

news briefs:

Campaign wants smokers to take a hike - in taxes



WASHINGTON (UMNS) – The United Methodist Church's longstanding opposition to tobacco use is moving into a new phase, as the denomination's Board of Church and Society puts its support behind a proposal aimed at reducing teen smoking nationwide. If successful, the effort with the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids will force smokers to cough up more money for cigarettes in the form of higher state taxes. "We feel this stand is in line with our *Book of Resolutions* and see this as a way to affirm and support our church's longstanding policy against tobacco use," says Lois Clinton, a board executive. The United Methodist Church's 2000 *Book of Discipline* recommends "total abstinence from the use of tobacco."

UM Women will meet in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA (UMNS) – Advocacy for children will be among the major concerns of the nearly 10,000 women attending the United Methodist Women's Assembly April 25-28 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, will address the assembly on April 26 and discuss how participants can help children in need. Other speakers during the assembly also will address issues of concern to children, youth and women, and more than 60 workshops are planned. Day registration is available on site as space allows, at \$35 daily April 25-27 and \$25 on April 28. For more details, call (513) 821-5896 or send an e-mail message to tcameron@fuse.net.

Church teams with Kroger to feed the hungry

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (UMNS) – Smoked pork chops, potato salad, roast beef and pecan pie. Not your usual food pantry fare. But that's exactly the kind of food Capleville United Methodist Church is sending weekly to the food pantries at United Methodist Neighborhood Centers of Memphis and to Reelfoot Rural Ministries, a Memphis Annual Conference outreach program to Northwest Tennessee. Capleville United Methodist Church is working with a neighboring Kroger store through the chain's "Adopt-a-Church" program. In the two years since Capleville began the project, the members have more than doubled the amount of food and other items they've given away. For details, call the church's Jesse Bauer at (901) 363-0629.

Methodists discuss aging in Madrid

NEW YORK (UMNS) – United Methodists will play an active role in the nongovernmental forum that meets in conjunction with the U.N.'s Second World Assembly on Aging in Madrid, Spain. The assembly, meeting April 8-12, will update the U.N.'s Vienna Plan, also called the 1982 International Plan on Aging, and determine a new long-term strategy on aging. Representatives of nongovernmental organizations will have their own meeting on those issues from April 5-9. United Methodists from Global Action on Aging and the churchwide Board of Discipleship, Board of Church and Society, and Board of Global Ministries will be among those working at or attending the conference.

Wood College loses accreditation

MATHISTON, Miss. (UMNS) – United Methodist-related Wood College has lost its accreditation and must find enough money to show that it can support its academic programs, according to school officials. However, they also say the decision of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to remove accreditation was based on incorrect information about Wood's finances. On March 13, SACS denied an appeal of its December decision to remove accreditation. SACS said the college failed to comply with criteria for possessing sufficient financial resources to support all programs and failed to demonstrate good cause for continuing accreditation. Wood is seeking re-accreditation and has launched fund-raising efforts.



2002 UMNS photo by Mike DuBose

Tobacco Farmer

▲ A farmer harvests tobacco on a farm in middle Tennessee. Proposals to raise taxes on tobacco in order to curb teen smoking have met with resistance from farmers.

World Methodists hope for Middle East peace

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C. (UMNS) – Officers of the World Methodist Council believe Israel must end its occupation of Palestine in order to achieve peace in the region. "We believe the fundamental requirement for a settlement and an enduring peace has two parts: the prompt end of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian areas and a withdrawal to the borders of June 4, 1967, which includes Jerusalem and the land upon which settlements have been constructed during almost 35 years of military occupation," said a letter signed by His Eminence Sunday C. Mbang of Nigeria, council president, and the Rev. George Freeman, top staff executive. The March 22 letter was sent to President Bush and Israeli, Palestinian, British and U.N. leaders.

Upper Room seeks international expansion

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) – Upper Room Ministries has launched a five-year, \$16 million campaign to expand resources and programs internationally, particularly in Africa, Europe and Asia. Implemented Jan. 1, the campaign is designed to develop new language editions of the Upper Room daily devotional guide, expand the Walk to Emmaus movement overseas and increase the capacity to respond to prayer requests through the Living Prayer Center. The initiative also will provide scholarships for people participating in the Academy for Spiritual Formation, maintain ministries for parents and their children, and provide additional complimentary editions of the Upper Room to hospital and prison chaplains and the visually impaired. Additional information about the campaign is available from the Rev. John Brown, Upper Room Ministries, P.O. Box 340004, Nashville, TN 37203-0004; phone: (877) 899-2781, Ext. 7520; e-mail: development@upperroom.org.

► FOR COMPLETE TEXT of these and other United Methodist news stories, visit www.holston.org and click on 'Expanded Nation & World News.'

Hiwassee faces, continued from page 1

While Philip pursued the multi-million dollar donation, fund raising has been suspended since August 2001, sources said. In January 2002, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools sanctioned Hiwassee College for 12 months for failing to meet eligibility and financial standards.

Now, both Tennessee Wesleyan and Hiwassee – respectively located within 15 miles of each other in Athens and Madisonville, Tenn. – must look for new leaders. For Hiwassee, the search for a president will coincide with a quest for funds.

"We've got to make up for lost time," said Vice President and Academic Dean James T. Murrell, who will assume Philip's duties in the interim. "Otherwise, the educational process is the same; nothing has changed. We still think the students get a pretty good education here."

Dawson has served as Tennessee Wesleyan president since 1995. Philip was inaugurated in April 2001.

► See also 'Bishop's Perspective,' page 2.