

# Experience Lake Junaluska

## A GLIMPSE INSIDE ...

- Lake Junaluska Singers *Memories of Christmas* CD, DVD
- Caring for Creation offers resources to green ministries
- Biblical Garden a place of spiritual reflection, education
- Ministry Summit reinforces 'It's not about us.'
- Appalachian Christmas, an Advent tradition
- Playwright commemorates Centennial Celebration

[www.lakejunaluska.com](http://www.lakejunaluska.com) 800-222-4930

**Experience**  
Lake Junaluska  
Conference & Retreat Center  
799 N. Lakeshore Dr.  
Lake Junaluska, NC 28745

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
Charlotte, NC  
Permit #3307



[www.lakejunaluska.com](http://www.lakejunaluska.com) 828-452-2881

# Experience Lake Junaluska

Fall & Winter 2011

## Everyone has a story



Jack Ewing, Lake Junaluska executive director

The mission of Lake Junaluska is to be a place of Christian hospitality where lives are transformed through renewal of soul, mind, and body. Do you have a story of transformation that you experienced at Lake Junaluska that would be worthy of passing on to your children, grandchildren, friends, or even strangers? As we prepare to celebrate the centennial anniversary of Lake Junaluska in 2013, we will be collecting stories of transformation to be a part of the history and archives of this amazing place.

I invite you to jot down some of your stories that you can share with us, and be sure to describe where you were so we can organize these stories around specific places on the grounds. Maybe it was a worship experience in Stuart Auditorium, a solitary time of reflection at the Cross or at Inspiration Point, or sitting on a bench overlooking the lake. Over this year I have heard numerous stories about transformative experiences that occurred at Lake Junaluska. Each one reaffirms the fulfillment of our mission statement. I look forward to reading or hearing your stories.

What has happened here in the past is very important, but we also know how essential it is for us to prepare for a very bright future. By the time you read this, we will have presented the report of the Strategic Planning Task Force to the board of directors on October 20, 2011. The task force has looked carefully at where we are, how we got here, and where we are going. The vision for the future is one that clearly embraces the values and many of the traditions of the past and also embraces changes that will promote our mission of being a place of transformation in effective 21st-century ways. Some highlights of that vision are:

- Fabulous Christian hospitality
- Programming that is attractive to younger persons, including children, youth, and their parents
- Strengthened relationships with the United Methodist Church, including its local congregations
- Tapping into markets that include other Christian denominations and nonprofit organizations
- Providing great value in all of the services that we offer, including lodging, food, and programming
- Strengthening our commitment to protecting and preserving the environment, especially the lake, and making our facilities and grounds more environmentally friendly.

I continue to believe that the future of Lake Junaluska is very bright even in these changing and challenging times. We want to make sure that Lake Junaluska is a place of transformation for the next 100 years. Thank you in advance for helping us achieve that vision.

## Appalachian Christmas, an Advent tradition



The 2011 Appalachian Christmas includes three unique concert experiences featuring the Lake Junaluska Singers, David Holt, and the children's choral group Voices in the Laurel.

For 21 years, Ann Seddon and members of Greene Memorial United Methodist Church in Roanoke, VA, have journeyed to Lake Junaluska to celebrate the Christmas season. For Seddon and her friends, the winter trips to Lake Junaluska are times to enjoy the beauty of the mountains and celebrate Christmas traditions.

Since 2000, the Lake Junaluska Singers and other artists and comedians, such as the Cockman Family, Ricky Skaggs, and Doc Watson, have provided seasonal entertainment, shining on the stage of Stuart Auditorium. Seddon and her church group have celebrated Appalachian Christmas every year since it first began.

"We always stay at the Lambuth Inn because of the beautiful decorations there," said Seddon. "We learned to book our stay early so we could stay there and enjoy them."

For Seddon and members of Greene Memorial UMC, Appalachian Christmas at Lake Junaluska is a time to celebrate established traditions.

"We have established a lot of our own traditions during our visits. While we're here, we take a trip to downtown Waynesville and spend the morning shopping. It's a neat little place. Another tradition we have is attending the early service at Long's Chapel on Sunday morning before we head home."

The 11th annual Appalachian Christmas, December 9-11, will be unlike any previous edition, providing three unique concert experiences featuring the Lake Junaluska Singers, Grammy Award-winner David Holt, and the children's choir Voices in the Laurel, in addition to the annual Christmas craft show and a special Sunday worship service opportunity.

"For my church group, this is one of our major Advent activities," Seddon explained. "There are about eight of us in our group who have come every year. It makes Christmas for us. We just love the feel of Lake Junaluska, the decorations, and the Singers concerts, of course."

Appalachian Christmas lodging and meal packages are available. For a detailed schedule of activities and additional information, visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/christmas](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/christmas) or call 800-222-4930.

## Ministry with Young People fosters growth experiences



MYP staffers Renea Marshall, left, and Katie Flack pose for a picture before leading the annual volleyball tournament during SURGE into Missions 2011.

Katie Flack has experienced Lake Junaluska in a way that not many others have—as a youth attending Ministry with Young People (MYP) events, as a chaperone for her church's youth group, and finally as a MYP staff person. Having experienced all sides of Lake Junaluska's youth retreats, Flack brings a unique perspective to planning this winter's INFUSE Ski Retreats with fellow MYP staff.

"I always wanted to be a staffer at Lake Junaluska," Flack said. "I have been at both summer and winter events, and I saw the staff and how enthusiastic they were. I wanted to be one of those people. When I was a youth, it was really easy to overlook all the hard work people put into the experience. You go, and the music is great and the speakers are awesome and you have all these activities. When I was on the staff side, I had to decide what to put into worship and I thought about what I wanted when I was a kid. It was easier to put things into perspective after having experienced them."

For three summers and three winters, Flack attended MYP programs with her youth group, Simpsonville United Methodist Church, SC. In 2010, she served as a chaperone during their INFUSE retreat, when Simpsonville UMC volunteered at Haywood Street Congregation in Asheville, NC.

"Volunteering at Haywood Street Congregation was really cool. We went on what is called the Invisible Box tour, which shows how homeless people are excluded in the city, as well as a few places that help the homeless," explained Flack. "I've been back there a few times, dropping off donations and eating meals with people. At the meals, anybody is welcome. (continued on page 3)

## Caring for Creation offers resources for starting green ministries



Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of the Mississippi Annual Conference shared a powerful sermon at Caring for Creation 2011 on our connection to the Earth and our call as Christians to care for creation. In her left hand is a small container of dirt from the Santuario de Chimayo mission church in New Mexico.

For the past two years, Betty Brandt of St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, IN, has journeyed to Lake Junaluska to learn at Lake Junaluska's annual Caring for Creation. As the leader of her church's green ministry, Brandt has sought opportunities to more efficiently promote an environmental consciousness in the church since St. Luke's UMC began its green ministry in 2007.

"I was very pleased to be able to meet other people and hear what they're doing," explained Brandt. "It was great to pick up national information we wouldn't necessarily know about in Indianapolis. We don't have any program like Caring here. It's an asset for us to be able to be here."

For many churches, being environmentally conscious isn't a new concept. Congregations across the United States have been actively seeking to educate and to promote a green ministry for years. Like Brandt, many churches promote green programs within their churches.

"We encourage other churches to start green ministries," said Brandt, who also serves as the secretary and treasurer of a multi-denominational coalition known as the Indianapolis Green Congregations. "Rebekah Simon-Peter's book, *7 Steps to Green Your Church*, was a great resource I got at Caring for Creation this year. I appreciated hearing from her and bringing that knowledge back with me. It was just what I needed to be able to help other congregations get on board."

During the 2011 Caring for Creation, participants were fully immersed in different aspects of the green experience. Opportunities included helping plant trees and touring a solar farm, an environmentally friendly home, and a restaurant oil-to-biodiesel facility.

"I loved the tours that we went on, and I bought one of the water-saving kits available," continued Brandt. "I installed the kit in my toilet and my shower. (At St. Luke's UMC) we have talked about doing that water-saving project. There were a number of really good ideas we've talked about doing from the conference."

The 2012 Caring for Creation experience will offer further opportunities to explore and learn, including a hydroelectric plant tour, a trip to Max Patch and the Appalachian Trail, a chance to spend 48 hours in a sustainable community, and a variety of plenary sessions and workshops led by persons such as Bill McKibben, author and founder of the grassroots climate campaign 350.org.

"I think every congregation should have a green ministry because I think it is a crucial part of who we are as Christians to care for creation. It has been sadly neglected in churches way too long," concluded Brandt. "I'm really happy to see congregations get on board."

Advance registration for 2012 Caring for Creation is available. Visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/caring-for-creation](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/caring-for-creation).

## Confirmation retreats are opportunities for affirmation



"It's nice to take the kids somewhere that includes Methodist programming, but that is still something they are going to be able to relate to," comments Rev. Asa Hendrickson, who brings her confirmands from First UMC in Maryville, TN.

Confirmation is a formative experience where youth further explore God's purpose for their lives. Throughout the year, youth groups gather at Lake Junaluska for confirmation retreat experiences, whether those sponsored by their individual church, the Intentional Growth Center (IGC) at Lake Junaluska, or the Foundation for Christian Formation (FCF).

Rev. Asa Hendrickson, director of youth ministries at First United Methodist Church in Maryville, TN, has brought her youth to IGC confirmation retreats at Lake Junaluska for two years, although her church has attended for many more years.

"I think the speakers are always great with anything Lake Junaluska does," explained Hendrickson. "I really appreciate the work that Lake Junaluska puts into all of its programming. The way the staff cares for the kids and their leaders is great."

Similarly, each February since 1998 Rev. Eric Bronkala has brought confirmands from Middlebrook Pike United Methodist Church, in Knoxville, TN, to Lake Junaluska to experience their own confirmation retreats.

"Coming to Lake Junaluska is a wonderful centerpiece in what we do in a four-month span of time with our confirmands," Bronkala reflected. "It helps to be on the campus to validate what we learn about John Wesley and to visit the World Methodist Museum and gardens."

Combining worship, workshops, and opportunities to explore the heritage of the World Methodist Museum and SEJ Heritage Center, confirmation retreats reaffirm the promise to support the church with prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.

For more information about scheduled confirmation retreats at Lake Junaluska, visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/confirmation](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/confirmation). Information regarding FCF confirmation retreats can be found at [www.fcconfirm.net](http://www.fcconfirm.net). Confirmation groups interested in hosting their next confirmation retreat at Lake Junaluska should call 828-454-6726.

## Lake Junaluska Annual Fund impacts lives



This past summer, more than 50,000 youth and adults experienced God's transforming love through Jesus Christ during our summer camps, conferences, retreats, and special events. Lake Junaluska has been creating similar experiences for 98 years and has impacted the lives of millions of people.

These transformational experiences would not have been possible without the support we have received from thousands of individuals who make financial contributions to the future of Lake Junaluska. Each gift to Lake Junaluska is used directly to support our ministry and place of Christian hospitality.

"It's nice to take the kids somewhere that includes Methodist programming, but that is still something they are going to be able to relate to," continued Hendrickson. "Our group always appreciates the opportunity to visit the museums and walk through the history of Methodism. It helps our unique Methodist heritage come alive for confirmands."

"Our youth often talk about their experience at Lake Junaluska as they get older," said Bronkala. "We are lucky that Lake Junaluska is close to us, but far away enough from home that the confirmands can be truly focused on their faith and heritage that resonates from this area."

A common rite of passage at many confirmation retreats at Lake Junaluska is the receiving of the stoles. Youth record highlights of their faith through scriptures and images on stoles that are later consecrated and given to them as a reminder of their continuing faith journey.

"I believe the time the youth make their stoles is really important because it is a time for them to look at themselves and see who God has created them to be," concluded Hendrickson. "The confirmation programming is really effective and has meaningful worship."

"In the past, our confirmands have volunteered to work in the gardens at Lake Junaluska as a service project," Bronkala commented. "Lake Junaluska is steeped in Methodism, and the different aspects of its history and the mountain settings add to the meaningfulness of each confirmation weekend."

Donations to the Lake Junaluska Annual Fund are unrestricted gifts and are used for a broad range of purposes, including subsidizing the cost of educational programs, providing scholarships, renovating lodging rooms and meeting spaces, as well as maintaining and creating new recreational opportunities.

When you donate to Lake Junaluska, you join a group of like-minded individuals who believe in a bright future for Lake Junaluska. Lake Junaluska Assembly, Inc., is a nonprofit organization. Your donations are considered tax-deductible contributions. You can make donations by mail, online, and in person.

Mail your donation to:  
Lake Junaluska Annual Fund  
PO Box 67  
Lake Junaluska, NC 28745

Make a donation online at  
[www.lakejunaluska.com/donate](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/donate)

Or call us at 828-452-2881, ext. 680.

## Biblical Garden a place of spiritual reflection, education

Since before the Betha Welcome Center was opened in 2007, Roddy Ray and Sarah Tippett shared a dream—to establish a Biblical garden at Lake Junaluska. Nearly four years later, the Lake Junaluska Biblical Garden is becoming a reality.



With assistance from the Lake Junaluska landscaping crew, children who attended the summer day camp learned about the new garden as they planted fruit and vegetables.

"The Biblical Garden will serve as a place of spiritual reference and invitation, offering to all a place of reflection, meditation, and education," explained Ray, who is director of landscaping and grounds at Lake Junaluska. "It began to be a reality in 2009 when we first went to the Associates with our proposal and they donated the initial funds that established the garden. The Associates, the Tuscola Garden Club, and other donors have been instrumental in making the garden a reality."

The Biblical Garden incorporates plants that both are included in the Bible and that are representative of those mentioned because of the limitations of the climate and soil of Lake Junaluska. Each plant in the garden emulates those from Biblical times.

"The garden, which was designed by Lake Junaluska resident Margaret McCleskey, is going to be an ongoing project," said Tippett, head of the Biblical Garden Committee. "Right now we are focusing on having the garden flourishing for the Centennial Celebration in 2013."

And now a new generation is getting involved. During the 2011 summer season, children from the children's day camp at Lake Junaluska helped plant beans, fruit, and other plants in the garden. Many returned with their families to see the plants' progress.

"We hope in the future to share our fortune of fruits and vegetables from the Biblical Garden with others," continued Ray. "Next year, the children from day camp will once again have the opportunity to plant and harvest the fruits of their labor to share with others."

In the future, the garden will include markers with a scriptural reference in addition to identifying the plant being viewed, along with benches for rest and reflection, and an arbor for grapes and other vines.

"We want to invite people into the garden," concluded Tippett. "We are working to ensure that each plant in the garden is representative of our Biblical heritage. The garden will be a significant asset and resource for the hundreds of confirmands and youth who attend retreats at Lake Junaluska."

For more information on how you can contribute to the Biblical Garden, contact Lake Junaluska's Development Office at 828-454-6680.

## Junaluska Associates honor member, plan for future — by Tita Parham\*



Betty Jo Crocker offers her thanks for the honor of being named the 2011 Chief Junaluskan on August 6 during the Lake Junaluska Associates Weekend. Photo by Tita Parham.

Not many people today spend decades working or volunteering for one organization. Betty Jo Crocker has.

She worked for 30 years at Lake Junaluska Assembly as secretary to the executive director and for 25 years as volunteer secretary for the Lake Junaluska Associates, a group whose members support the mission and ministry of Lake Junaluska financially and by creating awareness about Lake Junaluska. Crocker has been a member since 1987.

She hasn't done it all because she had to, but because she loved it. "It's a great place," she said. "I've been associated with a lot of people. I enjoy coming here."

For her dedication and years of faithful service, Crocker received the 2011 Chief Junaluska Award on August 6 during the annual Associates Weekend.

"I don't really believe I know the person that these gentlemen introduced a few minutes ago," Crocker said after receiving the award from two of her former bosses, Dr. Reggie Ponder and Gordon Goodgame. "But I have enjoyed very much my association with them and with all the people I worked for, as well as with all of you. It's been a joy, and about all I can say now is thank you, thank you."

Crocker's love of Lake Junaluska began nearly eight decades ago when her family moved to the Waynesville area. She became a member at First Methodist Church in Waynesville as a teenager and has been a faithful United Methodist ever since, serving as a teacher and an active member of her Sunday school class.

Crocker joined the staff at Lake Junaluska Assembly in 1969 and retired in 1999.

"Even after she retired she was always doing things around here," said the Rev. Dr. Ernie Porter, the Associates' president. "Everyone knows Betty Jo. She just naturally loves this place. She's been a goodwill ambassador for the Lake, and that's what it's all about."

Crocker is not alone in her support of Lake Junaluska. More than 800 people are Associates. They give at various membership levels and they are also charged with sharing the Lake Junaluska experience throughout the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church, enhancing and promoting the programs and outreach of Lake Junaluska Assembly, and helping improve and beautify the grounds and facilities.

Since 1968 the Associates have contributed more than \$3.2 million toward those goals. The group has funded construction of the Turbeville pedestrian bridge, restored the amphitheater, reconstructed the rose walk along North Lakeshore Drive, and paved and improved the walking trail around the lake. The group also provides scholarships for first-time visitors.

Since last summer the Associates have made improvements to Stuart Circle and the native garden, refinished the shuffleboard courts, and funded the beginning of a Biblical garden at Betha Welcome Center.



(continued from page 1) Volunteers and people from all kinds of churches attend the meals and Wednesday worship. You could see anybody there."

As a youth, Flack and her friends always looked forward to their visits to Lake Junaluska.

"My favorite thing, whether we came in the winter or summer, was how it was a great place to get away from the everyday. Just being in the mountains and at Lake Junaluska was exciting to me. My friends and I looked forward to coming. The programming was great, but we also looked forward to just being there," continued Flack. "Lake Junaluska is a beautiful place and has beautiful people. I love it a lot."

Flack and her fellow MYP staffers are busy preparing for the INFUSE winter ski retreats, which kick off December 29, 2011.

"If you come, you will grow in your relationship with God, but also have fun while you're doing it," Flack concluded. "You go out and do things you haven't done before, and get to go out of your comfort zone for a little bit. I think the fellowship we get among the staff and also with the kids is inspiring. It's rewarding to be able to get to know so many people from different situations."

For more information about INFUSE Ski Retreats, visit [www.myp.lakejunaluska.com](http://www.myp.lakejunaluska.com).

"Right now, the priority is to think of something that would be significant for the centennial," said Dr. Frank Stith, chairman of the group's projects committee. Lake Junaluska Assembly will celebrate 100 years of ministry in 2013. The Associates are beginning now to develop a project for that celebration. One idea suggested at the group's board meeting August 5 was completing the walking trail around a part of the lake where walkers must now walk in the street or on the grass, an estimated \$60,000 to \$90,000 undertaking.

The group's charge, Stith said, is beautification of Lake Junaluska, but members are just as committed to hospitality. Stith said the walking path around the lake "enhances the hospitality because it's open to anybody."

"This is not a gated community," he said. "We have people who come from all over the county who walk around the lake."

Working with the Assembly's board of directors and executive director, Dr. Jack Ewing, is also a priority.

"We want to support projects they deem important," Stith said. "(We're) trying to work with them within the framework of the vision that is being developed by the board of directors."

Ewing says he is grateful for what the Associates have already done and plan to do.

"I want to thank you for your work in the past," Ewing said at the Associates board meeting. "We've done really, really well, but we're going to do a whole lot better, and we'll invite everybody to reach a little higher to really help us to fulfill the mission of Lake Junaluska, which has been the same for 98 years—a place of Christian hospitality where lives are transformed through renewal of soul, mind, and body."

\* Parham is a freelance writer and editor in Apopka, FL.

Information about the Associates and how to become a member is available at [www.lakejunaluska.com/associates/](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/associates/).

# Experience fellowship, create lasting memories at Lake Junaluska



## Lake Junaluska

### Conference & Retreat Center

*The mission of Lake Junaluska is to be a place of*

*Christian hospitality where lives are transformed through renewal of soul, mind and body.*



Lake Junaluska Singer Brandon Little captivates the crowd and fellow singer Melodie Dale with his vocal prowess during the Associates Weekend concert.



Fall at Lake Junaluska is coming soon this year, and the colors promise to be as spectacular as those pictured above.



Rev. Roger Dowdy and Rev. Carolyn Poling of Lake Junaluska, along with Rev. Christi Huskison of First Baptist Church, Waynesville; Rev. Sandy Giles of First UMC, Waynesville; and other local pastors led the opening processional of the Easter Vigil Service during the 2011 Easter celebrations.



[www.lakejunaluska.com](http://www.lakejunaluska.com) • 828-452-2881

## Upcoming Events

- 11/10 - 12 African-American Music and Worship Explo
- 11/13 - 15 Lake Junaluska Peace Conference
- 11/29 - 12/02 Christmas at Lambuth 2011
- 12/2 - 4 Native American Social Justice
- 12/9 - 11 Appalachian Christmas
- 12/16 - 18 SEJ Student Movement Retreat
- 12/29 - 1/1 Youth INFUSE Ski I: New Year's Weekend
- 1/6 - 8 Youth INFUSE Ski II
- 1/13 - 16 Youth INFUSE Ski III: MLK, Jr. Weekend
- 1/17 - 20 Cabinet Consultation at St. Simons, GA
- 1/27 - 29 Youth INFUSE Ski IV
- 2/3 - 5 Youth INFUSE Ski V
- 2/10 - 12 Youth INFUSE Ski VI
- 2/17 - 20 Youth INFUSE Ski VII: President's Day Weekend
- 2/24 - 26 Native American Leadership Retreat
- 3/9 - 11 Confirmation Retreat 1, 2012
- 3/15 - 18 Caring for Creation
- 3/16 - 18 Confirmation Retreat 2, 2012
- 3/18 - 23 Appalachian Music, Cherokee, Scots-Irish 2012
- 3/23 - 25 Confirmation Retreat 3, 2012
- 3/23 - 25 Ebony Youth Retreat
- 3/25 - 30 Mountain Stories and Ballads, Appalachian Literature, and Mark Twain
- 3/30 - 4/1 Native American Lay Speaker Training
- 4/6 - 8 Easter at Lake Junaluska
- 4/13 - 15 Confirmation Retreat 4, 2012
- 4/15 - 20 Culture of the Southern Appalachians: Life and Times of Teddy Roosevelt, and Men of the 20th Century 2012
- 4/16 - 18 African-American Clergy Leadership
- 4/29 - 30 Civil War: The Common Soldier, World War II: The Good War, and Women in Film 2012

For more information about an event, visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/calendar.aspx](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/calendar.aspx).



Robert and Pat Fulbright worship during the Easter Vigil First Liturgy in Memorial Chapel.



Helen Rhiner and J.P. Holtz of the Wisconsin United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) strip wood from the old Lake Junaluska apartments during their recent mission trip. The materials were donated to Waynesville's Habitat for Humanity.



Rev. Dr. Donna Thompson, associate pastor of Solid Rock UMC, NC, discusses multiculturalism with Rev. Carol Goehring, executive director of Connectional Ministries for the North Carolina Conference.



Youth joined Rev. Olu Brown on stage during the INFUSE ski retreat on Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend to learn how to be transformed by the renewing of their minds.



Aynor United Methodist Church poses on a snowy day at Lake Junaluska during their 2011 INFUSE ski retreat.



Remove center spread to post on your bulletin board

## Ministry Summit reinforces 'It's not about us.'

— by Tita Parham \*



The Rev. Dr. Lovett Weems reminds participants that clergy must pose the right questions and "ask them over and over and over" as a way to help members let go of ministries that are dying so they can embrace ones that, instead, meet community needs. Photo by Tita Parham.

The sky is a brilliant blue, unbroken by clouds. The ocean is the only view. People are laughing, relaxing, doing whatever they choose. They don't have a care in the world.

Sounds like heaven, but not much like church. Yet, that's what the Rev. Mike Slaughter said many churches are like—cruise ships catering to every want and whim.

Slaughter is lead pastor at Ginghamburg United Methodist Church, a 144-year-old ministry in Tipp City, OH, that has 4,500 active participants on its campus each week. He also travels globally to equip leaders and churches for mission over "mortal."

Slaughter and the Rev. Dr. Lovett Weems, director of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC, were the key speakers at the Ministry Summit, July 31 – August 2, at Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center.

Under the theme "Leading in a New Day," 84 clergy and laity gathered to learn how they can more effectively lead their churches in making disciples of Jesus Christ in a context that is constantly changing.

### Outward, not inward

Slaughter said churches must abandon the cruise ship model of ministry and become mission outposts. Cruise ships are decadent, extravagant, and overstaffed, with guests who expect to be pampered and served.

Mission outposts, rather, are "driven by the unpaid servant" who wants to serve, not be served, Slaughter said. They network and create partnerships to meet community needs, and their customers are often poor. In a mission outpost, leaders equip people "to go out into the world," he said. "It's not how we get people into the church. It's how we get church into the world."

Weems reinforced that need for an outward focus during

his sessions. Instead of starting a program or worship service and then announcing it, he said, leaders must first ask how that ministry will meet people's needs. That means finding out as much as possible about them—their ages, values, and interests.

"It's not about you," Weems declared. "It's about the people God's given you."

That concept resonated with the Rev. Scott Eford, a 42-year-old pastor serving Wesley Memorial and Edisto Island United Methodist churches in Hollywood, SC.

He said he will encourage members of his churches to determine "the needs of the community and what it means to be a servant church, instead of a church that's just trying to survive."

The Rev. Brian Germano, 45, agreed. "What was reaffirmed for me was the importance of the church to be connected in the community and being externally focused, rather than internally focused."

Germano is lead pastor at East Cobb United Methodist Church, a 139-year-old church in Marietta, GA. He said he will remind members that the church needs to be "re-engaged in the community ... so that we can actually reflect the Kingdom of God in the lives of people and help other people discover that for themselves."

The Rev. Patty Frick, pastor at Rockwalkin United Methodist Church in Hebron, MD, said one key message she heard was "it's not about numbers; it's about mission."

### Things aren't the way they used to be

One reason churches are struggling, Weems contended, is that the culture has changed and the assumptions upon which churches built their ministries are no longer accurate.

"The world that we're in and the context we're functioning in is very different. The themes that used to bring the people to the church now don't."

Weems asserted one inaccurate assumption many churches have is the need for more families with young children. Yet today, only 22 percent of households have married couples with children living at home, he said.

Cultural challenges include the changing definition of family, couples living together but not getting married, an expectation of choice, and more people participating at church without becoming members.

Another factor Weems cites is "disruptive technologies"—practices that appeal to one generation, but not successive ones.

Disruptive technologies that gave rise to a strong Methodist movement were field preaching and small groups, Weems remarked. The Church of England could not compete because it had defined itself in a way that was entirely different from the practices of the early Methodists.

For many mainline churches, the disruptive technologies today are contemporary worship, more experiential ministry, and the rise of storefront and immigrant churches in urban areas. "Everything that makes us who we are means we can't respond," Weems stated.

### Embracing the 'living edges'

What leaders can do, Weems said, is "pose the right questions and then ask them over and over and over as a way of leading around the 'dying things.'"

"Dying things" are ministries that still take place, but are a struggle to promote, fund, and maintain. "Living edges" are ministries in high demand. They are effective, positive, and easy to promote.

In early Methodism, spirituality and conversion occurred in quarterly meetings, Weems observed. Their successor was the camp meeting, which gave way to Sunday school.

In the 1950s, Sunday school attendance was higher than worship attendance. Yet during that upsurge, conference leaders held fast to the camp meeting concept, the "declining technology" of that time.

Good leaders help members identify what is dying and where new life and growth might rise, Weems stated. The question to ask, he posed, is "if you weren't already doing it, would you start it now?"

Clergy must also help members lose their preconceptions about people, Weems said. One way is to have conversations with those they want to serve. The goal is listening, not judging or recruiting.

It's an approach Frick said she will encourage at her church. "Let's get out in the community to go where there are things attracting people and learn what those things are," she declared. "And then learn to walk with people where they are in the world with this love of Christ."

\* Parham is a freelance writer and editor in Apopka, FL.

The 2012 Lake Junaluska Ministry Summit, featuring Gil Rendle, is scheduled August 5–7. Visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/summit](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/summit) for more information.



Eddy McGee and his wife, Anna, enjoy spending time at Lake Junaluska and the surrounding mountain communities.

"Lake Junaluska is a vacation destination, not just a conference center. You're not going to find a more beautiful facility in the mountains of North Carolina," McGee affirmed. "The accommodations and the staff are great. My wife and I would like to someday own a house here. The convenience of everything you want to do in the mountains is found at Lake Junaluska."

For information about upcoming vacation specials and packages, visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/lodging-specials](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/lodging-specials) or call 800-222-4930.

## Playwright commemorates Centennial Celebration with theatrical production



### Lake Junaluska

1913-2013

Celebrate 100 years of transforming lives in 2013.

[www.lakejunaluska.com/100](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/100)



With just over two years until the official Lake Junaluska Centennial Celebration kicks off, playwright Jerry Sipp has begun work on *The Light of the Lake*, a musical drama commemorating the centennial.

"What we are trying to do is celebrate the last 100 years of Lake Junaluska, its history, its people, as well as the future of Lake Junaluska," said Sipp. "I have been charged with writing a piece that gives an honest portrayal of the struggles and triumphs of Lake Junaluska that have led up to all the good things at Lake Junaluska today."

Described as a multimedia experience, the production will incorporate photography, acting, and a heavy musical influence with performances by the Lake Junaluska Singers.

"The show will prominently feature the Lake Junaluska Singers," explained Sipp. "We will have a great deal of music, along with a small orchestra, which will be using both religious and secular music to comment on where we are in history and to demonstrate how music has been and will continue to be a big part of both the religious and social aspect of Lake Junaluska."

With a rich tradition of photography in and around Lake Junaluska, the production will incorporate visual projections from the past and present to illustrate the production's story.

"Not only will the audience get to use their imaginations as the actors are performing, but they will see the main events we are chronicling through photography," Sipp said. "We will travel back and forth through time by using these photographs."

The Light of the Lake, Lake Junaluska's Centennial Celebration theatrical production, will highlight time periods of the lake's history through photography and performance.

As Sipp prepares the first drafts of the production, he has spent hours researching in the SEJ Heritage Center and interviewing residents of Lake Junaluska.

"The personal anecdotes and stories of the people of Lake Junaluska were so interesting," said Sipp. "It has been a wonderful educational experience for me. One thing that is so rewarding about being a writer and theater person is that you never stop learning and interacting with new people, groups, stories, and perspectives, and I've gained all of those while working on this project. I look forward to its culmination in 2013 at the performance and continuing my journey at Lake Junaluska and to share the story with everyone."

The premier performance of *The Light of the Lake* is scheduled for 2013. For more information about the Lake Junaluska Centennial Celebration and a tentative schedule of events, visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/100](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/100).

### Lake Junaluska not just for retreats—it's a destination

While thousands of persons attend conferences and retreats, Eddy McGee, executive director of the nonprofit Stokes County (NC) Arts Council, and his wife, Anna, cherish their vacations to Lake Junaluska each year.

"I grew up in the United Methodist Church, so I remember coming here in the early '80s when I was a youth," McGee said. "Anna and I have been vacationing at Lake Junaluska for six years, using the lake as a central location for all we do in the mountains."

McGee and his wife enjoy their retreat to the mountains and to Lake Junaluska each spring and fall, and although they come primarily to vacation, they frequently check the event calendar to see if there is something taking place during their stay that piques their interest.

"Last year we came to the Plein Air artist event," McGee said. "I look at the Lake Junaluska website weekly to see what specials are running and to see what is happening. Over the years, we've enjoyed seeing the Lake Junaluska Singers perform several times."

"We enjoy walking around the lake, playing tennis and golf, and visiting the bookstore while we're here," explained McGee. "As far as the immediate area goes, we love going to downtown Waynesville and Sylva to visit some of the art shops. There are also quite a few eating establishments that we frequent when we are here, like the Sweet Onion, Nick 'n Nates, and, strange as it may sound, the Ingles salad and hot bar. Every time we visit Lake Junaluska, we know we're going to Nick 'n Nates and Ingles!"

They take advantage of Lake Junaluska's easy access to prime mountain attractions such as the Billmore Estate, downtown Asheville, Cherokee, and Bryson City—all within an hour's drive or less.

"We've gone bike riding and hiking on the Blue Ridge Parkway and Balsam Ridge," continued McGee. "If we want to go to Asheville, it is very convenient. We can visit the Billmore Estate and downtown, and even stop by Black Mountain. The next trip, we may want to visit Bryson City and Cherokee. My wife and I love going up to Lake Junaluska because there is so much to do up here."

### Lake Junaluska Singers release Memories of Christmas CD, DVD



The Lake Junaluska Singers celebrated the release of their new CD and DVD, *Memories of Christmas*, at their fall concerts, Friday and Saturday, October 14 and 15.

Recorded in a professional multi-camera television studio in Orlando during the Singers' summer tour, the CD and DVD feature glittering Christmas holiday classics, such as "The Wexford Carol," "Carol of the Bells," "Mary Sat A-Rockin'," and more.

"Both the CD and DVD include some of our favorite Christmas musical selections," said Dr. Melodie Galloway, director of the Lake Junaluska Singers. "The Christmas DVD also provides a special opportunity to get to know the Singers up close and personal as they share warm family Christmas memories from their childhoods."

Galloway reflected that it was an intense four days recording in the studio.

"We recorded two DVDs and two CDs," recalled Galloway. "The Lake Junaluska Singers will also release its concert CD and DVD in December."

CDs and DVDs are available online at [www.media.lakejunaluska.com](http://www.media.lakejunaluska.com) and at the Lake Junaluska administration building. CDs are \$15; DVDs are \$20. A special CD/DVD combo is also available for \$30.

"The Appalachian Family Christmas weekend celebrates our own memories of Christmas and the best family times shared together," continued Galloway. "The Singers are so excited to return to Lake Junaluska this winter and present their new recordings for the first time at Lake Junaluska. We hope everyone will 'come home for the holidays' with the Lake Junaluska Singers."

For more information about Appalachian Christmas, visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/christmas](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/christmas). For CD and DVD information, visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/singers](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/singers).

