue to give you my best and will keep all the churches and clergy in my prayers. North District is the best!



LaDonna



United
Methodist
Women
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

**NORTH DISTRICT
SPRING DAY APART**

SATURDAY

MARCH 31

HARDY UMC

Plans are being finalized and more information will be published in the March Newsletter.

MARK YOUR UMW CALENDARS AND MAKE SURE TO COME!