

February 2023



HAVEN CHIMES!



Joan E. Klein, Editor

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR - by Juhee Lee

My Beloved Haven Family,

May God's grace and peace be with you.

Again, I want to express my gratitude for your unwavering support and kind words during my COVID journey. Although it was tough, it also helped me realize the simple yet precious gifts that God has given us, especially our senses.

After having COVID, I lost my sense of smell and taste. The food I used to love was now tasteless and unenjoyable. I realized the importance of our sense of smell in recognizing things, like when I accidentally burnt a pot of soup because I couldn't smell it boiling.

COVID-19 has greatly affected many of our lives, but it also offers us a chance to appreciate what truly matters and live life with more intention and gratitude. I hope we can use our senses to deepen our connection with God and experience the beauty of life in new and meaningful ways.

If my senses of smell and taste return, I want to use it as a blessing and a reminder to live life with appreciation and purpose. I'm thankful to God for giving us the senses to feel, smell, taste, hear, and see, and I hope we all use these senses to get to know Him better.

As February approaches, I'd like to remind you that Lent will start on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. Lent is a time for us to confess our sins and reflect on the sacrifice of Jesus. During this period, we have the chance to experience God's mercy and forgiveness and return our hearts to Him.

We'll also have the opportunity to delve into Jesus' life journey during our Lent Bible study, which will be held every Wednesday at 7 pm from February 22nd to March 29th through Zoom. I'm hopeful that during this time, we can get closer to God and be refreshed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Take care and stay safe!

Warm regards,

Pastor Juhee Lee

Mission Statement: We are a haven for those who would seek to know God better while spreading the love of Jesus Christ.

February 1, 2023

Black History Month



Together in Christ

A letter from Bishop Johnson



Rev. Andrew Foster, center, who was Deaf from childhood, developed schools for the Deaf across Africa in the late 1950s. Photo courtesy of the Gallaudet University Archives. (Reference: Visionary Leader - May 2014, Andrew Foster)

February is Black History Month, and this is an important opportunity for us as a nation and as a church to take a long look at our past and to use that understanding of our history to create a brighter future.

I would like to tell you about a very famous Black man who was also Deaf. Rev. Andrew Foster was born in 1925 in Ensley, Alabama; he became Deaf at the age of 11 from spinal meningitis.

In those days in Alabama, there were limited education opportunities for students who were Deaf. He moved to Michigan to live with relatives and attended the Michigan School for the Deaf, which provided education for Deaf students as far as the 8th grade. Foster continued his education by taking night classes and correspondence courses while working in restaurants and auto factories. Foster finally received his high school diploma at the age of 26.

He sought entrance to Gallaudet University (then Gallaudet College, an institution of higher education for people who are Deaf in Washington, DC) but was turned down several times because of his race. He was finally accepted and in 1954, became the first Black graduate in the school's history.

Foster, a fervent Christian, was ordained in the Baptist Church and felt a strong call to international missionary service. He established the "Christian Mission for the Deaf" in 1956 and spent time touring the United States and raising funds in order to establish Deaf Schools in Africa. Very few countries (only 12) on that continent at the time had any educational opportunities for children with hearing loss and few used sign language as a means of classroom instruction.

Finally, Rev. Foster arrived in Africa in 1957 and began establishing schools where there was a need. He met his wife, a German teacher of the Deaf, at the Third World Congress of the Deaf. They were married in 1961 and had four children. He and his wife went on to establish 32 schools and mission churches, which included some in countries that spoke French.

The couple also taught at these schools, preached at the churches, trained teachers, and educated the public about the need for education for Deaf students. Foster also helped to connect some of his school graduates to Gallaudet to pursue their education.

Rev. Foster received an honorary doctorate from his alma mater in 1970; there is a building at Gallaudet named for him. Sadly, he died in a plane crash in December 1987 enroute from Rwanda to Kenya as part of this ministry.

But his legacy lives on in the many schools and churches he established across Africa and the lives he touched along the way. I was one of them. I was privileged to hear him speak at the Urbana Missionary Conference in 1976. He stood on the stage and signed to the audience about the need for people to be in partnership in ministry with Deaf people. I remember being amazed at the time at his sign language and his passion for the souls of the people he wished to reach for Christ.

As a bishop in 2014, I traveled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and attended the formal dedication of new United Methodist buildings in the East Congo Conference of The United Methodist Church. This country is French speaking, but what a surprise; all the Deaf people there knew American

Sign Language, the language that Andrew Foster had brought to them years earlier. I was able to communicate with them easily, and I celebrated those seeds of Deaf education that had been planted years earlier and continued to blossom.

I thank God for Rev. Foster, and I want to remind you that mission work is vitally important. Seek opportunities to partner with international friends in reciprocal relationships. The United Methodist Church has a vitally strong presence in over 300 countries.

Have the spirit of Andrew Foster, who never gave up even though he experienced a great deal of discrimination and personal rejection in the United States and in Africa for being Black, for being Deaf, and for living in a cross-racial marriage. “Never be weary in well doing,” as the Scriptures tell us, “for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart … (Galatians 6:9).”

Finally, don’t forget to celebrate Black History Month in your churches!

Church member is the inspiration for new movie

January 24, 2023



New England Conference
The United Methodist Church

Betty Pensavalle with her Tom Brady cutout.

Five women over 80. One GOAT. Eighteen weeks of football.

It adds up to a story of great friendships and fandom that's now a feature film: "80 for Brady," starring Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin, Sally Field and Rita Moreno; it opens in theaters Feb. 3.

Elizabeth "Betty" Pensavalle, 94, is one of the five women whose devotion to the Greatest of All Time quarterback Tom Brady inspired the movie. Brady, whose production company is one of the film's producers, and retired tight end Rob Gronkowski also appear in the film.

Pensavalle joined First UMC in North Attleboro, MA, in 1955. "When people ask me how long I've been a Methodist, I say, 'I was a Methodist in the womb.'" Her parents and grandparents were Methodists, and like her were active in the church.

First UMC has been promoting the movie – and some of Pensavalle's media appearances – on its Facebook page.

"The whole town is waiting for Feb. 3," said friend Joan Hutson, who is also a member of First UMC. Pensavalle knows some family members and friends are planning to see it together.

The attention surrounding the movie has been "overwhelming," Pensavalle said, (she's letting her daughter field media calls these days) but it's been a good experience.

"The whole thing is fun," she said. "We had a wonderful interview with CBS Sunday Morning. They were in the kitchen, the hallway, the back rooms ... We really enjoyed it. They took everything out of my living room except the piano ... they put everything back."

Pensavalle, Elaine St. Martin, Anita Riccio, Pat Marx, and Claire Boardman began watching games together more than a decade ago. Each week they would gather at each other's homes to share some food and conversation.

"We were really a close group," Pensavalle said. Some, like herself, were already football fans; others



learned the game as they watched together while sharing family stories and food.

"They marched through that door with hors d'oeuvres, we sat on my patio or in the sitting room. It was a lot of laughs, a lot of yelling," she said. "Those were the years the Patriots were winning everything."

And the movie captures it, Pensavalle said: "That's what it's about: friendships between elderly women. Women can have fun – even in their 80s."

Family members enjoyed watching the group watching the games. It was a friend of Pensavalle's daughter who coined their name, saying "Well, they're all over 80 for Brady."

Pensavalle's grandson, a graphic designer, had the T-shirts made in 2010. The shirts were mandatory for game day, Pensavalle said, though some would just "hold it up in front" of themselves.

About two and a half years ago, another grandson, Max Gross, who is an agent in Hollywood, pitched the idea for a film based on the Over 80 for Brady's. While they are the inspiration, events in the movie are fiction – they never went to the Super Bowl, for example.

"A few things in [the movie] we wouldn't dream of doing ..." Pensavalle said; pausing, she added: "Maybe we would if we were in our 80s again. We're all in our 90s now."

"I miss the girls," she said. Boardman passed away and Riccio and Marx are in assisted living facilities, but Pensavalle hasn't lost her enthusiasm for the game.

"I love football. I was brought up with football," she said; her husband, son and grandsons all played. As for Brady, "He's the GOAT – he's good looking too."

Brady and the Buccaneers ended the 2022 season with a loss to the Dallas Cowboys in the wild card playoff Jan. 16. The game didn't start until 8:15 pm, but Pensavalle stayed up for the whole thing.

"I couldn't sleep afterwards I was so upset," Hutson said.

"Me too," Pensavalle said. "I moved from the sitting room to my bed and still watched it. The next day, I thought I'm so glad I watched it. It might be his last game."

Brady went to Tampa Bay in 2020, and Pensavalle makes it clear that she's a Brady fan whose team is still the Patriots. For several years she and her late husband had season tickets.

These days she's happy to watch on TV with plenty of snacks on hand – "popcorn, a sandwich, wings – lots of wings, love wings." Watching from home is great, unless the Patriots and Buccaneers are playing at the same time: "that's the worst part going back and forth with the buttons," she said.

As for the movie, Pensavalle and St. Martin were invited to a special premiere; Hutson attended as well. The event included a filmed message from the stars thanking the Over 80 for Brady's for "showing that women can do anything and have great friendships."

So which of the stars is Betty? "I've been known to be bossy and I've been known to be feisty, so I think maybe Lily Tomlin toward the end of the movie is more like me," Pensavalle said, but it could be Jane Fonda, she admits.

"I hope it does well," Pensavalle said. "It's fun. It's a happy movie."



The five members of Over 80 for Brady



Betty Pensavalle looks at a photo of herself with 3 of her 5 children in First UMC's 1969 Pictorial Directory

Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'I Have a Dream' speech

January 16, 2023 marks Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Below is a transcript of his celebrated "I Have a Dream" speech, delivered on Aug. 28, 1963, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

Civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. addresses the crowd at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., where he gave his "I Have a Dream" speech on Aug. 28, 1963, as part of the March on Washington. AFP via Getty Images



But 100 years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check.

When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men – yes, Black men as well as white men – would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked insufficient funds.



Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders gather before rally at the Lincoln Memorial on Aug. 28, 1963, in Washington. National Archives/Hulton Archive via Getty Images

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt.

We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to his hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism.

Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. 1963 is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual.

There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

Civil rights protesters march from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial for the March on Washington on Aug. 28, 1963. Kurt Severin/Three Lions/Hulton Archive/Getty Images



But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny.

And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone. And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, when will you be satisfied? We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities.

We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: for whites only.

We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote.

No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our Northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.



People clap and sing along to a freedom song between speeches at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963. Express Newspapers via Getty Images

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends. So even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, one day right down in Alabama little Black boys and Black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

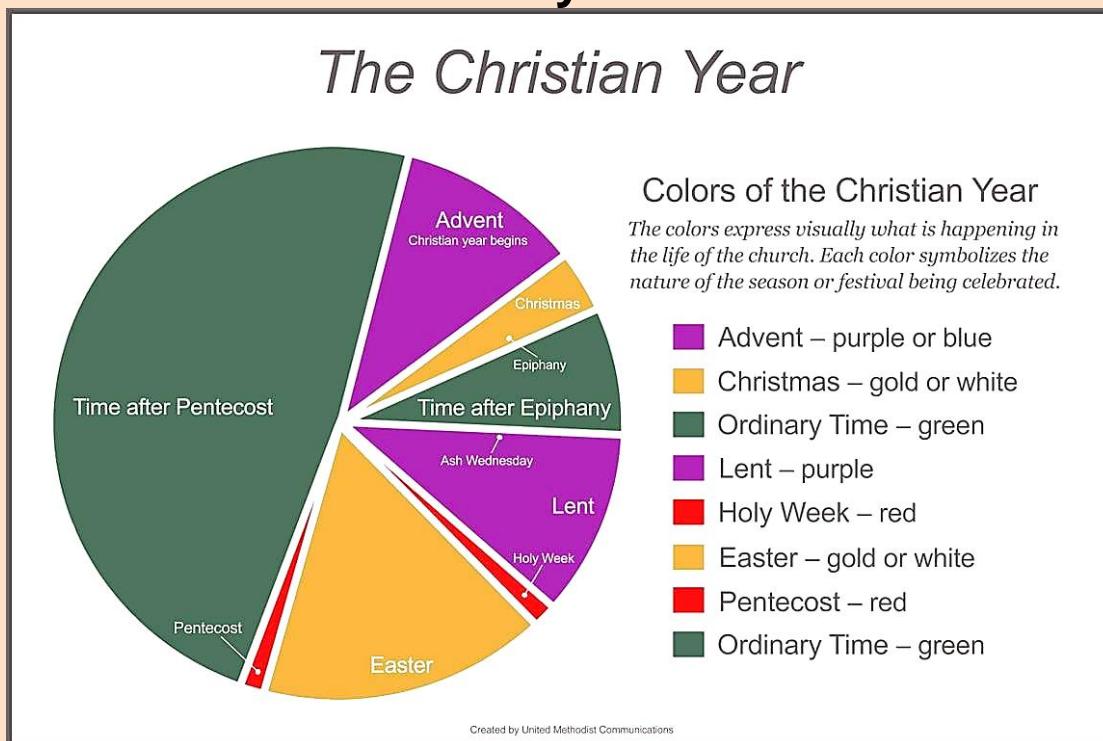
This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning: My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that, let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, Black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: Free at last. Free at last. Thank God almighty, we are free at last.

Transcript from <https://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/122701268/i-have-a-dream-speech-in-its-entirety>

Ask the UMC: What is Ordinary Time?



The Christian year includes the central seasons of Christmas and Easter followed by Ordinary Time. The colors associated with the different seasons express visually what is happening in the life of the church. Each color symbolizes the nature of the festival being celebrated. Graphic by Laurens Glass, United Methodist Communications.

The Christian year includes two central cycles focused on major events in the life of Christ: the Christmas cycle (Advent-Christmas-Epiphany) and Easter cycle (Lent-Easter-Pentecost).

Each of these seasons begins with a time of preparation and anticipation followed by a time of celebration. A season designated as Ordinary Time follows each cycle.

The word "ordinary" here does not mean "routine" or "not special." Instead, it refers to the "ordinal numbers" (first, second, third, etc.) used to name and count the Sundays (such as the Third Sunday after Epiphany). This term comes from the Latin ordinalis, meaning "numbered" or "ordered," and tempus ordinarium, "measured time."

The first period of Ordinary Time, called the Season after Epiphany, begins on Epiphany Day and ends on the day before Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent). The central theme of this season is the calling of disciples and the early ministry of Jesus.

For some congregations, this will mean a focus on evangelism, as found in the Old Testament and Gospel reading for each week. For others, the focus will be preparing to help others grow in their discipleship. The Epistle reading each week emphasizes this.

The second period of Ordinary Time, the Season after Pentecost, follows the Easter cycle. It begins the day after Pentecost and continues to Advent. The purpose of this season is to support new disciples and the whole congregation in living out the gifts and callings discerned during the Easter Season and commissioned on the Day of Pentecost.

Every year, Christians experience the contrast between the central seasons of Christmas and Easter, where we see God in the events around the coming of Christ, and the in-between times, where we see, speak about and join God's ongoing work in the world.

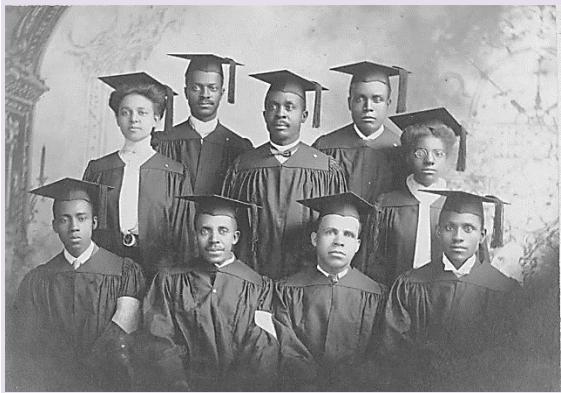
We thus experience two regular cycles of preparation, celebration and action in ministry each year, with the Ordinary Times as the primary periods of action.

This content was produced by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications.



United Methodist Black History Quiz

United Methodist Communications



Historic photo shows African-American students. Courtesy of General Commission on Archives and History.

Too often, the accomplishments of African Americans have not received adequate notice in U.S. history books and classrooms. That is why historian Carter Woodson first proposed a weeklong focus on black history in 1926. The first U.S. celebration of Black History Month happened decades later.

We invite you to take a short quiz about African American history in the U.S. and in The United Methodist Church. (answers on page 26).

1. *Historian Carter G. Woodson chose February as the month to honor black history because:*

- Woodson was born in February.
- Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass were born in Feb.
- February was the shortest month.
- All of the above.

2. *True or False, Black History Month is only celebrated in the United States.*

- True
- False

3. *The first Black History Month celebration in the U.S. took place when?*

- 1945
- 1957
- 1970
- 2000

4. *This former slave became a famous abolitionist and a Methodist preacher.*

- Sojourner Truth
- Harriett Tubman
- Harriett Beecher Stowe
- David Walker

5. *Which United Methodist church is named after one of the "founding fathers of Gospel music?"*

- Tindley Temple
- Jones Memorial United Methodist Church
- Barratt's Chapel
- Seay-Hubbard United Methodist Church

6. *This former school, once a haven from racial prejudice, is now an UMCOR relief center:*

- Scarritt Bennet Center, Nashville, Tennessee
- Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas
- Sager-Brown Depot in Baldwin, Louisiana
- The New Room, Bristol, England

7. *After the U.S. Civil War, this trailblazing African American woman went to college, owned a business, and became a Methodist missionary.*

- Susanna Wesley
- Susan Angeline Collins
- Billie Holiday
- Bishop Sharma Lewis

8. Mother African Zoar United Methodist Church in Philadelphia housed...

- The first well-baby clinic for African Americans
- A stop on the Underground Railroad
- A school
- All of the above

9. Who was the first African American bishop in the UMC?

- Roy G. Biv
- Roy C. Nichols
- Roy Rogers
- Roy Brown

10. Who was the only woman besides Coretta Scott King on the platform when MLK gave his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963?

- Jacquelyn Kennedy
- Lena Horne
- Mahalia Jackson
- Dorothy Height

Reader's Digest

A Trusted Friend in a Complicated World

Facts You Didn't Know About Black History Month -- Kelly Bryant Updated: Jun. 17, 2022

In honor of Black History Month, here are some facts about Black history in America that even history buffs may not know.

The man with the plan

Historian Carter G. Woodson, the creator of what we presently know as Black History Month, worked passionately to establish the event in an effort to provide an education on the origins, struggles, and achievements of African-Americans in United States history. Originally, it existed as seven days of commemoration, first established in 1926 and called "Negro History Week." Woodson penned more than a dozen books, including 1933's *Mis-Education of the Negro*.



SPENCER GRANT/GETTY IMAGES

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES



It's been nationally recognized since 1976

Despite its forerunner, Negro History Week, originating all the way back in 1926, Black History Month as we know it today didn't become nationally recognized until the 1970s. Black students and educators at Kent State first celebrated Black History Month in January and February of 1970. Other educational institutions started following suit, and for the United States' bicentennial, President Gerald Ford recognized Black History Month, as has every president since.

This year marks an anniversary

UNIVERSAL HISTORY ARCHIVE/UIG/SHUTTERSTOCK

On February 12, 2023, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) will celebrate its 114th birthday. The date of February 12, 1909, was chosen for the NAACP's inception because it also marked the 100th birthday of President Abraham Lincoln, and coincided with abolitionist Fredrick Douglass's birthday (February 14). It's America's oldest civil rights organization, as well as its largest.





February 1, 2023

Blessing in the Tears

By: Winn Collier

Blessed are those who mourn. Matthew 5:4

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Matthew 5:1-12 (NRSVUE)

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying: ³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵ Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

I received an email from a young man in England, a son who explained that his father (only sixty-three) was in the hospital in critical condition, hanging on to life. Though we'd never met, his dad's work and mine shared many intersections. The son, trying to cheer his father, asked me to send a video message of encouragement and prayer. Deeply moved, I recorded a short message and a prayer for healing. I was told that his dad watched the video and gave a hearty thumbs-up. Sadly, a couple days later, I received another email telling me that he had died. He held his wife's hand as he took his final breath.

My heart broke. Such love, such devastation. The family lost a husband and father far too soon. Yet it's surprising to hear Jesus insist that it's precisely these grieving ones who are blessed: "Blessed are those who mourn," Jesus says (Matthew 5:4). Jesus isn't saying suffering and sorrow are good, but rather that God's mercy and kindness pour over those who need it most. Those overcome by grief due to death or even their own sinfulness are most in need of God's attention and consolation—and Jesus promises us "they will be comforted" (v. 4).

God steps toward us, His loved children (v. 9). He blesses us in our tears.

REFLECT & PRAY

- What places do you encounter sorrow in your story and in others' stories? How does Jesus' promise of blessing alter how you view this grief?
- *Dear God, when I'm awash in grief and sorrow, please help me to experience Your blessing even in the tears.*

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

Matthew records five major sections of Jesus' teaching (Matthew 5–7; 10; 13; 18; 24–25). Matthew 5–7 is known as the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus taught it when he was "on a mountainside" (5:1) in Galilee (4:23). In this sermon, Christ teaches what it takes to be His disciple. First, He describes the character (5:3–12) and then the conduct (5:13–7:29) of a believer in Jesus. Matthew 5:3–12 is known as the Beatitudes, so named because the Latin word for "blessed" or "happy" is *beatus*. One author calls them the "Beautiful Attitudes." Each of the eight beatitudes opens with the word *blessed* (*makarios*), which is translated "happy" in some versions. But *makarios* has the basic meaning of "being approved by God" or "receiving God's favor." Those who've received God's approval and favor are indeed blessed and have cause to be contented and joyful.

By: K. T. Sim

January 16, 2023

Photo caption: Attending the unveiling were, from left, Pastor Kyle Walden, Union UMC; Bishop Peggy A. Johnson, Bishop Johnson's spouse, Rev. Mary Johnson; Rev. Dr. Jay Williams, senior pastor, Union UMC; Rev. We Hyun Chang, Acting DCM/Commonwealth East District Superintendent, and Rev. Laura Everett, Executive Director, MA Council of Churches. Photos courtesy of Bishop Johnson.



On Jan. 13, 2023, New England Conference leaders, including Bishop Peggy A. Johnson, attended the unveiling of "The Embrace," a monument to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King in Boston Common.

Artist Hank Willis Thomas' 20-foot by 40-foot bronze sculpture was inspired by a photo that captured the Kings embracing when it was announced that Dr. King had won the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize.

The governor, mayor, and other dignitaries gathered at America's oldest public park for a celebration that included members of Dr. King's family.

Of the speech given by Yolanda Rene King, the Kings' granddaughter, Bishop Johnson said: "She emphasized the strength and unity that can be found in the power of love. This 14-year-old stressed that all of us are needed to carry forth the unfinished work of creating true equality among all people, and that the key to that work is love."

"The Embrace" sits on the 1965 Freedom Plaza, which honors more than 60 local civil rights leaders, including New England Conference Elder, the Rev. Gil Caldwell.

Rev. Caldwell, who died in 2020, served as pastor of Boston's Union UMC and as a district superintendent.



A medallion presented to those attending the unveiling

The Rev. Dr. Jay Williams, who currently serves as senior pastor at Union, also attended the unveiling. "'The Embrace' memorial is a physical marker on Boston Common that calls us to our shared humanity and common purpose," he said. "The embrace of Coretta and Martin, symbolized in the sculpture, reminds us of the power of love. Embrace. It's a simple word that invites us into the profound possibility of beloved community. In witnessing the monument's unveiling today, we bear witness to the pursuit of justice, equity, and liberation."

The Kings met in Boston in the 1950s; Rev. King earned his doctorate from Boston University. In April 1965, Dr. King returned to the city to lead the Freedom Rally, a march from Roxbury to Boston Common that attracted more than 20,000 people, in which Rev. Caldwell also participated.

"The unveiling was a tribute to Dr. King, but also a call for each of us to continue the work of civil rights and to do so with a spirit of unity and tenacity," Bishop Johnson said.

Rev. We Hyun Chang, acting Director of Connectional Ministries, agreed that "The Embrace" is a call to action.

"'The Embrace' seems a most appropriate and necessary name in an age of such deep and unjust polarization," he said. "We need to embrace one another."



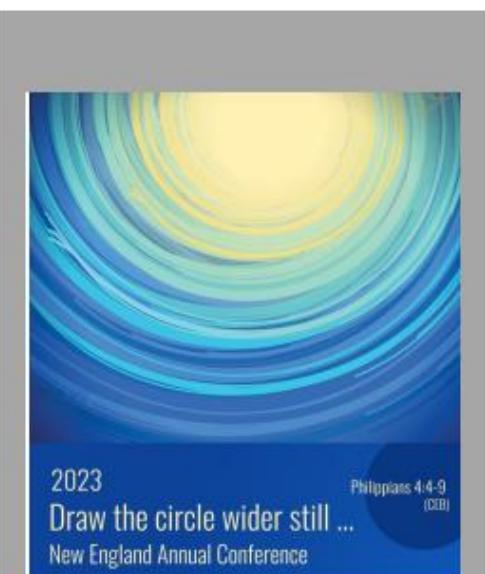
February 2023



New England Conference
The United Methodist Church

Connected is a publication of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church. This monthly insert is designed put Conference news directly into the hands of our local church members.

Find more at www.neumc.org.



2023 Annual Conference

The 2023 New England Annual Conference will be a hybrid session taking place June 8-10 via Zoom and in person in Manchester, NH.

The theme for this year's session is "Draw the Circle Wider Still ..."

Our guiding scripture is Philippians 4:4-9, CEB

Get all the latest AC news and information at:

www.neumc.org/ACsessions



Rev. We Chang named DCM

Bishop Peggy A. Johnson is pleased to announce the appointment of the Rev. We Hyun Chang as Director of Connectional Ministries for the New England Conference effective July 1, 2023.

Rev. Chang, who serves as Superintendent of the Commonwealth East District, will continue to serve the district and as Acting DCM during these next few months.



Rev. Chang

"I am deeply grateful to Rev. Chang for his willingness to accept this new role, which is vital to the life of our Conference," Bishop Johnson said. "He brings the gifts of visionary and collaborative leadership that will help New England embody our connectional vision and mission fully and boldly."

"Steward of the vision" for the Annual Conference is how The Book of Discipline characterizes the work of the Office of Connectional Minis-

tries, ensuring "connections among the local, district, annual conference, and general church ministries."

"We is an experienced leader and strategic thinker who has the deep appreciation for and commitment to our connectional identity that is essential in our Director of Connectional Ministries," the bishop said.

Rev. Chang will succeed Rev. Ashley Johnson, who served as DCM from July 1, 2021 to Dec. 31, 2022.

"On behalf of the Conference, I would like to thank Rev. Johnson for her faithful work and willingness to share her many gifts as DCM," Bishop Johnson said. "She truly has a servant's heart."

Rev. Chang became a district superintendent in 2017. In 2022, he worked on the team to launch New England's [Community Development Corporation](#).

Rev. Chang is married to the Rev. Dr. Yoo-Yun Cho-Chang; they are the grateful parents of Hope Chang.

Contact Rev. Chang at
DCM@neumc.org



READ THE FULL ANNOUNCEMENT

www.neumc.org/news

Meet Bishop Johnson

Bishop Johnson to visit each district



2023 District visits

Saturdays; times vary

Seacoast District
Commonwealth West District
Granite District
Commonwealth East District
Katahdin District
Many Waters District
Green Mountain District

*Attend any session
that's convenient*

Feb 11
Feb 25
Mar 4
Mar 18
Apr 1
Apr 15
Apr 22 & 23

Check your district calendar for location, registration and other details
www.neumc.org/events

Over the next few months, Bishop Peggy A. Johnson will be making an in-person visit to each district in the New England Conference.

Clergy and laity are invited to Join Bishop Johnson for holy conversation and fellowship.

The visit dates are listed at left. To get details, find the event on our online calendar at www.neumc.org/events

Come and greet our new bishop and learn more about her and her vision for the New England Conference.

'Intersectionality' theme of training

The Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR) announces the following schedule for the quadrennial anti-racism training in each district. The theme is "Intersectionality."



Training

This in-person training is REQUIRED for clergy and lay ministers serving on ministry teams. Laity, especially those in leadership positions, are strongly encouraged to attend. Continuing Education Credit (.5 CEU) is available for completing the training.

Participants are asked to watch two videos in advance of the training session; links to these can be found with the information about each training session on your district calendar.

- ⇒ [The urgency of Intersectionality by Kimberle Crenshaw](#)
- ⇒ [Intersectionality 101](#)



Click the links for details or check our online calendar at www.neumc.org/events

- [Feb. 25 Many Waters District](#)
- [Feb. 11 Commonwealth West District](#)
- [Feb. 11 Granite District](#)
- [March 4 Commonwealth East District](#)
- [March 4 Katahdin District](#)
- [March 4 & 11 Seacoast District](#)
- [March 10 & 11 Green Mountain District](#)

Let's Connect

Do you have a story to share? A feature idea? A question to ask? Contact Beth DiCocco, Conference Director of Communications, at communicate@neumc.org or (978) 682-8055 ext. 150

Bible Quiz: The Fall of Adam and Eve



1. Where did Adam and Eve live?

- Sodom
- Israel
- Eden
- Zion

2. Which two trees grew in the midst of the garden?

- The tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of joy and despair
- The tree of life and the tree of death
- The tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil
- The tree of death and the tree of joy and despair

3. Which tree bore fruit that God forbade Adam and Eve to partake of?

- The tree of joy and despair
- The tree of death
- The tree of knowledge of good and evil
- The tree of life

4. What would NOT happen to anyone who would partake of such fruit?

- They would die
- They would know for themselves the difference between right and wrong
- They would become all-knowing
- They would be able to bear children

5. What animal deceived Eve?

- A serpent
- A crow
- A wolf
- A fox

6. The animal who deceived Eve represents:

- Jesus
- The spirits of Eve's unborn children
- Lucifer
- Adam

7. What did the deceptive animal convince Eve to do?

- Leave Adam
- Partake of the forbidden fruit
- Blaspheme against the Lord
- Kill an animal

8. What did Adam do after Eve obeyed the animal and transgressed against the Lord's commandment?

- He exiled her
- He forgave her
- He also transgressed against the Lord's commandment
- He condemned her

9. Why did Adam hide himself from the Lord?

- He was embarrassed because he realized he was naked
- He was ashamed of his wife's transgression
- He wanted to see if he could outwit the Lord
- He wanted the Lord to prove to him that He can see all

10. What did the Lord NOT do as a result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve?

- Kill them instantly
- Cause them to work the ground for food
- Give them the ability to feel emotion
- Cast them out of Eden and His presence

11. How did God curse the animal that deceived Eve?

- He sent it to live under the ground and never see light
- He forced it to live on the ground and in the dust
- He bound it to the skies and forbade it to ever perch and rest
- He caused it to be constantly hunted by all other animals

12. What does Eve's name mean?

- Mother of all living
- Mother of knowledge
- Mother of death
- Blessed mother

13. How did God say mankind was similar to Him?

- They could feel joy and sorrow
- They could know good from evil
- They would live forever
- They could create life

14. Why did God protect the tree of life?

- To ensure that He could never be destroyed
- So that Adam and Eve would not lose the ability to bear children
- So that man would live forever
- So that man couldn't obtain a means to live forever

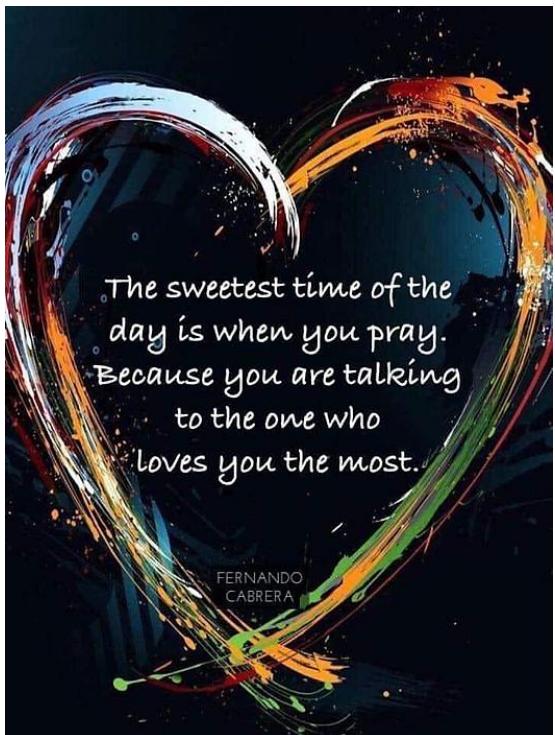
Answers can be found on page 26. Quiz taken from <https://www.religionresourcesonline.org/bible-quiz/4-bible-quiz-the-fall-of-adam-and-eve>

15. What did God place at the east of the garden of Eden to guard the tree of life?

- Cherubim and a flaming sword
- A dragon with seven heads
- A seraph with six wings
- A pit of poisonous serpents

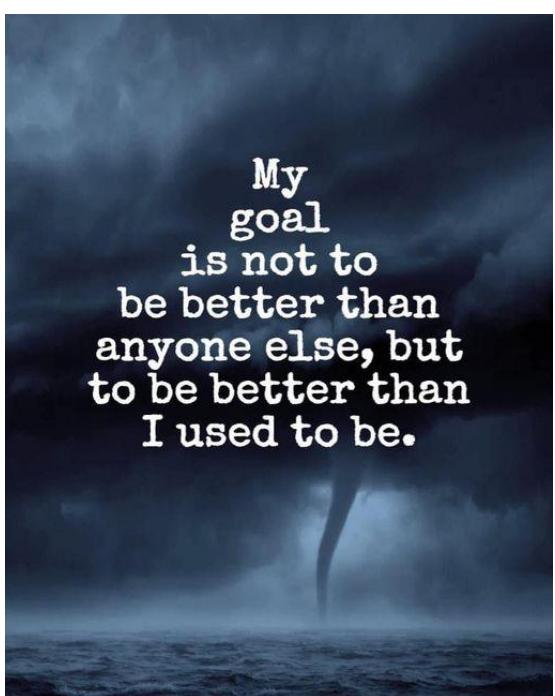
16. What did the Lord do for Adam and Eve before He exiled them?

- He armed them with weapons
- He clothed them
- He fed them
- He allowed them to rest



The Bible tells of flawed people -- people just like me -- who make shockingly bad choices and yet still find themselves pursued by God.

Philip Yancey



Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you..., and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Jeremiah 29:7

Preaching that we are to **LOVE** our neighbor, **WELCOME** the stranger, & **STAND UP** for the marginalized

does not mean you are making **political statements**.

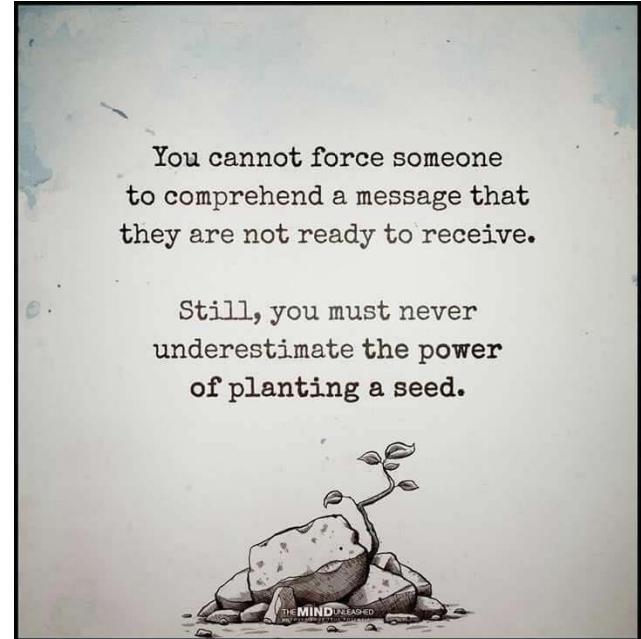
It means you are making **BIBLICAL statements**.

- A Southern Pastor

“

If you see what needs to be repaired and how to repair it, then you have found a piece of the world that God has left for you to complete. But if you only see what is wrong and what is ugly in the world, then it is you yourself that needs repair.

LUBAVITCHER REBBE



You cannot force someone to comprehend a message that they are not ready to receive.

Still, you must never underestimate the power of planting a seed.

Why did this Knoxville church get on NPR? Its outreach includes brew pubs and Topgolf

John Shearer Shopper News Published 5:05 a.m. ET Jan. 24, 2023 <https://www.knoxnews.com/>



Bearden UMC
Photos: John Shearer/Shopper News



The church's blessing box provides canned and nonperishable food for the community.



A stained-glass window Pastor Brad Hyde inside Bearden UMC



Churches have traditionally tried to focus primarily on drawing members and worshipers into their doors.

But as mainline denominational church attendance has declined nationwide, particularly among younger adults, many houses of worship are finding that meeting people outside their walls is an increasing area of focus.

That is true for Bearden United Methodist. While still possessing a healthy-for-today Sunday worship total, it has also begun two ministries in its parking lot related to solving food and hunger needs. The church and the Rev. Brad Hyde are also planning to start a monthly dialogue with the community down Sutherland Avenue in – yes – a brewery.

"It's developing relationships," said Hyde of the additional efforts. "It's changing the community's perception of who we are."

The church's work has come into larger focus through a National Public Radio report last month by John Burnett focusing on Knoxville churches doing outside-the-box ministries. Besides an interview with Hyde about the church's monthly produce ministry, the nationwide broadcast also highlighted Episcopal Church of the Ascension and the Battlefield Farm and Gardens.

Hyde jokingly admitted to initially being a little nervous when a professional crew representing NPR showed up. "And then it dawned on me – something very good could come out of this opportunity," he said, adding that he heard from numerous friends and acquaintances after the piece aired.

He just arrived as the pastor last summer after previously serving at Powell United Methodist and said some of the outreach ideas and mission mindset had begun under previous ministers Sherry Boles and Mike Sluder.

But with many activities beginning again as the pandemic has waned, he said the church was ready to start anew. The food ministries involve going the second Saturday of the month to the Market Square market, where some vendors will allow them to take unsold produce back to the church parking lot to give away.

"The community now knows they can get fresh and locally grown produce for free," he said.

The church also has a "blessing box" by its parking lot, where canned, nonperishable and sometimes fresh items are donated and taken by local residents. It is a project in which he hopes the larger community can get involved.

"We are partnering with restaurants and businesses in the community who are going to be adopting the blessing box," he said, adding that FirstBank and others have already begun helping.

Hyde is trying to help the church offer good conversation as well as good food. He said he is planning in the coming weeks to start having a monthly community dialogue at Albright Grove Brewing Co. on the Christian faith and a selected social issue of interest.

"It will be an open dialogue with civil discourse, so we don't have to be at each other's throats like so much of the country is," he said.

The church is also trying to do other untraditional activities, like its restarted men's ministry that met at Topgolf, a place he said the attendees likely felt more comfortable inviting friends than to a Sunday service.

"Long gone is the day that just because we sit here, people will come and go to church," he said, adding that Bearden UMC has gotten additional visibility from passing rush hour traffic avoiding Kingston Pike.

This is a trying time for the United Methodist Church in general, with some churches around the country disaffiliating amid debates on allowing LGBTQ clergy or performing same-sex weddings. But he believes his church will stay part of the UMC and continue doing ministry.

Bearden United Methodist had been formed in 1950 and, according to a plaque at the church, began meeting on the ground floor in 1951 until the Barber and McMurry-designed sanctuary was finished in 1955. The church has had several additions since then.

By the time Hyde was born in the early 1970s, UT football coach Bill Battle attended and occasionally invited team members to worship there, he has learned.

After Hyde's father, Don, served in the military and later took a community college job in Chattanooga, Brad attended Baylor School there before graduating in 1991. A mission trip to Jamaica with a Presbyterian church as a teenager led to a decision to become a minister.

After attending Emory & Henry College and Princeton Theological Seminary, he began his ministerial career with the United Methodist Church.

He said he experienced a warm feeling when he and his wife, Nicole, drove over to see the Bearden church building last year after learning he would be appointed to serve there.

"We said that this strangely feels like home," he recalled.

He also hopes others can be warmed as well by the ministries highlighted on NPR.

"I am still hoping that this spotlight might shine a different kind of light onto what local churches can do," he said.

Info: BeardenUMC.org.



“When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could say, ‘I used everything you gave me.’” ~ Erma Bombeck

“We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him. He walks everywhere incognito.” ~ C.S. Lewis

“The pupil dilates in darkness and in the end finds light, just as the soul dilates in misfortune and in the end finds God.” ~ Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*

“God creates out of nothing. Wonderful you say. Yes, to be sure, but he does what is still more wonderful: he makes saints out of sinners.” ~ Soren Kierkegaard, The Journals of Kierkegaard

"It doesn't matter if a million people tell you what you can't do, or if ten million tell you no. If you get one yes from God that's all you need." ~ Tyler Perry

"Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?" ~ Corrie Ten Boom
"Anything under God's control is never out of control." ~ Charles Swindoll

Yambasu Agriculture Initiative empowers farmers

By Phileas Jusu Jan. 27, 2023 | PORTO-NOVO, Benin (UM News)

Participants of a training program at the Songhai Center in Porto-Novo, Benin, learn how to bottle pineapple juice once the processing is complete. The training,

part of The United Methodist Church's Yambasu Agriculture Initiative, gives farmers first-hand experience in sustainable agriculture. Photo by Phileas Jusu, UM News.

Yambasu Agriculture Initiative staff from 15 annual conferences sharpened their entrepreneurial skills during training at the Songhai Center, a sustainable farming research, teaching and production facility in West Africa.



The 70 farmers trained over a six-week period from September to November. They were split into three groups — with sessions in English, French and Portuguese — to ease communication challenges at the mainly French-speaking center. Trainees were from eight African countries: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Congo, Angola, Côte d'Ivoire and Mozambique.

"Poverty is not when you don't have dollars in your pocket. The real poverty is that incapacity to open our eyes and see potential in what God has given us," said Father Godfrey Nzamujo, Songhai founder and director as he bade farewell to the English-speaking members.

"At Songhai, we are fighting the real war against poverty because we are opening our eyes to see the possibilities before us," the Dominican priest said, emphasizing the need to break the cycle of food dependency and poverty in Africa.

The Yambasu Agriculture Initiative was launched in December 2020 by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries under the leadership of top executive Roland Fernandes. The initiative was named in memory of the late Bishop John K. Yambasu of Sierra Leone, who died in a vehicle accident in August of that year. Yambasu was instrumental in efforts to build a resilient and sustainable African church through agriculture, improving food security and strengthening farm communities across the continent. He was a fervent believer that United Methodist conferences in Africa can be self-reliant through agriculture.



At the juice-processing plant of the Songhai Center in Porto-Novo, Benin, participants learn how pineapple juice is processed using no chemical or harmful preservatives. Yambasu Agriculture Initiative staff from 15 annual conferences attended the training over a six-week period in September and November. The Global Ministries-supported initiative is named after the late bishop John K. Yambasu, who was a fervent believer that United Methodist conferences in Africa can be self-reliant through agriculture. Photo by Phileas Jusu, UM News.

The Songhai Center in Benin Republic trains and supports those who yearn to take agriculture from subsistence to entrepreneurship. It promotes the development of integrated systems where there is synergy in crop farming and animal rearing. There is hardly any waste because animal waste or droppings are recycled as organic fertilizer to grow crops, while waste from harvesting and food processing is used as feed for the animals.

Participants learned skills in growing crops and rearing animals in a healthy environment, as well as maximizing crop yield and marketing. They spent about 90% of their time practicing more productive and healthy farming skills and also had opportunities to visit farms of Songhai graduates who have gone into entrepreneurship. The visits enabled them to learn how crop farming, animal husbandry and fish farming are practiced sustainably.

Participants at agricultural training in Porto-Novo, Benin, visit previous graduates' farms to see how alumni from the Songhai Center are making an impact in their communities. The trainees also learn how to manage their expectations in agricultural entrepreneurship as climate change, outbreaks and government policies all can affect outcomes. Photo by Phileas Jusu, UM News.

"The certificate you will receive today is mission order to send you back to restore humanity," Nzamujo said, further explaining that real justice is restorative justice; bringing back the order God created that humanity has messed up.



"So, that's what you came here to do. The Bible says, 'Seek and you will find.' You are a faith-based organization, meaning that you came into this mission because you abandoned your own little project and you joined the mission of God. Therefore, you know how to seek and you will find the key in your hand and the door before you. This is my prayer for you," Nzamujo said. Elfreda Brima-Fawundu, a participant from Sierra Leone, was energized by the Songhai experience.

"Coming to Songhai was a blessing ... I see Africa rising again. I see commitment and dedication in the staff, more so among the young people, which is so much lacking in my country. And those are the ones we need to tap," she said, emphasizing the need to change the mindset of young Africans who have the energy to work in the farms but are distracted by quick but unsustainable income.

"I hope that all of us here will be the changemakers in the little ways that we can."

Philip McKay from Liberia said he comes from a farming family. "But everything we did was just for our consumption. Little did I know that from a little piece of land, I can feed my family and feed the nation. So, my coming to Songhai has broadened my thinking. We need many of the young people in Africa to come here.

"If Global Ministries continues to support this program, God will be with us everywhere because the success and the development of our continent now is all directed to organic food production as is being done at Songhai," he said.

Since its inception, the initiative has awarded more than \$4.3 million in grants to 15 annual conferences.

Kalava Thomas Kwalla was emotional about the connection the Yambasu Agriculture Initiative was bringing to Africa.



Elfreda Brima-Fawundu (right) from Sierra Leone helps remove boiled rice from a parboiled rice steamer at the Songhai Center. Attendees of the training program visited the rice-processing department to learn about the simple and affordable technology. Photo by Phileas Jusu, UM News.

"This training has not just opened our eyes in terms of agriculture-entrepreneurship. It has also connected us across the Anglophone countries. I am very much comfortable that being a Nigerian, I can gladly go to Sierra Leone and get somebody to connect with. I can go to Zimbabwe and have somebody to relate with. We have also built a relationship and are becoming one family. So, I appreciate this opportunity and I know I am going to treasure it for many years to come," he said.

Global Ministries remains committed to ensuring that the Yambasu Agriculture Initiative becomes a flagship program for the continent, according to Kepifri Lakoh, who is director of the initiative. The agency relies on staff in the respective episcopal areas to implement and build revenue streams out of proceeds.

"I really encourage you to take up the responsibility to make this work," he said.

Father Nzamujo said Bishop Yambasu lives on through initiative.

Kepifri Lakoh, director of the initiative, says Global Ministries is committed to ensuring that the Yambasu Agriculture Initiative becomes a flagship program for the continent aided by staff in the respective episcopal areas. Photo by Phileas Jusu, UM News.

"The Lord is sending all of us from here to go and redouble our effort to transform our world; make it a living place. This is what the Bishop Yambasu initiative is all about. I heard someone say, 'I wish the bishop were alive today.' The bishop is alive; this is his vision. We're just supporting. So, I thank The United Methodist Church for immortalizing that great man."



Jusu is director of communications for The United Methodist Church in Sierra Leone. News media contact: Julie Dwyer at newsdesk@umnews.org.



NFAAUM and AALM of The United Methodist Church's Statement on the Half Moon Bay Shooting

Jan 31, 2023

As the coastal community of Half Moon Bay continues to reel from the recent mass shooting of Chinese and Latinx farm workers, the members of the New (National) Federation of Asian American United Methodists (NFAAUM) and Asian American Language Ministry (AALM) share their pain and loss of precious lives. We grieve over the senseless loss of precious lives from mass shootings just days earlier in Monterey Park, Yakima, Oakland, and Des Moines, Iowa, and neighborhoods across our country do not appear in the national news.

And with people who have been watching from across the world, we are outraged at Mr. Tyre Nichols's vicious murder by active duty police officers and believe this is indicative of a chronic culture of violence that too many people of color are still asked to endure—more than 1,000 people have died at the hands of police in 2022 and wide racial disparities existed among those deaths.

And so we lift up our voices with the Psalmist, "I cry out to you from the depths, Lord—Let your ears pay close attention to my request for mercy!" (Psalm 130:1). We must lift our voices up to God when forty mass shootings have been recorded in the US since the beginning of 2023 – a record number in such a short time. We raise our voices in prayer for increasingly vulnerable members of our communities who are immigrants and people of color, as they are tragically targeted by this national epidemic of gun violence.

Gun violence is a public health emergency. While some states have enacted stricter gun violence prevention laws, guns continue to be trafficked across states that tragically, continue to enact lax gun policies. We echo the voice of the Council of Bishops which condemned the idolatry of gun violence as posted in <https://www.umnews.org/-/media/UMC-Media/2022/09/01/20/35/council-of-bishops-letter-on-gun-violence-2022>.

The NFAAUM and AALM urge every United Methodist to lift their cry and raise their voices to end this national epidemic. We urge all United Methodists to contact their Senators to demand meaningful legislation to end this national scourge. As a matter of conscience, we advocate for a national ban on the sale of assault weapons and ask the 118 Congressional sessions to make this an urgent priority.

Rev. Scott Christy, President NFAAUM and AALM pastorscott@gmail.com



At 96, hymnal editor shares his story

By C. Michael Hawn

Jan. 13, 2023 | UM

The Rev. Carlton "Sam" Young has written a book about his long, fruitful career in church music, which includes editing The United Methodist Hymnal. Young titled his autobiography "I'll Sing On: My First 96 Years." Photo by Mike DuBose, UM News.

Nonagenarians are an integral part of our society. As I write this, news has broken about the deaths of legendary journalist Barbara Walters and Pope Benedict XVI at 93 and 95 years of age, respectively.

The Rev. Carlton R. "Sam" Young, thankfully still with us, is another nonagenarian, one with few peers among church musicians and theological educators. And now the 96-year-old Young, best known as editor of The United Methodist Hymnal, has gifted us with his autobiography — "I'll Sing On," a title taken from the final stanza of the hymn "What Wonderous Love Is This." The subtitle, "My First 96 Years," more than hints at the wit that underlies the book.

Few in church music bring Dr. Young's array of gifts — as composer, professor, editor, conductor, performer, scholar. His new book is for anyone who wants insight into the church and its music since 1960.

Those who have used Young's authoritative "Companion to The United Methodist Hymnal" (1993) will expect several qualities in his autobiography — exacting scholarship, honest evaluation of people and issues and delightful humor. All of these are brought to bear in "I'll Sing On."

The scores of composers, publishers, hymn writers, colleagues, scholars and former students mentioned in the book reveal a life full of relationships. Individuals are often given a paragraph or two, placing them and their gifts into the context of Young's life. "My grandparents served 40 years as missionaries in Brazil, and my parents also served almost 40 years," he said. "I grew up speaking Portuguese; in Mexico and Central America, it was Spanish, so I speak three languages including English."

Of particular note are those with whom he had decades of interaction, including hymn writers Shirley Erena Murray and Fred Kaan, composers and teachers Jane Marshall and Lloyd Pfautsch at Southern Methodist University, publisher George Shorney, Baptist composer and hymnologist William J. Reynolds, hymnology scholar Nicolas Temperley, and Bliss and Mildred Wiant, missionaries to China. Others with whom Young worked or collaborated at specific points receive equal appreciation, such as Abingdon editor and former student Gary Alan Smith and the late Page Thomas, director of the Wesley Collection at Bridwell Library (SMU).

The care with which Young presents those who have touched his life indicates a sensitivity and appreciation for others that sets a tone of gratitude rather than self-congratulatory citation of

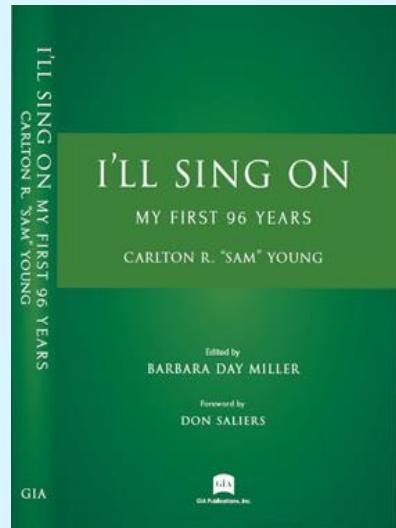
accomplishments.

Young's self-deprecating humor and wit punctuate the text throughout. An example: Early in his career, he learned that he was not in control of all aspects of a church choir, recounting a particular recalcitrant practice. "But the top pick of all the choir members' shenanigans was they would not assemble for the stated 7:30 Wednesday evening rehearsal until they had listened to 'The Lone Ranger,' 7:30-7:45, on their car radios. This meant rehearsals with music in hand seldom started before 7:55."

Sometimes he mixes wit with a modicum of sarcasm, such as in this observation: "It is axiomatic that forming worship spaces seldom results from local group expertise, but more likely from the hired opinions of architects of space and/or sound who are possessed by great ideas, have above average communication skills, and demonstrable egos. Paul Rudolph, architect, and Chick Holtkamp (1928-2018), organ builder, did not disappoint in any regard."

As an editor, Young prepared groundbreaking publications such as "Songbook for Saints and Sinners" (1971), "The Genesis Songbook" (1973) and the visionary "Ecumenical Praise" (1977). The United Methodist Hymnal (1989) introduced innovations that many hymnal editors emulated in the following decades, especially in the balance between its Methodist heritage and the ecumenical "hymnic explosion" of newer 1960s, 1970s and 1980s repertoire.

Additional innovations included the incorporation of sacramental services and other liturgies and, arguably, the broadest representation of congregational song from the world church of any North American hymnal.



Book cover image courtesy of GIA Publications Inc.

A topic that permeates this autobiography is Young's advocacy for African Americans and Black music. Living in Atlanta, Dallas and Nashville during and in the wake of the civil rights movement left a profound imprint. He recounts taking mixed-race Seminary Singers on tour to congregations in the South, making it clear that music-making for Young was both an artistic and ethical endeavor.

Young's love of jazz, reflected in compositions and performances as a bass player and pianist in the years following World War II, may have set the stage for his appreciation of cultural and stylistic diversity. Duke Ellington's "Come Sunday," first appearing in "Ecumenical Praise" and then The United Methodist Hymnal, became a favorite in many United Methodist congregations and gatherings. The liberal inclusion of African American spirituals and the hymns of Black Methodist pastor Charles Tindley in The United Methodist Hymnal and other publications were an indication of Young's affinity and advocacy for this music and the people it represented.

The author skillfully uses footnotes throughout the book to provide additional background on specific issues and persons without bogging down the readable flow of the narrative. For the reader deeply interested in church music, the footnotes are essential. A few of my favorites were his discussion of the origins of the term "Minister of Music" (n.2, p. 54), the rehearsal techniques of Westminster Choir College luminary John Finley Williamson (n. 14, p. 60), Atlanta Symphony conductor Robert Shaw (n. 19, p. 66) and the significance of the gospel song genre (n. 13, p. 85).

Though he deals with serious topics, Young does not take himself too seriously. Scattered throughout are references to positions or events for which he was “totally unqualified in music and education” and “eminently unqualified.” During his first position in Nashville, he notes, “Given the prospect of editing and publishing a revised Methodist hymnal without prior training or experience in either, especially the British and American Wesleyan hymnic traditions, one of my first acts was to assemble for my daily study and reflection a modest library on hymnology and worship.”

A thread throughout the book is Young’s partnership with Marjorie Lindner Young, his wife. Her care for their four children enabled him to travel extensively, including internationally, for his work in church music. This book is also a chronicle of family events and difficulties. Sam Young is especially vulnerable in his discussion of son Robert’s schizophrenia.

These days, Sam Young’s struggle with multiple myeloma, Marj’s hip replacements and her early-stage Alzheimer’s disease have resulted in lifestyle choices. They are blessed to receive support from their children. Robert’s residence in their four-story house — known as The Owl’s Nest, and now with an elevator — makes it possible for the couple to live independently.

This review cannot do justice to the nuance and rich resources in “I’ll Sing On.” Young enhances the narrative and even the extensive index with photographs, musical scores and other extras.

Suffice it to say that Dr. Young is always looking ahead. The conclusion offers reflections on the field of church music, several recommendations for the future of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada and special thanks to more than 50 people.

Young’s autobiography offers an essential perspective on developments in Protestant mainline church music within an ecumenical context. This volume includes wisdom and wit while tracing the life of one of the most influential church musicians of our time.

Hawn is the University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Church Music at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University.

More on the book

“I’ll Sing On: My First 96 Years,” the autobiography of the Rev. Carlton R. “Sam” Young, was edited by Barbara Day Miller, with a foreword by Don Saliers. The book is available for order from GIA Publications, Inc.

Read more about Young

UM News’ Sam Hodges interviewed the Rev. Carlton R. “Sam” Young in 2020 as he released a new collection of sheet music. Young said he hoped “Today I Live: Hymns and Songs of Remembrance and Hope” would provide new, fitting music for memorial services caused or delayed by COVID-19.

Popular hymns

The Rev. Carlton R. “Sam” Young composed the music and Shirley Erena Murray the text for the hymn “Star-Child.” Another popular hymn tune of Young’s, paired with a lyric by Brian Wren, is “This Is the Day of New Beginnings.”

Young’s music for the biblical benediction “The Lord Bless You and Keep You” also is available on YouTube.



The Black Church Matters: Envisioning the Beloved Community

BY REV. DR. MICHAEL BOWIE

25 JANUARY 2023



As we begin the month of February, the nation is prepared to celebrate Black History Month. It is an excellent opportunity to remind us that the Black church matters and that the work of the beloved community is as crucial today as it was in its origin.

The idea of having a time dedicated to Black history originated with Carter G. Woodson (1875-1950). It was of concern that black children did not learn about their ancestors' achievements in American schools in the early 1900s. In 1926, the first Negro History Week was announced in February to encourage Black Americans to become more interested in their history and heritage.



This week was so successful that in 1976, fifty years later, the idea was expanded from celebrating the contributions of Negros from one week to the entire month. Woodson said, "We should emphasize not Negro History but the Negro in history. We need not a history of selected races or nations but the history of the world void of national bias, race hate, and religious prejudice."

Years later, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a similar desire to address the ills plaguing America. In his first book, *Strive to Freedom*, Dr. King imagined the beloved community as a global vision in which all people can share in the earth's wealth. In the beloved community, poverty, hunger, and homelessness are not tolerated. Instead, an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood will replace racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry, and prejudice.

Friends, the beloved community is the answer to the vision raised by Carter G. Woodson. The beloved community could be the antidote to curing and closing the wealth gap, so there will no longer be the haves and have-nots.

Unfortunately, society is still inundated with white supremacy, voter suppression, mass incarceration, and other blatant injustices. However, the Black church has a significant role in making the beloved community a reality. The Black church has been the epicenter for healing, help, and hope for the least, last, and lost! The Black church has been the prophetic voice for marginalized and oppressed people who continue to rise above all injustices.

Dr. King once declared, "The local church is the hope for the world." The Black church matters today! Investing and planting beloved communities needs to be a priority. For this reason, Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century (SBC21) and Path 1 have established a covenant and are committed to providing innovative, cutting-edge, and relevant resources to strengthen the Black church. SBC21 is also committed to providing resources to educate and equip the local church to engage in restorative and social justice.

SBC21 will continue to empower young adults who will also play a vital role in seeing the beloved community become a reality. Our support in empowering young adults in our communities, churches, and HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) will shape our present and future leadership in making the beloved community a reality.

As we begin Black History Month, SBC21 believes that the entire denomination and even the nation are more vital when we strengthen the Black church. Amid so much uncertainty, chaos, and indifference, we need the Black church now more than ever. So, remember that the Black church still matters during Black History Month!

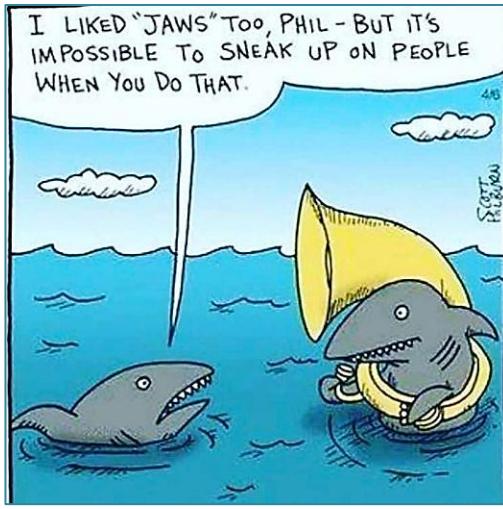
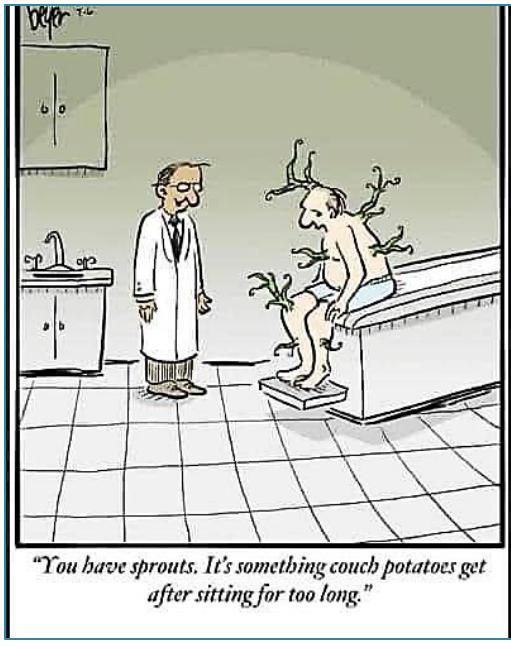
For more information on how you can get involved, email Rev. Patricia Pena, Director of Diversity, and Innovative Community Engagement at Path 1 at p pena@umcdiscipleship.org.

9. Why did Adam hide himself from the Lord? <i>Genesis 3:10</i>	10. Kill them instantly <i>Genesis 3:16-19</i>	11. He forced it to live on the ground and in the dust <i>Genesis 3:14</i>
1. Eden <i>Genesis 2:8</i>	2. The tree of knowledge of good and evil <i>Genesis 2:16-17</i>	3. The tree of knowledge of good and evil <i>Genesis 3:14</i>
4. They would become all-knowledgeable <i>Genesis 3:16-19</i>	5. A serpent <i>Genesis 3:1-6</i>	6. Lucifer <i>Genesis 1:20-23</i>
7. Partake of the forbidden fruit <i>Genesis 3:1-6</i>	8. He also transgressed against the Lord's commandment <i>Genesis 3:8</i>	9. Cherubim and a flaming sword <i>Genesis 3:22</i>
10. Woodson chose February as the month to honor black history because Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass were born in February. Woodson's initial concept in 1926 was for "Negro History Week" to be held near the birthday of Abraham Lincoln on February 12 and of Frederick Douglass on February 14. Black communities had celebrated those dates together since the late 19th century. Learn more about African American contributions to The United Methodist Church.	11. So that man couldn't obtain a means to live forever <i>Genesis 3:22</i>	12. Mother of all living <i>Genesis 3:20</i>
1. According to Wikipedia, Black History Month, also known as African-American History Month in the U.S., is an annual observance in Canada, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States at Kent State University organized the first month-long event. In 1976, President Gerald Ford recognized Black History Month during the U.S. Bicentennial celebration. He urged Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history".	13. They could know good from evil <i>Genesis 3:22</i>	14. So that man couldn't obtain a means to live forever <i>Genesis 3:22</i>
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3. The tree of knowledge of good and evil <i>Genesis 2:16-17</i>	17. Lucifer <i>Genesis 3:1-6</i>	
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Complete Answers: United Methodist Black History Quiz

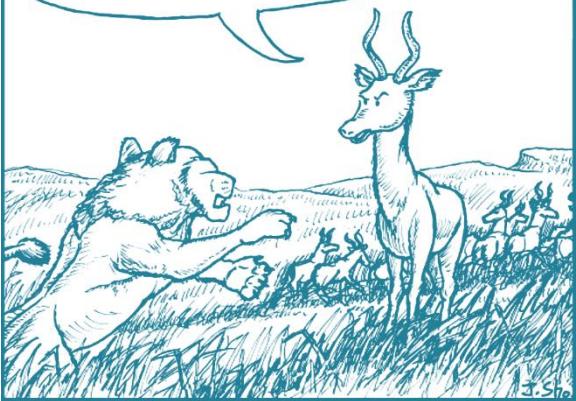
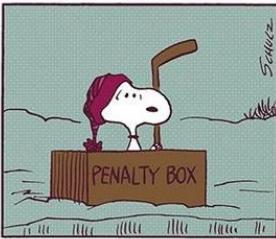
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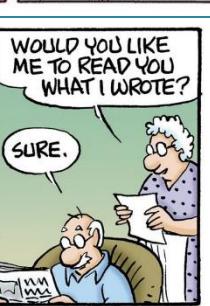
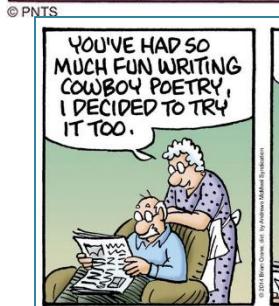


OOOHH, SO HERE COMES BIG MISTER PREDATOR.. SERIOUSLY? I'M LIKE, SO SCARED. I BETTER, LIKE, RUN AWAY AS FAST AS I CAN, OR WHATEVER.

jimsheehanhill.com © 2011



While old, sick, and weak animals remained targets, the lions most enjoyed culling the herd of its sarcastic teenagers.



Dear bill collectors,

I know I still owe you... but I've got some good news! I typed "Amen" on a Facebook post, and in 48 hours, I will get a TON of money.

So, when I get it, I will pay you.



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