My First Annual Conference
BY PHILIP BROOKS

I had the opportunity to attend Annual Conference as a lay delegate for the first time this year. This was also a first for our new bishop, Bill McAlilly, who was elected to the episcopacy this year and presided over the Tennessee Conference for the first time. In my humble opinion I think we both did very well. John Wesley established the Annual Conference as one way for his followers “to watch over one another in Christian love.” Each day I was there I saw conference that watched over its members tenderly.

I also saw a conference excited at the prospect of becoming “means of grace” to others. This week in nearly every meeting, every report, every worship service, and every request from the floor, I saw a church enthusiastic about sharing grace and trusting God in the face of all challenges before them.

The highlight of this conference was the “God Stories” video series that played throughout the week. “God Stories” told heart-wrenching stories about individuals and families dealing with issues like addiction, crime, and broken families. Each one told of how they turned to God out of desperation when they reached their lowest point and realized God’s unending and redeeming love. That moment became the first step to a life or lives completely transformed. These stories celebrated the power of God’s grace in the world and challenged us to get in touch with that kind of grace in our ministries.

During the presentations by representatives of the various ministry partners, the speaker from Open Table, which is an organization that provides assistance to the homeless, told the story about how someone criticized the organization’s work as impractical. She responded to this statement saying, “Yes, we are as impractical as Cavalry.” Such bold statements and actions are not the works of an institution worried about its own future, but a humble body inviting God to do miraculous things through it.

When the conference was over, Bishop McAlilly reminded us that a good year in the church is not determined by figures and numbers. It’s determined by whether the members are willing to hand over control to God and let themselves become part of what God has in store for the world. Belle Meade can be that church. We can be the means of grace.

July Communion Offering

The Communion Offering for July will go to Open Table - "a non-profit interfaith community that disrupts the cycle of poverty, journeys with the marginalized, and provides education about the issues of homelessness."

Open Table grew out of efforts to relocate residents of the tent city on the banks of the Cumberland River after the May 2010 flood. A handful of outreach workers, ministers and volunteers moved about 140 homeless people and their pets to the Red Cross Shelter at Lipscomb University and promised they would not abandon them. When the shelter closed, Metro Government could not provide adequate solutions.

Hobson United Methodist Church in East Nashville, offered their parsonage as housing for a number of these displaced residents. The parsonage called Hobson House now serves as community and transitional housing. Ingrid McIntyre, Executive Director for Open Table says: "Open Table means a place where everybody is welcome. The table is never too full and there is always an open seat."

You may give anytime during the month of July. Please designate your gift as July Communion Offering and either place in the offering plate, mail, or bring to the church.
Youth Ministries Mission Trip to Virginia BY JASON SANDBURY

As someone who is new to this church but not new to mission work, several things struck me from our recent mission trip to Virginia, where we helped renovate a thrift shop, painted part of a community center and visited a local retirement center:

1. The Belle Meade UMC youth really want to make a difference in the world and aren’t afraid of serving when asked. I was very impressed and proud of each one, who worked hard and were willing to try new things.

2. All of the adults were amazing and I am excited to continue to help them and folks like them make an investment in our young people. Louise Shacklett was our amazing “Moses,” a reluctant leader who did great! Mark Whitler and Andy Dial are great leaders, serving well and also talking about their faith well. We need more men like Mark and Andy who are willing to talk so openly about their faith in Jesus! Vicki Bandy was a great help leading the young women on the trip and was always looking to make sure students were at work and serving. Anna Carro and Anna Crawford are two amazing college-aged young women who made an investment in the lives of the our youth because of their experience here as youth. I was greatly impressed with them and grateful that the heritage of servant leadership is being modeled and passed on by them to the next generation of young people of this church.

4. God was and continues to be at work in the lives of the people involved in this trip. From our small group moments of honesty, vulnerability, trust and affirmation, I saw God at work and our future is bright. I am looking forward to what God has in store for all of us as we more ahead.

Thanks to you all, our amazing church family! Your faithful support of the youth ministry through your participation in our Pumpkin Patch, Annual Golf Tournament, and Share the Love auction, as well as your support of the church help to make great ministry possible. Thank you on behalf of everyone on this trip!

Calling All Youth and Parents!

With school just around the corner, we are ready for a great launch party! On Saturday, July 27th, we are having an overnight event that will be partly at the church and partly off site. Plans include a visit to Sky High, a local trampoline fun place, a scavenger hunt, a worship time and a little sleep. And we will need a little sleep because on Sunday, July 28th, there is a luncheon to celebrate this summer’s amazing trips, including the Share the Love Tour, the Virginia mission trip and the upcoming Guatemala Mission Trip. Watch for details via the youth ministry email list. If you aren’t on that list, which is our primary communication method for all things youth, you can email jason@bellemeadeumc.org to be added to the list!

(Rising 6th graders will be welcomed into youth group after this event and our regular Sunday night programming will begin on Sunday, August 11th)
All Church Pot Luck Next Wednesday Night
Next Wednesday, July 10th, we'll have a church-wide pot luck supper. Church supplies the meat and drinks. Bring your favorite dish to share. Our regular Wednesday Nights together schedule will start up again August 14.

Next Painting Prayer July 10
Summer Painting Prayer is Wednesday, July 10th at 6:00 PM (following pot luck dinner) in room 216. All ages are invited to come. There is a $15 material fee per painting. Also offered is a free creative table for preschool children. Please sign up by emailing carrieduborg@gmail.com.

And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.”
Matthew 4:19

New Art Exhibit
The new exhibit in our Connections Gallery (located in the administrative offices wing) features art by Mildred Fallington Bradford.

Several years ago Ms. Bradford, with the encouragement of friends took an art class. She became hooked, and for the past forty years has created canvas expressions from her heart.

To quote Ms. Bradford: "Each time I begin I'm reminded of the song *this little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine*, and I thank God for allowing me to express myself through this venue."

The exhibit can be viewed during regular office hours Monday - Thursdays 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM and Fridays 8:00 AM to noon and on Sundays from 8:00 AM - 11:30 AM.

ART Camp Now Open for Rising 3rd Graders through Rising 12th Graders
July 22 - 26, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM, we will explore various media including clay, pottery, drawing, painting, & collage. It will be a fun time learning about art and creating together while experiencing artistic ways to glorify and connect with God. Led by local artist Carrie Duborg. ([www.OliveThisArt.com](http://www.OliveThisArt.com)) Music and worship led by Anna Carro. Morning snack, water and lemonade provided. Please bring your lunch. Cost $100 (Scholarships & partial scholarships are available.)

Register: mark@bellemeadeumc.org 352-6210 or carrieduborg@gmail.com 289-2343
Join us for an amazing week!

Prayer Concerns
The church prayer list cannot be included on our website due to privacy issues. You can find the list in the church bulletin or in the e-mail newsletter. If you would like to receive the newsletter by e-mail please contact the church office at 352-6210 or sign up at the church website, [www.bellemeadeumc.org](http://www.bellemeadeumc.org), under the newsletter and events page.

Memorial Gifts
Gifts were made to the General Fund in memory of Jim Cloyd by Bob and Jan Crowson and in memory of Anne Forrester, Tom's mother, by the Fidelis Class.

Community Conversations
The Hillwood Neighborhood Association will host a Q&A session on Nashville's proposed bus rapid transit plan, "AMP", on Saturday, July 13, at 10:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall. All are invited to participate in the discussion.
Leaders of Martin Methodist College to Speak at Belle Meade
Sunday July 14th, Dr. Ted Brown, President of Martin Methodist College in Pulaski will speak in the Fellowship Hall during the Sunday School hour. His topic will be a presentation and discussion about Martin Methodist College as an institution and how the college fits into the United Methodist Church on a conference and world-wide basis as well as how the college approaches the church connection.

The following week, July 21st, Dr. Ed Trimmer, Executive Director of the Cal Turner, Jr. Center for Church Leadership, will be discussing the role of the Center in developing a new generation of youth for service in the church as well as opportunities for providing continuing education for lay and ordained leaders in the church.

All Sunday School classes and individuals are invited to attend these two talks. The Oxford Class is our host for these events.

Help Needed!
Have you noticed that we have baptized a lot of new babies lately? Our church nursery is full on Sundays. What a blessing! Currently, we need two volunteers to assist in the nursery during worship on Sunday mornings. It will be a big help to the nursery staff and budget. Please contact Erin Seay at 352-6210 or erin@bellemeadeumc.org to lend a hand.

Church Offices Closed
July 4 and 5
The church’s offices will be closed on July 4th and 5th. We will re-open at 8:00 AM on Monday, July 8th.

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY
8:30 AM - Worship in the Chapel
    Sermon: Tom Gildemeister
    Music by BMUMC acoustic ensemble

8:45 AM - Holy Communion in the Sanctuary
A 15-minute time of communion with prayers and liturgy.

10:30 AM - Worship in the Sanctuary
    Sermon: Tom Gildemeister
    Music: Belle Meade Choir and Instrumentalists

9:15 AM - 10:15 AM Sunday School for all ages