

# LEGACIES

APRIL 2024

## Compelling Preaching Initiative, 1st clergy cohort retreat at Winthrop Rockefeller Institute



Clergy participants include (pictured from back row, left to right) Revs. Jacob Lynn, Jeremy Hopper, Daniel Thueson, Judy Rudd, Heather Rose, Abbey Maynard, Chase Green Front row: Jay Clark, Miranda Hornsby, Ray Wheeler, Melanie Tubbs, and Terry Gosnell.

The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas' Compelling Preaching Initiative began its program through a "Practice of Preaching Retreat" with the first clergy cohort on Feb. 9-12, 2024, at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain. The Initiative, funded through a grant from Lily Endowment, Inc., aims to foster and support preaching that inspires, encourages, and guides people to come to know and love God and to live out their Christian faith more fully.

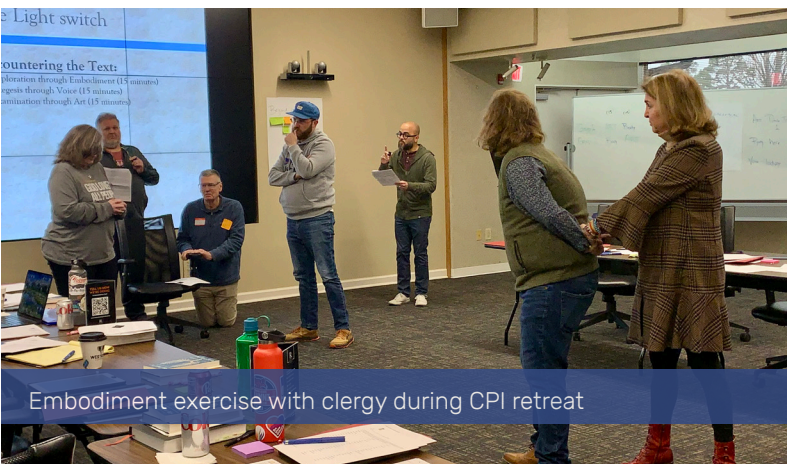
"We seek to build the capacity for bold, innovative preaching among Arkansas United Methodist clergy," said Rev. J.J. Whitney, MFA's Compelling Preaching Initiative Project Director.



Clergy workshop at Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain

The statewide five-year program open to clergy members of the Arkansas United Methodist Conference. The weekend gave clergy in this first cohort an opportunity to enhance preaching skills through capacity building activities.

"We were grateful to have the gifted leadership of Christine Parton Burkett from Duke Divinity School and Rev. Juan Carlos Huertas who will serve as Preaching Coach for the next two years," said Whitney. "We participated in activities designed to expand preaching skills; how to begin and end sermons, creating an arc in sermon writing, embodying the scripture to listen closely to the Word, and focusing on delivery work in timing, pitch, and pace."



Embodiment exercise with clergy during CPI retreat

Other aspects of the retreat included worship with holy communion, a hike to the Petit Jean Mountain overlook, and intentional moments for rest.

Rev. David Freeman, Senior Pastor at First UMC, Little Rock, serves as Retreat Coordinator for CPI

# News from Northwest Arkansas

The first few months of 2024 have been quite busy up in Northwest Arkansas! Like much of the state, we have enjoyed snow, ice, rain, sleet, lightning storms, and 80-degree weather! Regardless of this crazy weather...great things are happening in Northwest Arkansas.

OUT  
& ABOUT  
WITH  
AMY

Amy Anderson  
Northwest Arkansas  
Development Officer



In January, the Foundation hosted Financial Literacy for Women at First United Methodist Church in Downtown Rogers. Sarah Catherine Gutierrez, Founder, Partner, and CEO of Aptus Financial, engaged those in attendance in transform their relationship with money. Attendees walked away with the confidence to look at money differently, create a budget that allowed them to not only have money to cover their current financial obligations, but to save for the future and ways to grow those savings through investments. That afternoon, I had the privilege to visit with the group about estate planning and legacy gifts. It was a fantastic workshop and one that I hope we will continue to offer! [aptusfinancial.com](http://aptusfinancial.com)



In February, the Foundation was happy to once again be a sponsor at Soup Sunday NWA, which benefits Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families (AACF). Bishops Club members and guests joined the nearly 1,000 in attendance to taste (and then vote on their favorite) soups from 29 restaurants and catering businesses in Northwest Arkansas. In addition to raising \$220,000 for AACF, 786 pounds of canned goods were collected and then donated to the NWA Food Bank. [aradvocates.org](http://aradvocates.org)



In March, the Foundation was honored to be the Ribbon Cutting sponsor for the opening of the Diaper Collective of NWA Warehouse. Since 2020, they have distributed 689,000 diapers! But, the sad reality is that they are only able to serve 5.6% of the NWA community. By expanding into this warehouse, Family Network, Inc. and the Diaper Collective of NWA are able to store three times the amount of diapers to distribute out into the community.



The Diaper Collective is the only nationally affiliated diaper bank in the state of Arkansas and currently serves Benton, Washington, and Madison counties. [familynetworknwa.com/diapercollective](http://familynetworknwa.com/diapercollective)

For the last few years, the Foundation sends altar flowers to its church clients that have made at least one deposit into their account over the previous year. We appreciate the continued partnership with these churches and this is just a small token of our gratitude. Goddard UMC in Fort Smith had a different spin on it this year. Instead of providing altar flowers for a Sunday, the decided to have 75 carnations delivered on Valentine's Day that just happened to fall on the day its food pantry was open. So, when people came to receive their food, they also received a flower or two. We heard back from Goddard that it was so well received and brightened everyone's day.

# UPCOMING FOUNDATION EVENTS



## Grant Opportunities for Arkansas United Methodist Churches

Online Conversation  
Thursday, May 2, 2024 @ 10am CST



## INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

Lunch: 11:30 am  
Program: 12:00 - 3:30 pm



## ARKANSAS METHODIST LAWYERS CONFERENCE

Thursday, September 19, 2024



[methodistfoundationAR.org](http://methodistfoundationAR.org)

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# Foundation long-time Board member Rogers passes at 101



**Josephine Raye Jackson Rogers**, 101, died peacefully at her Little Rock home surrounded by family on February 7, 2024. Rogers was a Methodist Foundation for Arkansas' Board of Directors member, joining originally in 1984 and serving multiple terms until retiring in 2014.

A First United Methodist Church member in Batesville since 1949, Raye and her husband Doyle, Sr., were youth counselors for many years.

She taught Sunday school, was active in United Methodist Women, and was co-chair of the Membership and Evangelism Committee.

While serving as on the Foundation Board, Rogers was a member of the Grant Committee. "I'm especially glad we support causes like Camp Aldersgate and Mount Eagle Conference Center that provide places of rest and revitalization for people from throughout the state," she said in a past interview.

In addition to her work with The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas, Rogers was a founding member of the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) and the Advisory Board for the UAMS Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging.

"It is essential to help churches and Methodist institutions in Arkansas beyond our local church," she said. "One of my favorite Foundation projects is the Seminary Scholarships that help young ministers pay for their educations."

In addition to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock, memorials for Rogers may be sent to First United Methodist Church, 615 E. Main Street, Batesville, Ark. 72501.



Past Foundation Board President Judge Beth Deere and Rogers



Madam Secretary Hillary Clinton (left), Foundation then-President Jim Argue, and Rogers at the 1989 Bishops' Club Luncheon

## Compelling Preaching Initiative [continued from cover](#)

said "the spiritual practice of sabbath is critical to the ongoing work of the weekly preacher by allowing space to listen, reflect, and be inspired. Compelling preaching requires a preacher whose soul has space to rest and be nourished."

The clergy cohort also spent time during the retreat planning the "Innovation in Preaching Pilgrimages" that will take place during the summer. Clergy will meet with practitioners across a variety of settings to focus on the areas of storytelling, delivery, and creativity. This 1st cohort will divide into small groups of four to attend the Disney Imagination Campus in Los Angeles, the Broadway Workshop in New York City, and Improv classes in NYC.

If you are a clergy member interested in joining the upcoming cohort of the Compelling Preaching Initiative, contact Rev. J.J. Whitney at [jwhitney@methodistfoundationAR.org](mailto:jwhitney@methodistfoundationAR.org) or visit [methodistfoundationAR.org](http://methodistfoundationAR.org).

# Walking the Mourner's Path Grant Aimed at Facilitators

Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church in Little Rock received a \$10,000 grant from the Foundation for statewide facilitator training of United Methodist clergy and laity in the Walking the Mourner's Path grief program. Nineteen United Methodist clergy and laity facilitators were trained.



Participants listen during Walking the Mourner's Path facilitator training at Pulaski Heights UMC in Little Rock.

The training was provided via Zoom and in person at PHUMC on Thursday, February 9, and Friday, February 10, 2024. The facilitators trained in this program agreed to offer it to their local church members and their respective community members who have experienced a death.

Walking the Mourner's Path is an in-person grief group for anyone who has suffered a significant loss and would like to process it in a group setting. In the 8-week program mourners learn ways to honor their loved ones, seek spiritual direction, and discover God's promise of comfort in the community.

Does your church have a project or program in need of funding? Visit the Foundation's website for more information about our thriving grant program and how to apply. [methodistfoundationAR.org/grants](https://methodistfoundationAR.org/grants)

## FOUNDATION EVENTS



Robinson Social Justice Luncheon at Highland Valley UMC, LR



The Foundation host the UA Little Rock Wesley Drum Circle



Rev. Mackey Yokem and Cathy Hall address visitors



Philander Smith University Living Legends 2024 Honoree Dinner



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CLERGY MISSION TRIP

# EPWORTH BY THE SEA

October 14-19, 2024



with The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas

ST. SIMONS, GA

Calling all Methodist clergy members! Spend a week with The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas at [Epworth by the Sea](#), located on St. Simons Island, Georgia. The United Methodist Retreat Center is a place for conference, study, renewal, and service.

There are more than 20 different service opportunities offered by Epworth. While we will not be able to participate in all the service opportunities, we do hope we will do some work with children, environmental clean-up projects and light maintenance projects such as painting and trail cleaning.

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