

# The Arbor Vine

Ann Arbor District of The United Methodist Church  
Rev. Mark E. Spaw, District Superintendent

**April 2014**

---

## **“ROLLING STONES”**

It will soon be Easter. The wonderful celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so let me ask: “Have we prepared our hearts, minds and souls for the reality of a risen Christ as well as we have made preparations for the Easter baskets, Easter ham, or the new outfit we’ll wear on Easter morning. Are we still engaged in celebrating Easter but doubting the resurrection? There is, I think, inside each of us what I call, “The Scientist-Guy”, who demands proof. You remember doubting Thomas who demanded proof. He was not about to be fooled by empty tombs or eyewitness accounts. Jesus gave him what he asked for, but in doing so gave us what we need. Thomas was blessed by Jesus, for seeing and believing. More blessed, however, are those who do not see yet believe.

The stone has been rolled away. And behind the stone is an empty tomb. But the meaning and reality of resurrection lies beyond the stone and the tomb. Not at the empty tomb do we understand the resurrection, but on the path of obedience. Not in convincing proof or physical evidence, but in encounter, fellowship, and worship do we meet and embrace the risen Christ. Thomas certainly found the way to belief blocked by a huge stone. Not by a literal stone, but by the figurative stone of doubt. The stone that blocks our way is our desire to have certainty about our beliefs. The stone that blocks our way is our doubt that death can truly be overcome in life. The stone that blocks our way is our all too human desire to live by sight and not by faith. The stone that blocks our way is our unwillingness to meet the risen Christ on His terms, and not ours.

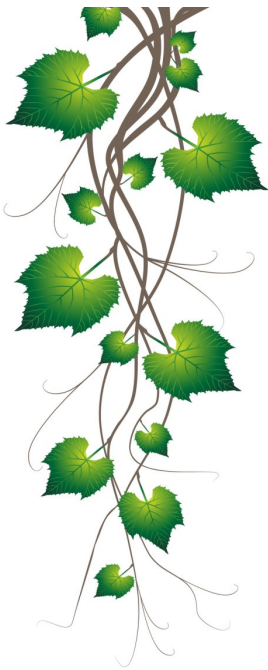
And what are His terms? We meet the risen Christ in obedience, in faithful service, in worship and in trust. The stone has been rolled away. Now if we can just stop staring at it and the empty tomb behind it and turn toward the Christ who is risen indeed. In this season of celebration of the risen Christ roll away the stones that keep you from not seeing yet believing.

My prayer for you is a blessed Easter and a faith journey that brings you to Jesus Christ.

Joy in the Emptiness,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "mark".

Rev. Mark E. Spaw, D.S.



Page 2

## DISTRICT NOTICES

### UNITED METHODIST MEN PLAN EVENTS FOR 2014

June 14 - Canoe Trip Outing, a multi-generational Father's Day  
September 20 - at Howell UMC. Breakfast and Speaker

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The topic is "Keep Making Peace." Held at University UMC in East Lansing on Saturday, April 5. Register at <http://www.msuwesley.org>. \$15 fee, free for students.

### REGISTER FOR SUMMER CAMP

Summer will return someday and you should be ready for camp. The camp directors can visit your church to describe the opportunities. The closest camp is Judson Collins and the director there is Sarah Ratz. Reach her at 517-467-7711. You can register at [www.umccamps.org](http://www.umccamps.org). They are also looking for young adult staffers.

### SPRING RETREAT FOR CLERGY SPOUSES

The Clergy Spouses Association is sponsoring a retreat at Lake Huron Retreat Center on April 25-27. The subject is "Fruits of the Spirit: Fruity or Fruit-Filled." For a brochure contact Penny Malicoat. Registration deadline is April 8.

### YOUTH DIRECTOR POSITION AT BRIGHTON

The Youth Director will oversee youth ministries at First United Methodist Church of Brighton, Michigan, for grades 5-12, including: youth groups, faith formation, and missions. Must have degree in youth ministries or equivalent and experience as a youth director. 32 hours/wk. Apply by April 20, 2014. Accepting resumes via email only at: [youthdirector@brightonfumc.org](mailto:youthdirector@brightonfumc.org).

### VISITING MISSIONARIES

Revs. Ut To and Karen Vo-To, GBGM missionaries to Vietnam, will be in Michigan from July 23rd through August 11th. To schedule them to speak at your church, Contact Roberta King, 734-662-8020 or [garyandroberta@sbcglobal.net](mailto:garyandroberta@sbcglobal.net).

### KNITTED TOGETHER IN LOVE

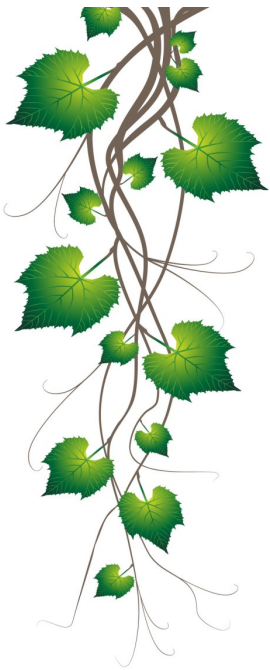
Come to Judson Collins and make Prayer Shawls on May 2-3. Come for all or part of the weekend. Quilting, knitting, crocheting and more are welcome. See <http://umccamps.org/pages/detail/1906>, Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Judson-Collins-Center/154320245657#>,-- for brochure and registration. if you could like the Judson Collins page and pass along the prayer shawl retreat information to those who might be interested we'd appreciate it!

### IMMERSION IN WESLEYAN LEADERSHIP

Consider a trip to England, walking in the footsteps of John and Charles Wesley. Visit <http://www.gbod.org/WesleyPilgrimage>

### CHURCH SECRETARIES - SAVE THE DATE

The Secretaries Fall Retreat (DCUMCS) will be on October 12-13, 2014 in Mackinaw City at the Bridge Vista Beach Hotel. The theme is going to be finding ourselves in the Bible and we will have an excellent training on some of the UMC paperwork and processes.



Page 3

## ***Imagine No Malaria***

The John Dean Town Health Project is an important initiative for the Ann Arbor District. There is more information on this in the following pages. We also support Imagine No Malaria, a project that is a key mission for Bishop Kieseey and for the Conference as a whole.

Information on Imagine No Malaria is available at <http://www.minomalaria.org/>.  
Donations should be sent to:

**Detroit Annual Conference Treasurer's Office**

**1309 N Ballenger Hwy.**

**Flint MI 48504**

Use Advance Special Number 3021190

## ***Do you subscribe to MI Connect?***

*MI Connect* is the Conference e-newsletter. If you are not yet a subscriber, go to <http://detroitconference.org/pages/detail/2056>. It provides all the latest news from around the Conference. They have also been running a Lenten series, with videos from the Bishop and all the District Superintendents, and a focus on Imagine No Malaria. It is moving and beautifully produced. The *MI Connect Monthly* is a compilation of articles from the month in a form that is easy to print out for the congregation.

---

### **NOTICES CONTINUED. . .**

#### **EXTRA BIBLES, ANYONE?**

The House by the Side of the Road in Ann Arbor needs used Bibles. "I'm thinking some churches may have old version stored away and we don't care what condition they are in - our clients need God's word as much as they need used clothing and small household items." It is best if people can deliver them to The House Mon and Fri from 10-4; Tues, Wed, Thur from 10-2 - but we will pick them up too. Contact Deacon Cathy Freeman at 734-665-5632 or [cathyfreeman27@gmail.com](mailto:cathyfreeman27@gmail.com)

### **LOCAL CHURCH EVENTS**

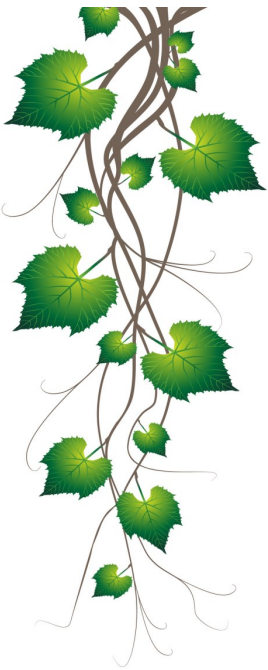
#### **SINGING THE PSALMS - APRIL 6, 3:00 P.M.**

Ann Arbor First is presenting this Bernstein piece. Presented by the Ann Arbor Cantata singers, Michigan Sinfonietta, the FUMC Chancel Choir, and guest soloists. Ann Marie Koukios, conductor. 734-662-4536.

#### **NORTH LAKE EGG SUPPER - APRIL 11**

The 138th Annual Egg Supper will be held at North Lake United Methodist Church on Friday, April 11, 2014 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 P. M. The church is located at 14111 N. Territorial Rd., Chelsea, Mi. We will be serving omelets, baked beans, salads, rolls and dessert, free-will donations will benefit camp and mission scholarships. Handicap accessible.

#### **PARTY FOR WAR AT DUNDEE - SEE PAGE 6**



Page 4

## ***Defrocked United Methodist Pastor Frank Schaefer to speak at Ann Arbor First***

May 10, 2014 - 7 PM

Rainbow Crossing and the First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor (FUMC) are honored to welcome Frank Schaefer to speak in the Sanctuary at 120 S. State, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. His talk will be followed by a Q & A, and a reception in the Wesley Lounge at FUMC.

Frank Schaefer lost his credentials in the United Methodist Church (UMC) in December 2013 because he performed his son's same-gender marriage. Mr. Schaefer is a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity.

## ***An Easter CD***

Thanks to the Ann Arbor District for the grant of \$500. The sacred vocal band, The 151st, and the community concert choir from 10 different churches did use it for the creation of an Easter CD.

There will be four free release Concerts:

Saturday April 5th at 7:00 p.m., Dundee United Methodist Church. (734) 529-3535

Sunday April 6th at 4:00 p.m., Grace United Methodist Church, (517) 451-8280

Saturday April 12th at 7:00 p.m., Monroe First UMC. (734) 241-6070

Palm Sunday April 13th at 4:00 p.m., Light of Christ Catholic Parish, (517) 447-3500

Proceeds from the sale of CDs and the offerings to benefit the youth ministries at each participating church. \$10 each.

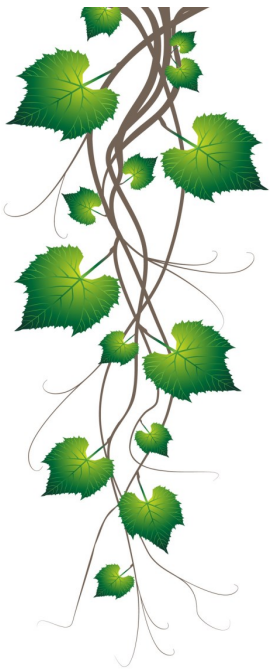
## ***Fishing, Anyone?***

Lake Louise Camp is holding a Fishing Tournament on May 3 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. First prize is \$350. For details and entry forms see [www.lakelouisecommunity.org](http://www.lakelouisecommunity.org).

Note: All the camps are looking for summer staff. Learn more at [www.umccamps.org](http://www.umccamps.org).

- 1 Gloria Downing
- 2 Jim & Susan Walker
- 10 Jan Harris
- 11 Theresa Cochran
- 11 June Marshall Smith
- 11 Ruth Smith
- 13 Cathy Butson
- 19 Reed & Juliana Swanson
- 23 Loretta Job
- 24 Sharon Miller
- 27 Tracy & Jerry Hunter

## **APRIL BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**



Page 5

## ***ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014***

Annual Conference will be held at the Adrian campus on May 15-18. The schedule and resolutions will be posted on [www.DetroitConference.org](http://www.DetroitConference.org).

### **Annual Conference registration will be done online**

Registration for the 2014 Detroit Annual Conference may only be done online this year; no paper registration forms will be available. Those members without computer access are asked to arrange to register using the church office or pastor. Register on [www.DetroitConference.org](http://www.DetroitConference.org). Materials must also be downloaded from the Conference website and will not be mailed.

### **Special Covenant Offerings at Annual Conference**

There will be two special covenant offerings at Annual Conference this year. There will be no containers. In recent years Haiti and Liberia have requested that we not send containers, but rather assist financially with special ministries.

**Covenant Mission Offering** - to be split between ministries in Haiti and Liberia to feed children.

**Liberia Teacher Training Program** - an offering to assist training workshops for school teachers.

### **Clergy Spouse Luncheon - Saturday, May 17, 2014**

12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m. sponsored by the Detroit Conference Clergy Spouse Association on Adrian College Campus in the Ritchie Dining Hall's Adrian Room and hosted by the Blue Water District Clergy Spouses. *BE SURE TO PICK UP YOUR TICKET AT REGISTRATION AND BRING IT TO THE LUNCHEON. TICKETS ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR.* Information on child care can also be found in the Clergy Conference Packet or on the Conference web site.

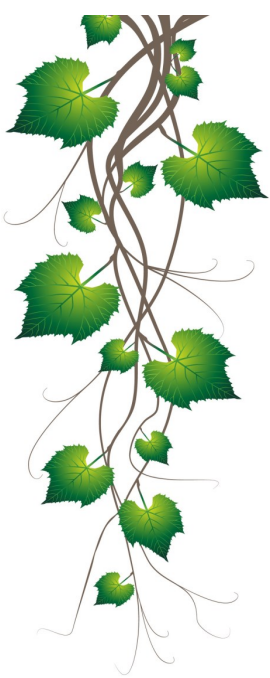
## ***Do you ever wonder about the Wesley Foundation?***

Learn about this United Methodist organization for University of Michigan college students, led by Rev. Bob Roth, in a video created by one of their students.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0\\_MndYPkwE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0_MndYPkwE)

## ***Mediation Skills***

Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders will be presented by the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center on June 2-6, 2014, at Utica United Methodist Church, Sterling Heights. The MSTI consists of a combination of lectures as well as discussion and guided practice in role plays. The training will look at the nature of conflict, guide participants in understanding their own style of response to conflict, and develop an understanding of mediation skills using Family Systems Theory and Church Conflict.



Page 6

## ***A Party for WAR at Dundee***

The Dundee United Methodist Women will be conducting an extraordinary event on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 10AM-12PM and we sincerely hope you can attend. The event will be both informative and fun. This is a PARTY unlike any party you have ever been to before.

The PARTY will focus on informing attendees of the mission of Women At Risk (WAR) International, while offering the opportunity to shop for items made by women rescued from slavery. WAR International is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that was established in 2006. The first WAR Chest Boutique was opened in Rockford, Michigan.

The purpose of WAR International is simple; to empower women attacked by crisis and turn devastation into hope. Their mission is “to unite and educate women and children in areas of human trafficking and sexual slavery.” The income from the jewelry sales allow the rescued women to earn an income outside the world of slavery.

Human trafficking is a lot closer to home than most people think. According to a report from the Michigan Commission on Human Trafficking, the FBI cited that more pimps were arrested in metro Detroit (18) than in any other city involved in a July 2013 Operation Cross Country sweep. The FBI raids also resulted in the recovery of ten children from metro Detroit – second only to San Francisco, where 12 children were rescued.<sup>1</sup>

If you are looking for other ways to help, the following donations will be gladly accepted at the event to be used for various WAR mission projects:

- Used or New Crayons
- Baby Supplies (Diapers, clothing, blankets, wipes, etc)
- Used formal wear (Wedding/prom dresses from within the last 5-10 years)
- Household supplies for WAR Int’l Headquarters
- Girls unopened underwear
- Unopened Happy Meal Toys
- Unopened Make-up (Eye shadow, blush, lipstick, eyeliner, mascara, lip gloss)

The need is apparent, and the time to act is now. This event isn’t for just woman, it is open to all individuals. If you need more information or to RSVP, please contact Louise Proctor at 734-735-3421 or [elproct@aim.com](mailto:elproct@aim.com).

Thank you, and God bless,  
The Dundee United Methodist Women

### **Free to a Good Home**

- 17 polyester gray choir robes of various sizes
- 1 size 5’1”-5’3” Black robe (owned by Judi Darling)
- 1 red stoles                      1 purple/green stole                      1 black/gold/purple stole

Contact Novi United Methodist Church, [info@umcnovi.com](mailto:info@umcnovi.com), 248-349-2652



# The John Dean Town Health Project

All Ann Arbor District congregations are invited to participate in the **John Dean Town Health Project**, which has the goal of bringing *sustainable and lasting health improvements to 18 rural Liberia villages*. The project focal point is a place called John Dean Town, located in the heart of our covenant partnership region, in St. John River District, Grand Bassa County. John Dean Town is in a remote location, a 90 minute walk from the nearest road. Even so, it is a hub of United Methodist activity, with a UM church, school, clinic and guest house. Because of this existing infrastructure -and because of the dire maternal and infant health status of the surrounding area -- Bishop John Innis of the Liberia Annual Conference, and Victoria Tomah, Director of the United Methodist Health Program in Liberia, have identified John Dean Town as an ideal place to host this major effort.

## What Will This Project Accomplish?

Local midwives, or Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs), from 18 villages within walking distance of John Dean Town will receive intensive training from qualified health practitioners.

These will be multi-day sessions, given roughly quarterly. They focus on hygienic best practices for rural births, pre- and post-natal care, and child immunizations. Trainings also cover issues such as nutrition, safe water, malaria, HIV/AIDS, and other general public health topics.

In order for a village to send a TBA to the training, it must provide her with work space (a "birthing hut,") and with compensation.

In order for a village to be provided with a well, and with building supplies for a latrine, its people must dig and haul sand and gravel for making the needed concrete.

The program provides well pumps, cement, forms for making the concrete well liners, and Liberian well diggers and builders who have the necessary experience.

Villages receive mosquito nets for general distribution.

## What Makes This Project Worthwhile?

It replicates a proven, successful effort that has already been run once before in another Liberia location - one that has led to **substantial reductions in maternal and infant mortality**.

The project is fully-aligned with the UMC's Four Areas of Focus, in this case, "combating the diseases of poverty by improving health globally."

It intentionally works to raise the status of women, via village leadership roles for the local midwives.

It requires significant buy-in and commitment from participating villages.

It opens up meaningful VIM experiences to Ann Arbor District volunteers, with all the associated benefits of being in direct relationship with our Liberia Partners.

We are able to receive mentoring from leadership at Trinity UMC, Denver, Colorado, which funded the pilot project.

## What Will The Project Cost?

Costs are estimated at \$80,000 over three years.

As of 3/17/2014, Ann Arbor District churches have pledged \$35,570, of which \$17,068 has already been contributed.

If contributions are received beyond what is needed at John Dean Town, the excess will be used to seed the next round of TBA training in another location. Note that \$15,000 in kick-off funding for our project was provided by the above-mentioned Trinity UMC.

# Directions for Sending Funds for the John Dean Town Health Project

## Ann Arbor District Liberia Partnership Task Force

Additional documents and videos are available on [www.AADistrict.org](http://www.AADistrict.org)  
Direct Questions to Edith Wiarda, [ewiarda@mmtc.org](mailto:ewiarda@mmtc.org), 734 475 9121 - Updated 3 8 2014

**1) Write a check to "Advance GCFA." Put "John Dean Town TBA #3020622" in the memo line.**

(“TBA” stands for “traditional birth attendant”.) Note that the designation for “John Dean Town TBA” is important. This advance number is for the entire Liberia Annual Conference Health Program, not just for the John Dean Town project.

**2) Send a note with the check. Use the form at the bottom of the page.**

**3) Send the check and the letter to: Advance GCFA, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087-9068**

**Do not send your donation to the Ann Arbor District**, nor to the Detroit Annual Conference. DAC bundles donations, and has no way to tell GBGM that your donation is to be designated to the John Dean Town Health project.

**4) Please send emails to the following to inform that the gift is on its way (optional step, but helpful):**

- a. Bishop Innis: [b.innis123@amail.com](mailto:b.innis123@amail.com) and
- b. The Bishop's Administrative Assistant, Sister Awah Cole: [Liberiaumc@vahoo.com](mailto:Liberiaumc@vahoo.com) ;
- c. Treasurer for Liberia Annual Conference, Sonoway Dolopei (he does not do email), via the accountant, James Jackson, [treasury206@yahoo.com](mailto:treasury206@yahoo.com);
- d. Ms. Victoria Tomah, LAC Health Program Coordinator, [moniudaesv@vahoo.com](mailto:moniudaesv@vahoo.com).
- e. Ms. Winsome Wright, GBGM: [wwriaht@abam-umc.org](mailto:wwriaht@abam-umc.org) ;
- f. Edith Wiarda, Ann Arbor District Liberia Task Force: [ewiarda@mmtc.org](mailto:ewiarda@mmtc.org).

**5) Keep copies of everything you send.**

On your year end local church report enter the amount on line 48, "total amount given directly to UM Church causes." Your church will "get credit." It does not help to notify the Conference.

**6) Track your gift online.**

Go to [www.advancinghope.org](http://www.advancinghope.org). Click on "Gifts at Work" at the top. Then click on "Track your Gifts." You can search by Advance number, or by your own church (it helps to know your church's GCFA number - see your Treasurer), or both. Your donation will appear online within a couple of weeks of sending your donation. Check the website to confirm its receipt.

Fill out the following form and attach with your check as described above.

---

Dear Officials for the General Council on Finance and Administration:

Please accept the enclosed donation, check number \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_,  
**for Advance number 3020622.**

This gift is for the John Dean Town TBA (traditional birth attendant) project, and is to be directed to the attention of Ms. Victoria Tomah, Health Department Coordinator for the Liberia Annual Conference.

Thank you,

Name of individual donor: \_\_\_\_\_  
or Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ UMC, Ann Arbor District, Detroit Annual Conference