

Your Connection to The Mississippi Annual Conference

# The Circuit Rider

Published Wednesday | June 12, 2017

The POWER of We

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## Share Your News in The Circuit Rider

Contact The Circuit Rider at [news@mississippi-umc.org](mailto:news@mississippi-umc.org).

### Mission:

The mission of the Mississippi Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

## Fun and Faith at Youth Beach Retreat



Beach Campers take break time 'seriously' and work hard together playing in the sand. **Read more in the section Connecting on page 3** to find out how this beach retreat created opportunities for fun and spiritual formation. Photo courtesy of @woahitsdreww on Instagram.



2017 Special Edition of The Circuit Rider is now available to view online! Go to: <http://bit.ly/2t7XYFm>

### Purpose:

The Mississippi Annual Conference—empowered by love, generosity, justice and apprenticeship—forms spiritual leaders, faith communities and connections so more disciples of Jesus Christ transform the world.

## Our Values

The Mississippi Conference Four Core Values are love, generosity, justice and apprenticeship. For more information, visit [www.mississippi-umc.org/thepowerofwe](http://www.mississippi-umc.org/thepowerofwe).



LOVE



GENEROSITY



JUSTICE



APPRENTICESHIP



Mississippi Conference  
of The United Methodist Church

Living Out  
The POWER of We

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Jackson, Mississippi 39206  
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[www.mississippi-umc.org](http://www.mississippi-umc.org)

## word POWER

### Romans 8:1-11

*New International Version (NIV)*

#### Life Through the Spirit

**8** Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, **2** because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. **3** For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, **4** in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

**5** Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. **6** The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. **7** The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. **8** Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

**9** You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. **10** But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. **11** And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

## Bishop On the Move

Below are some of the events where Bishop James E. Swanson Sr. will be visiting in the upcoming weeks.

#### July 21 (Friday)

Bishop Swanson will lead closing worship for the Mississippi Conference United Methodist Women's event, Mission u. The service will be held at 11:15 a.m. at the Cabot Lodge in Jackson near Millsaps.

#### July 30 (Sunday)

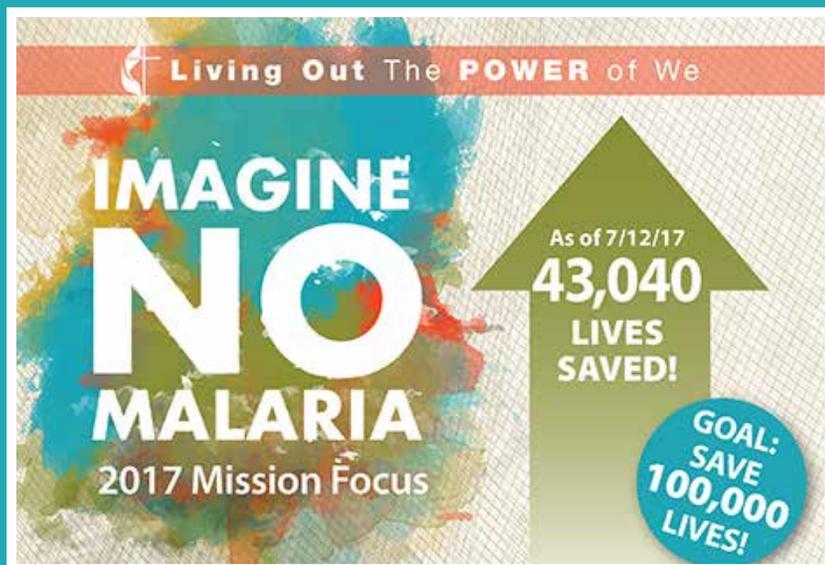
- Bishop Swanson will preach during the 10:00 a.m. worship service at Taylor United Methodist Church in Taylor.
- The New Albany Lay Rally will be held at Northeast Mississippi Community College in Booneville at 4:30 p.m. and Bishop Swanson will deliver the message.

#### July 31 – August 1 (Monday – Tuesday)

First United Methodist Church in Booneville is hosting 'Time with the Bishop.' This is an opportunity for pastors to obtain CEUs as Bishop Swanson will be teaching on "Invitational Preaching."

#### August 12 (Tuesday)

Bishop Swanson will preach during opening worship of "Reconnect," a course of study reunion. This event will be held at Millsaps in the Ford Academic Complex.



## Imagine No Malaria Update

*For more information:*  
[www.mississippi-umc.org/inm](http://www.mississippi-umc.org/inm)

### Youth Enjoy Beach and Celebrate Beginnings at Beach Camp

By Jasmine Haynes, Web and Social Media Specialist, Mississippi Conference

**Photo right:** Rev. Josh Swanson (back, light blue shirt) with Beach Campers. Photo courtesy of @leprechaun.on\_a\_mission on Instagram.

**Photo below right:** Conference youth and families coordinator, Mike Howington (left, black shirt and cap) helps illusionist, Todd Smith strap himself into a strait jacket. Photo courtesy of @toddsmithmagic on Instagram.

It is almost uncanny that all the messages at the premiere of Beach Camp for youth in the Mississippi Conference, happened to be focused on beginnings. Beach Camp keynote speaker, Rev. Josh Swanson -- who is also the son of the Mississippi Conference's own, Bishop James E. Swanson Sr. -- used passages from Genesis throughout the weekend to demonstrate the importance of embracing new perspectives and starting points. Two dozen congregations were represented by more than 250 youth and their leaders from various parts of the state -- all of whom converged at the Mississippi Gulf Coast to experience relaxation, fellowship with friends and quiet time with God. Beach Camp was held July 7-9 in Biloxi.

Designed to be an engaging spiritual weekend for youth grades six through 12 and their leaders, conference youth and families coordinator, Mike Howington said the event exceeded his expectations.

"It was a great success for the very first Beach Camp. The idea that we can come together and worship with Matt King, the excitement and energy that FLAME brought was really refreshing and then the message that Josh brought home -- which is the idea of starting anew -- culminated well," said Howington.

The genesis theme also resonated with high school senior, Sabrina Pendleton.

"He [Swanson] talked about labels and told us that people labeled him because he has dread[lock]s but he wanted to be a preacher," shared Pendleton. "He also talked about Jacob and Esau and how even though Jacob left with nothing because Esau wanted him dead, he returned with a lot because he had faith in God."

Although the purpose of this retreat is rooted in spiritual growth, youth also had a blast participating in sports tournaments and what are called 'beach battle teams,' which were part of an ongoing competition throughout the weekend. Students also got to enjoy meeting new peers while exploring beach trikes and kayaking.

Although Beach Camp just concluded, Howington is already setting goals for the future.

"We plan on growing the event and making it even more exciting than this year."



### AU Grad Thanks Miss. Conference for Extravagant Generosity

Tsungai Shalom Kaseke, *photo right*, a member of the 2017 graduating class of Africa University, is also a recipient of a Mississippi Conference endowed scholarship and wrote a letter to the conference expressing her gratitude. Read how your extravagant generosity has not only aided Kaseke's financial need and educational goals, but also how your giving will help her impact the lives of children in Africa.

#### Greetings,

*My name is Tsungai Shalom Kaseke, I was a recipient of the endowed scholarship from Africa University and I recently graduated on the 10th of June 2017. I graduated with a Bachelor of Social Science(Honours) in Psychology with a CGPA of 3.63 and a second upper degree class. I would like to express my greatest gratitude to my sponsors on allowing me the grace to make my dream come to life.*

*The opportunity that I was given through this scholarship was indeed life-changing as I became the first graduate in my family. It was a long struggle as at one time I had lost all hope but God was faithful and I am grateful. I look forward to getting a job as well as furthering my studies with Africa University in the Masters in Child rights and childhood studies beginning this August. My desire is to play a significant role in the protection and advocating for children's rights in Africa amidst challenges such as poverty, epidemic diseases and economic strife.*



*My prayers are always with you for God to richly bless you for the wonderful investment you have made in my life and enabling me to become an educated young woman. I have attached some pictures of myself and also my graduation.*

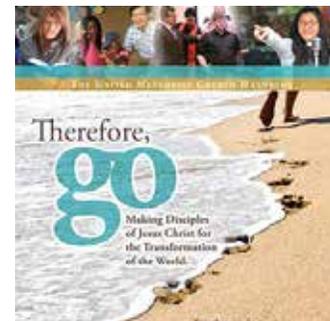
*Kind regards*

At the 2014 Session of the Mississippi Annual Conference, Bishop James E. Swanson Sr. challenged every local church in the Mississippi Conference to give towards the future of Africa University, a private Pan-African and United Methodist-related institution, by providing 10 endowed scholarships of \$130,000 each for a total of \$1,300,000.

Africa University celebrated their 25th anniversary and a small group from the Mississippi Conference attended the festivities that took place March 24-26, 2017 to present the school with a donation of over \$690,000.

## New UMC Handbook Now Available

The new United Methodist Church Handbook for this quadrennium is available, providing a detailed overview of the denomination's beliefs, mission, structure and history. The handbook is a free, go-to resource for anyone in search of information about The United Methodist Church and is helpful for leaders and new members. To place your order for the new handbook, go to <http://bit.ly/2unU5wo>.



## Disaster Response News

### Register Now for Upcoming ERT Training: July 29 and August 19

Those who feel called to providing a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of a disaster, are not only welcome but encouraged to attend an early response team (ERT) training. This team is neither a first response group of emergency workers nor a recovery rebuild or repair team. Rather, it fills a specific need in the early days after a disaster to establish the presence of the church.

The registration fee is \$40 and includes a manual, t-shirt, lunch, background check and leader expenses. For ERT certification, participants will need to attend the entire course. This training will have hands-on activities, and it is recommended that you dress comfortably in layers. For more information and how to register for either the July 29 [<http://bit.ly/2tNuDyR>] at St. Marks or August 19 [<http://bit.ly/2uezM4a>] at Grenada Lake trainings. For more information, go to <http://www.mississippi-umc.org/ert>.



## Faith Communities

### A Time of Discovery: Dates, Times and Locations

Is God calling you? Are you passionate about making disciples that transform the world and want to multiply your church's impact? Do you feel led towards church planting or church revitalization?

Jesus invites his disciples to "come and see." Joining us for a 'Time of Discovery' -- an event designed to explore your calling to church planting or revitalization -- is one of the best ways to sense if God is drawing you to a deeper discernment.

Sponsored by the Faith Community Formation Office of the Mississippi United Methodist Conference, the Time of Discovery events will help you recognize your calling as you consider ways to live out your ministry in the world. Whether you are clergy or laity, you will learn about the leadership gifts needed for revitalization and church planting, church planting strategies [<http://bit.ly/2tk5W9M>], Readiness 360 (a church revitalization process) [<http://bit.ly/2tNHtxd>] and more.



## Dates and Locations

- **Tuesday, August 15 - 6:00 - 7:15 p.m.** - Anderson United Methodist Church, 6205 Hanging Moss Rd., Jackson
- **Tuesday, August 29 - 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.** - The Bridge, 3179 Mallett Rd., D'Iberville
- **Thursday, August 31 - 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.** - Park Heights Rooftop, 335 E. Main St., Tupelo

## Registration

Register at <http://bit.ly/2sUG6tv> to attend one or more of these events and explore the possibilities of reaching new people and making disciples for the transformation of the world.

For more information, contact Jane Horstman at [jhorstman@mississippi-umc.org](mailto:jhorstman@mississippi-umc.org) or 769.243.7072.

## Stay in the Loop

Text the keyword "faithcommunity" to the number 95577 to receive tips, updates and details pertaining to church planting and revitalization. Please note: there is no space between "faith" and "community."

## Spiritual Leadership

### Scholarships Now Available for Exploration 2017

Registration for Exploration, a three-day event for young adults age 18-26, is now open. This biennial event is designed to help attendees listen, discern and respond to God's call to ordained ministry, as they explore their gifts for service as a deacon or elder in The United Methodist Church.

This year's event will be held November 3-5 in Portland, Oregon. Young adults who have a sense that God might be calling them to ordained ministry, who have wondered what ministry in The United Methodist Church is all about, who would like help sifting through issues involved in an ordained vocation or who want to learn more about The United Methodist seminaries and theological schools should attend this event.

To register, go to [www.explorecalling.org/exploration/](http://www.explorecalling.org/exploration/). Registration fees include conference meals and shared hotel accommodations for two nights. There are a limited amount of registration scholarships available through the office of spiritual leadership. Contact Rev. Dr. Larry Hilliard at [lhilliard@mississippi-umc.org](mailto:lhilliard@mississippi-umc.org) for more details. Registration will be open until September 15.

- Young Adult Registration \$275
- Adult Registration \$350



## Administry

### Post-retirement Health Legislation to be Discussed at Upcoming District Listening Sessions

During the 2017 Session of the Mississippi Annual Conference, it was announced that the board of medical benefits will be conducting listening sessions for important legislation coming to the 2018 annual conference session. The subject will be the study of the post-retirement health benefit available to clergy and lay employees who participate in the conference health plan and the related cost that is included in the mission shares and in the board of medical benefits budget. Following are other concepts that will be shared:

- If the benefit is terminated, what future date should this occur? By setting a date in the future, participants who are nearing retirement and have planned on this credit being a part of their retirement package can make necessary decisions.
- How much additional funding if any, in future years will have to be collected so that the decreasing retiree subsidy amounts can be funded out of the reserves on hand?
- How can we help the participants who actually lose the benefit make provisions for the loss of this amount in their future retirement?

To see the schedule of listening sessions go to <http://bit.ly/2unH9qe>.



### 3 "L" Academy - Learning, Living and Leading Stewardship: August 14-15

The Mississippi Conference Board of Pension is pleased to present a two-day educational session that will provide an opportunity to explore clergy benefits, financial planning, stewardship education and connectionalism. The goal is to assist clergy in modeling and teaching the United Methodist commitment to fully utilizing their time, talents, gifts, service and witness. The academy will feature keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe, general secretary of the General Board of Church and Society and will provide an opportunity to explore clergy benefits, financial planning, stewardship education and connectionalism.

This two-day event will be held at the Hilton Hotel on County Line Road in Jackson. The cost of attendance is \$40. For spouses who also want to attend, the cost is \$25.

For more information and registration details, go to <http://bit.ly/2uexAtd>.



### Rev. Melvin Amerson to Lead a Conference-wide Stewardship Training: August 20

This training event is sponsored by the Mississippi United Methodist Foundation for pastors, members of finance committees and stewardship committees of local churches.

Amerson, *photo right*, is the author of three books: *Stewardship in African-American Churches: A New Paradigm*, *Celebrating the Offering* and *Fruit for Celebrating the Offering* (which is a collection of offering invitations). All three books are available through discipleship resources. In addition, he has published numerous articles on stewardship, leadership and visioning. Through his energetic and engaging training events, Amerson has become a nationally-recognized stewardship ministry consultant.



This two-hour training will be held Sunday, August 20 at 3:30 p.m. in the sanctuary of Anderson United Methodist Church, which is located at 6205 Hanging Moss Road in Jackson. For more information, call the foundation at 601.948.8845.

### Finance Committees: Take Advantage of UMDData Tool

Rev. Mike Hicks, director of the Mississippi United Methodist Foundation [<http://bit.ly/2vhXnxo>] shares thoughts about evaluating mid-year giving and tools that help interpret financial vitality. Read the entire message here: [www.ms-umf.org/825](http://www.ms-umf.org/825).

### Protecting Our Churches: Minimizing Thunderstorm Damage

Beyond taking steps before a storm, there are ways to protect your facility during a storm as well. Two steps you can take in preventing lightning damage include:

- Do not handle electrical equipment or a telephone when lightning is striking. The lightning can follow the wire.
- Turn off electrical appliances, such as air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can overload the compressors.

To read the full newsletter, go to <http://bit.ly/2sVdYq4>.

Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, Inc. administers the conference property insurance plan and writes a monthly newsletter titled, *Protecting Our Churches for the Mississippi Conference of The United Methodist Church*.



## Students

### Sign Kids Up for FamJam

Christ-centered quirky games and challenges, along with lively worship are at the heart of FamJam. Modeled after The Gathering, a high-energy youth conference, FamJam is a one-day family event packed full of faith and fun for kids in kindergarten through sixth grade and their parents. The doors will open at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, August 12. Activities will kick off at 1:00 p.m. and conclude at 4:30 p.m. This year's FamJam will feature Kidz Blitz Live [<http://bit.ly/2tR4QUV>], a crowd participation show with biblical principles and Nashville-based Christian artist Yancy [<http://bit.ly/2uWL9eu>], who will lead worship.

The cost is \$10 per child, \$30 per family (maximum) and accompanying parents can enter for free. Find more details and how to register here: [www.mississippi-umc.org/famjam](http://www.mississippi-umc.org/famjam).



## First Stop on The Gathering Tour - August 27, Madison UMC

Coming this fall, The Gathering Student Conference is on the road, bringing some of the amazing artist that youth will see at The Gathering 2018. Attendance to The Gathering: Director's Cut Tour is free and will feature youth and families coordinator, Mike Howington; Christian Hip Hop artist, "Big Al" Cherry; illusionist, Todd Smith and DJ Blaha.

All tour stops are on Sundays from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. While registration for this event is requested for planning, we welcome additional guests. Make plans to attend where The Gathering Director's Cut Tour stops in your region! Visit <http://bit.ly/2tR089w> to check out the schedule.



## Save the Date | Announcements

### School of Mission u: A Conference-wide United Methodist Women's Time for Study July 19-21, 2017

Mission u is an opportunity to study current issues impacting society based on current mission study topics with particular attention to the responsibilities of women in fulfilling the mission work of the church. Mission u will be held at the Cabot Lodge near Millsaps at 2375 N. State Street in Jackson. Find more details about the featured studies here <http://bit.ly/2sVjJnE>.

### Festival of Wisdom and Grace August 7-10, 2017

Attend the Festival of Wisdom and Grace at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, Aug. 7-10, 2017. Registration is open. To learn more about this amazing older adult educational opportunity, go to <http://bit.ly/2tjzWme>.

### Next Phase Retreat: A Candidacy Gathering September 7-9, 2017

The Next Phase Retreat will be held at the Duncan Grey Center in Canton. This event is designed to be an opportunity for ministry candidates to fellowship with each other, as well as take time apart to discern where and how God is calling them to serve. More details about this event will be forthcoming from the office of spiritual leadership in the near future. For more information, contact your district office.

### Administry Courses Now Available September 23 - December 9, 2017

This financial leadership training provides counsel and guidance to strengthen the administrative and financial abilities of the local church treasurer, financial secretary, finance committee members and church business administrators. Course options range from human resources to budget preparation to internal controls.

The training cost \$60 for the first person from a church and \$10 for each additional person from the same church. This fee covers meals, snacks and resources for the complete day. For more information on course descriptions, the agenda and registration, go to <http://bit.ly/28T7OBx>. Click on the location below nearest you if you're ready to register today!

- District Office, Senatobia District - Sept. 23, 2017 [<http://bit.ly/2uWD5Kw>]
- West Point First UMC, Starkville District - Oct. 14, 2017 [<http://bit.ly/2tka5KF>]
- District Office, Meridian District - Nov. 18, 2017 [<http://bit.ly/2tkaaxX>]
- Williamsburg UMC-Collins, Hattiesburg District - Dec. 9, 2017 [<http://bit.ly/2uWoKxP>]



## Announcements

### Wurlitzer Parlor Grand Piano for Sale

The used modern piano pictured is in excellent condition, 5'8" and well maintained. The owner is accepting \$7,000 or your best offer. For more information, call Leigh Thomas at 601.624.8589.



## A New Season for the Lake Junaluska Singers

The Lake Junaluska Singers arrived at the lake in June to begin rehearsing for their upcoming performance season under the new leadership of interim director, Mary Huff.

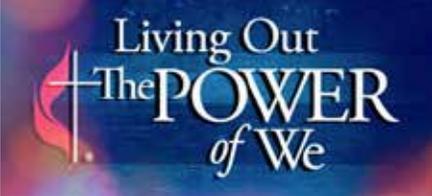
Tickets are now on sale for upcoming concerts. You can purchase tickets online at [www.lakejunaluska.com/singers](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/singers), by calling 800.222.4930 or at the Bethea Welcome Center at Lake Junaluska.



## September is Hunger Action Month -- Get Resources Here

Plan now to make September a time for your congregation to stand together against hunger. Join with the Society of St. Andrew to see that each person in this country has healthy, nourishing food to eat.

To find our Calendar of Prayer and Action, go to <http://endhunger.org/ham/>.



Four-part Bible Study: Living Out The POWER of We  
*With Bishop James E. Swanson Sr.*  
Link to access the videos: <http://bit.ly/2l1bUbW>

## Employment

As a courtesy to the Mississippi Annual Conference, job announcements from across the United Methodist connection are featured in *The Circuit Rider*. To submit an employment notice, send an email to [news@mississippi-umc.org](mailto:news@mississippi-umc.org). Postings are not guaranteed to appear more than once in Mississippi Conference publications. **To read a description of job opening(s) listed below as well as other listings, go to <http://www.mississippi-umc.org/employmentopportunities>.**

- Full-time Children's Ministry Director
- Director of Youth Ministry
- Part-time Children's Ministry Director
- Director of Music Ministries
- Full-time Director of Youth Ministry
- Minister of Music/Lead Musician
- Part-time Choir Director
- Youth Minister
- Director of Music Ministries
- Full-time Music Director
- Director of Children's Ministries

## Stay Connected

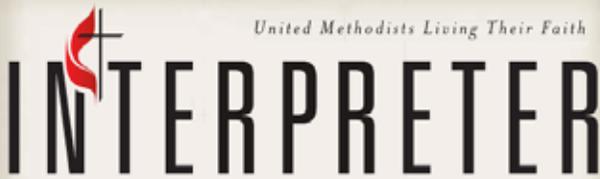
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/pages/The-Mississippi-United-Methodist-Conference/436491529732524](http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Mississippi-United-Methodist-Conference/436491529732524)
- Twitter: [https://twitter.com/Mississippi\\_UMC](https://twitter.com/Mississippi_UMC)
- You Tube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSRtxv\\_Kix8lbYuHKRMLjg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSRtxv_Kix8lbYuHKRMLjg)
- Flickr: [www.flickr.com/photos/119483421@N02/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/119483421@N02/)

### Stay Connected with ConnectText

Mississippi United Methodists with the ability to receive text messaging via phone are encouraged to sign up for ConnectText. The service is another option for people to stay informed about important dates and other conference happenings.

To sign up for ConnectText:

1. Remember, you must have the ability to get text messages on your phone.
2. From your mobile phone, text the letters 'MSUMC' to the number 95577 and press send.
3. Wait a few seconds for a confirmation text and you're connected!



Visit <http://bit.ly/2tkheuG> to receive UM Interpreter  
Interpreter is published by United Methodist Communications as a ministry magazine for the members—lay and clergy—of The United Methodist Church.