

Reading List

What books are laying on the nightstands of these Conference Council on Youth Ministries members?

● **Allyson Johnson**, age 17
Hurst UMC
Chattanooga, Tenn.
“*The Great Gatsby*,” by F. Scott Fitzgerald

● **Drew Marrs**, age 16
Ebenezer UMC
Bluefield, Va.
“*The Great Gatsby*,” by F. Scott Fitzgerald

● **Helen Mason**, age 17
Sulphur Springs UMC
Jonesborough, Tenn.
“*The Message: The New Testament in Contemporary Language*,” by Eugene H. Peterson ■

Calendar

Ash Wednesday on March 5

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which falls this year on March 5. For worship planning helps, go to <http://www.gbod.org/worship/> and search for “Ash Wednesday.”

Day of Prayer on March 7

World Day of Prayer is sponsored by Church Women United, with which United Methodist Women cooperate. To prepare for the March 7 observance, go to <http://www.churchwomen.org> or <http://worlddayofprayer.net>. Packets are available by calling (800) 298-5551.

One Great Hour on March 30

One of six Special Sundays in the United Methodist Church, One Great Hour of Sharing is commemorated with an offering to benefit the United Methodist Committee on Relief. For planning information, go to <http://www.umcsgiving.org/content/sundays/onegreat.asp>.

Administrators meet Aug. 4

The Southeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Association of Church Business Administrators meets Aug. 4-7 in Lake Junaluska, N.C. For a brochure, contact Vicki Eleazer at (865) 966-6728 or e-mail Vicki@concordumc.com. ■

At Lunch With

Lu Ellsworth: Law school president

By Kevin Slimp

Last year, Lu Ellsworth experienced his proverbial 15 minutes of fame. It was Jan. 16, 2002, when the president of Appalachian School of Law learned one of his students had fatally wounded two instructors and another student.

“I was in Richmond with four of our trustees when the shootings occurred during the noon hour,” remembers Ellsworth, age 61. “We were walking back to our van when someone’s cell phone rang. The person who took the call told us that there had been a shooting on campus.”

Ellsworth and two others from Grundy, Va., where the college is located, flew immediately to Norton in the governor’s plane. When they arrived at the school, the campus was filled with media representatives.

“The media had arrived from Atlanta, Chicago and New York. I participated in a press conference with over 100 media people, probably 30 different television stations. As the events unfolded over the next few days, we had media from Europe, the west coast, everywhere.”

Arriving in Grundy in 1994, Ellsworth never imagined the eyes of the world would be cast on this quiet coal community. After completing graduate school at the University of Delaware in 1969, he took his first journey to the South to become involved in a research project with the Creek Indians at the University of West Florida in Pensacola.

There’s a theme to Ellsworth’s life that he often considers: “Florida was rural. I went to work with a brand new institution.” Later, when he accepted a post as vice chancellor and dean of Clinch Valley Community College/



Photo by Kevin Slimp

Lu Ellsworth, photographed in an art store next to the Starving Artist restaurant, says Appalachian Law School is more “tightly knit” since last year’s fatal shootings.

University of Virginia College at Wise, the school had “the only residential four-year program in the coalfields. I was very attracted to this. Then came the law school. That’s the same kind of thing.”

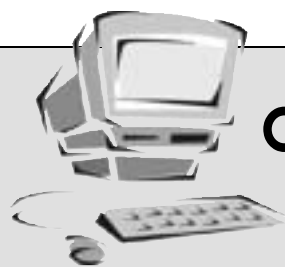
He adds, “I hope most of the major activities of my life have been designed to help people achieve their objectives. I look back with a sense of helping build something that will have long-term sustainability.”

Four years ago, Ellsworth and wife Phyllis, along with another couple, organized a worship community, the Appalachian Prayer Fellowship, near Wise, Va.

“The established churches in the community were pretty much continuing to do what they had been doing, which is good,” Ellsworth explains. “But there were a lot of potential Christians who weren’t attracted to the established church. We’re in an area with a lot of unemployment. Our idea

was to create an environment where truly unchurched people were welcome.” Ellsworth says he receives support from the Rev. Dennie Humphreys, Big Stone Gap District superintendent, as well as other area United Methodist churches.

Since last year’s shootings, Appalachian School of Law is more “tightly knit,” says Ellsworth, the recipient of Holston’s 2002 Francis Asbury Award for fostering United Methodist ministries in higher education. He rose from his seat at Abingdon’s Starving Artist Cafe with one final remark: “I want to pick up the check as a small way to support the conference.” ■



C-Mail

Sprague: a prophetic voice

It with dismay that I hear about the misguided attempt of some United Methodist clergy and laity to have one of our fine bishops removed. [“Holston members sign complaint against Chicago’s Bishop Sprague,” Jan. 31 issue] I find the thinking of this bishop refreshing as he has struggled honestly with our faith as believers in Christ. He is trying to express the faith in fresh ways, especially to those who find “the same old, same old” inadequate. Like another “outside the box” theologian, John H. Spong, this good bishop is the prophetic voice in our church. Thank God for his work!

Rev. Warren Stewart
Retired pastor
Abingdon District

Lazer tag is not the answer

The question, “What do young adults want from the church?” needs to be rephrased to “What do young adults need from the church?” [“Connectional Reflections,” Jan. 31 issue] What I hear them saying is they don’t want more social gatherings. They need to know how the teachings of Jesus apply to their lives, and they need to deeper study in the Word. They are not looking for more of what they already have in the world, but they need to know what difference a relationship with the living Lord will make in their world.

I am a 60-year-old laywoman with children ages 34, 32, and 30. They can get concerts, lazer tag, social interaction, multimedia explosions, etc., elsewhere. They are dying for spiritual nourishment.

Elaine Ross
First Broad Street UMC
Kingsport District

For more letters, go to www.holstonconference.com/thecall/ and click on “C-Mail.” For an update on the complaint against Bishop Sprague, see page 8.