

NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Bishop Julius Calvin Trimble

Dennis Tevis

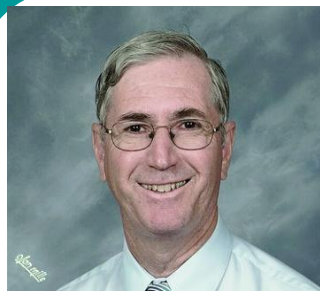
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Jon Gaul

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Alanna Warren

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From the DS....

I wonder. I wonder what I would have heard had I been there on the night that Jesus was born. It is a question that I think about every year at Christmas. Don't you? Would I have heard the choirs of angels singing; or simply the sounds of sheep and shepherds bedding them down for the evening? Would I have seen the star in the sky that night or simply two poor and very frightened adolescents looking for a suitable place for a child to be born? Would I have felt the hushed silence of the divine presence, or simply the chill of a cold east wind? Would I have understood the message of Emmanuel, God with us, or would the cosmic implications of that evening simply passed me by? I wonder.

Certainly very few people in Palestine heard and saw and understood what took place that night. The choirs of angels singing were drowned out by the haggling and trading going on in the shops and bazaars of the town. There was a bright star in the sky, but apparently the only ones paying any attention to it were pagan astrologers from the East. If anyone did see Mary and Joseph on that fateful night, they were too preoccupied with their own problems to offer them any assistance. I wonder what I would have done.

My point is that God's revelation is not forced upon us or upon the world. We have to look closely and listen carefully to see what God is doing and to notice what God has done. That is what we do when we come together to celebrate with joy the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Perhaps the words of one of our Christmas carols put it best:

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;
so God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

May it be so for all of us on this Christmas. Amen.

Blessings,
Dennis



All Clergy and their significant other are invited to join us for the Annual Epiphany Party. This year the District Board of Laity will host the party and they ask that the clergy bring nothing but their Holiday Spirit. **Please RSVP to the District office by 12/28/09**

Date: 01/10/10

Time: 6:00 P.M.

At the Faith Methodist Church in Webster City

(Across from McDonalds)

Contact: Alanna Warren

Phone: 515-832-2784

Fax: 515-832-1244

E-mail: alanna.warren@iaumc.org

**EPIPHANY
PARTY**

Field Outreach Ministry

Jon Gaul

A new year is fast approaching. Resolutions, fresh starts, changes, good intentions are all thought of this time of year. One of those I'd like to suggest actually doing is beginning a "Yearlong Stewardship" program! Sounds exciting, doesn't it? Well, it can be and we can make it that way. I am going to lay out a program by Doug Anderson, director of the Bishop Rueben Job Center, on "Seasonal Emphases Based on Membership Vows."

Stewardship of **Presence**—When: **Winter** (January); Preparation: Letter to members with a report of worship attendance in the past year; Methods: Utilize Wesley Covenant Service, or other act of commitment; Commitment: Commit to worship attendance in the coming year (sealed in envelope, returned for accountability); Follow-up: Track weekly attendance with registration pads, computer database.

Stewardship of **Prayer**—When: **Spring** (Lent/March-April); Preparation: Seminars on developing a strong devotional life, lists of resources, develop small group leaders; Methods: Use growth resources such as *Companions in Christ*, or *40 Days of Transformation*; Commitment: Commit to pray daily, read scripture daily, participate in a small group for growth at least once a month; Follow-up: Short-term and long-term small groups formed, develop "disciple-making system."

Stewardship of **Service**—When: **Summer** (July-September); Preparation: Invite members into discernment regarding spiritual gifts, train leaders for spiritual gifts studies, offer small groups; Methods: Conduct time and talent survey, place in offering during worship, offer *Disciple Bible Study* or seminars on spiritual gifts; Commitment: Commit to direct involvement in serving in the community, organize mission work teams, hands on mission opportunities; Follow-up: Nominations process provides for personal invitations to serve in a ministry matched to gifts at least once per month.

Stewardship of **Gifts**—When: **Fall** (October-November); Preparation: Letters, announcements about plans for Commitment Sunday, comprehensive buildup including preaching; Methods: Organize and conduct stewardship campaign in support of ongoing ministries, e.g. *New Consecration Sunday*; Commitment: Commit to proportional giving/tithing for God's work through the church, estimate of giving presented at altar during worship; Follow-up: Thank-you letter with confirmation of financial commitment for the year, quarterly statements with thank-you notes.

Stewardship of **Witness**—When: **Advent** (November-December, or Pentecost season in spring); Preparation: Preaching, newsletters, multimedia used to urge outreach, invitation, everyday faith sharing, prepare excellent Christmas worship and activities; Methods: See 5 Practices resources regarding radical hospitality, use "FRAN Plan" from *Igniting Ministry*; Commitment: Active members commit to invite a friend, relative, associate or neighbor to special Christmas service or activity, write names on card during worship; Follow-up: Utilize trained "spotters," hosts to get names of guests, track presence of guests through low-threat registration process.

There you go, just ready and waiting to be implemented. I would tweak a few things myself, as would each of you, no doubt. I can e-mail this to you in a pdf chart format, just let me know and have a very blessed Holy Season.

Grace and peace,

Jon

Prayer Requests

- † Please keep Rev. Rose Marie Calderon Kahn and her family in your thoughts and prayers. Rose Marie is recovering at home after falling. As a result, she broke three ribs. Rose Marie is the Pastor Meservey, Salem - Thornton, First UMC
- † Please keep Rev. Denise Group and her family in your thoughts and prayers as she continues to recover from surgery. Denise is Pastor at Corwith-Wesley, First.
- † Please keep Rev. Margaret Aiseayew and her family in your thoughts and prayers. She had surgery and is at home recovering. Margaret is the Pastor at the Mackey UMC.
- † Please keep Rev. Reg Merrill and his family in your thoughts and prayers. Reg fell on Thanksgiving Day and broke his wrist. He had surgery the following Wed. and has been at home recovering since. He did go into the Hospital on Wed., Dec. 16th for a procedure and some tests. Reg is Pastor at Our Savior (Manson, Pomeroy) Church.

District At-Large Members - 2010 Annual Conference

Are you Interested or know someone who might be, in serving the North Central District as a District At-Large Member to Annual Conference in 2010? There is a Conference Rule of Order that addresses this question. On page 377 of the 2009 Iowa Annual Conference Journal, line 23, the

Rule states: "One-half of the additional lay members needed to bring equalization shall be assigned to the districts in equal numbers, and each district conference shall elect upon nomination by the District Nominating Committee, said additional lay members to the Iowa Annual Conference..."

If you know of someone who would serve well, please submit your nomination for consideration to the Nominating Committee via the district office, Alanna.warren@iaumc.org by January 15th. Please keep your youth and young adults in mind that could be represented among this group. Include the name and address of the person you are nominating.

REMINDER: Dennis will be out of the office beginning December 23rd and will not return until January 4th. Alanna will be out of the office beginning December 18th and will not return until January 4th. Jon will be out of the office beginning December 24th thru the 30th.



Weather related closing for District Office

The North Central District Office (and all District Offices in the Conference) follow the schedule of the surrounding Public School Systems and closes when schools are not in session due to the weather. This means no school, early dismissals and late starts.

JANUARY 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				Happy New Year!	1 New Year's Day District office CLOSED	2 Lay Spk. Comm. Mtg Lorene Dykstra's Home - Ventura 9 AM
3 Jon - Preach Eldora	4	5	6 Dennis, Jon, & Alanna Mtg. W/ Naomi Sea Young Wittstruck	7 Dennis & Jon Ministry Cabinet SE Cluster meets	8 Dennis dCOM Committee Mtg. WC Faith UMC	9 Dennis - CFA mtg Des Moines Dennis & Jon - Conf. Mtg.
10 Dennis - CC Rowan Jon - Preach Maxwell NC District Epiphany Celebration - 6:00 PM WC Faith UMC	11 Jon - Orders Meeting Indianola	12 Jon - Iowa Falls	13 Ft. Dodge Cluster 10:00 AM	14	15	16
← Dennis - Cabinet →						
17 Dennis - CC Hubbard	18 Martin Luther King Day District Office Closed	19	20	21 Dennis - Crisis Communication Event	22	23
← Jon - FOM Meeting →						
24	25	26	27	28 Jon - Academy for New Ministry Development-- Arkeny	29	30
← Dennis - Cabinet →						

CELEBRATE!

LET'S CELEBRATE CHURCHES IN MISSION IN THE NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT.

MASON CITY, WESLEY GRACE: On December 1st, Wesley UMC in Mason City began a new ministry. Its goal is to offer meaningful and accessible help to children, youth and families. Three priorities have been identified for the ministry: (1) provide consultations to members of the Wesley faith community and the larger community, (2) provide programming for the community and congregation that will respond to specific needs and issues relating to children, youth, and families, and (3) assist the congregation to be a caring and supportive faith community where hope and healing happens in the name of Jesus Christ. Ken Zimmerman, former director of the Mental Health Center of North Iowa has been hired to coordinate "Wesley Family Outreach Ministry".

MASON CITY, FIRST: A group of 15-20 persons from Mason City First UMC will travel to the Tree of Life Mission on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota on January 31 and spend a week working there. They will work on three projects: painting and doing repairs in the Youth Center, working in the clothing store and repairing individual homes. Money collected earlier this fall has been used to purchase a new furnace and stove and these items have already been delivered to Rosebud and installed. This has been a very rewarding mission for members of FUMC for several years.

We are asking you to send information about your new ministries and mission outreach so in the next newsletter we can share and celebrate what God is calling us to do.

Removing Barriers to Self-Care



In January many people make plans to do better at taking care of themselves such as: losing weight, eating better, or spending time with family rather than putting work ahead of family. In other words, to improve their health habits. This translates into what is known within wellness and health promotion as "self-care". While we know we "should" take better care of ourselves, it is often hard to do. Several barriers include:

Knowing you want to change your eating habits and physical activity, but not knowing where or how to start.

You have tried before, but have gotten discouraged due to the amount of effort required to keep doing the new patterns.

A constantly-changing schedule squeezes both your time and resolve in maintaining your new and improved life-style.

The people around you may unconsciously be resistant and/or un-supportive.

Your work environment could be detrimental to your efforts in improving your health habits.

An unconscious feeling that other persons and their needs should come first and that it is selfish to place my self-care practices/needs first.

In Iowa, January weather is not conducive to out-door activities and raw veggies.

If you resonate with several of the above statements, you are not alone. So, how does one go about coping with such barriers?

Formulate a plan and write it down. Seeing it in writing helps to both solidify it and makes you think through what you want to do.

Think through obvious obstacles and devise fall-back, alternative actions.

Enlist a person at home and someone at work to help you

work your plan.

Be *intentional and consistent* about taking care of your-self.

If you don't, who will?

Find ways to beat the January weather; videos, cold-weather clothing, contests with like-minded friends, arrange for the use of a school gym on the weekends/evenings

Do a potluck of calorie-light comfort food, bring recipes.

My passion is to help people move forward in their journey towards wellness by helping to remove barriers and in finding supportive people, props, and means to do so. I am planning an event for clergy, spouses, and conference staff regarding self-care strategies in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, stress/time management, relaxation/restoration.

A Resource of the General Board of Pensions

Servant Leadership Self-Care Covenant Seminar/Retreat

Wesley Woods Retreat Center, February 28-March 1

Sunday 5 pm through Monday at 5 pm

\$50 to cover food and lodging.

Registration deadline February 26th

Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen to God's voice in everything you do; everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Don't assume you know it all. Your body will glow with health, your very bones will vibrate with life. (Proverbs 3: 5, 8 The Message)

I invite you to consider the barriers you have regarding your personal vision of a health-full lifestyle. How can I help you move closer towards making your vision a reality?

Kae Tritle, RN
Wellness Coordinator

NOTE:
**Church Statements, 10 Year Histories,
 Direct Bills, General Ledger Mailings,
 & Apportionments.....**

Due to the Conference's conversion to new software, the Church Statements, 10 Year Histories, Direct Bills, and General Ledger Mailings will be delayed. We will update you weekly by news blast of our progress.

FYI: This does apply to the Apportionments as well.

WHAT'S YOUR RESOLUTION?

Yes it is that time of year when a lot of people make their New Year's resolution.

The tradition of the New Year's Resolutions goes all the way back to 153 B.C. Janus, a mythical king of early Rome was placed at the head of the calendar. With two faces, Janus could look back on past events and forward to the future. Janus became the ancient symbol for resolutions and many Romans looked for forgiveness from their enemies and also exchanged gifts before the beginning of each year.

The kiss shared at the stroke of midnight in the United States is derived from masked balls that have been common throughout history. As tradition has it, the masks symbolize evil spirits from the old year and the kiss is the purification into the new year.

What are you planning to do to bring in the New Year. For most of us we have seen a large amount of change. Some have lost a lot and some have lost their life savings. Some are working less hours and others have seen their work place close or were notified that their services were no longer required. We all keep thinking that it is about to end, but it continues. This year, for the first time in many years, there are many of us that will look strongly at the tradition of the midnight kiss to say goodbye to the evil spirits of the past year and receive purification as we welcome the new year.

I have a suggestion for a resolution for all of us for the coming year, in fact this resolution should be one that should last us for a lifetime. We find this resolution in a letter from the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the church in Philippi. **Philippians 2:5 "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus"**. If we all accept this as our new rule for life all that is left for us to do is to figure out what is the mind of Jesus. This resolution will open us to a lifetime of study, prayer and service to our fellow humans.

May you all be like Janus who could look back into the past and at the same time with his second face look into the future. Americans are eternal optimists and we need to believe that there will be better days ahead for all of us. Let us all be thankful for what God has given and will be giving us and learn to share with joy with others the same way that Jesus would have shared.

HAPPY NEW YEAR, BROTHERS & SISTERS IN CHRIST!

Oh most heavenly God, help us all find a resolution this next year that will not be dropped and forgotten in a short period of time. Lead me to one that will change my life and direct me in paths never before traveled. I give myself to your service and realize with joy that I need to strive to learn to think, act and pray more like your son, Jesus Christ. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen

North Central District Lay Leader
 Dave Decker
 1112 Val Kay Court
 Hampton, IA 50441
 641-456-2087



Travel with the Trimbles to the Oberammergau Passion Play

Bishop Julius Trimble and Racelder Grandberry-Trimble invite you to join them on an exciting pilgrimage to Germany and Austria in August of 2010. On this trip we will attend a performance of the historic once-every-ten-years Passion Play in Oberammergau and stay in a historic Alpine village.

Other highlights will include a day in Salzburg, Mozart's birthplace; a visit to Innsbruck, where we will tour Maria Theresa's Imperial Palace; breathtaking views of the Tyrolian Alps; a drive through the Brenner Pass, and visits to castles, churches and abbeys in the region.

In the 17th Century, when the village of Oberammergau was spared from the Black Plague, the villagers promised God that they would show their gratitude by performing a Passion Play every ten years. Now, 370 years later, we will have the opportunity to experience this world-famous production.

In addition to the nine-day pilgrimage, travelers may choose an Italy pre-tour or extensions to Switzerland, Vienna and Prague, or an Alpine village extended stay. For further information and registration materials, please contact Ron and Ruth Anne Petrak at 1507 Pennsylvania Ave., Des Moines, IA 50316; Phone 515/262-3691; email address: ronruthanne1507@msn.com.

Inclement Weather Closing Instructions

Inclement Weather Closing Instructions from WHO Radio: WHO Radio is going to a web-based system for reporting and disseminating information regarding changes in event schedules, such as event cancellations due to inclement weather. Go to the North Central District Downloads page of the Iowa Annual Conference web site or click [HERE](#) for specific instructions on how to use this new system.

Iowa Conference United Methodist Church Thanksgiving Ingathering

Each year on the first Saturday in November United Methodists gather for the Thanksgiving Ingathering at five sites across Iowa to collect cash and other items for missions in Iowa and across the world. A portion of the funds collected is returned to Iowa hunger relief agencies. There is a modest sum of money available for use in the North Central District. If your church is involved with a hunger project you may apply for a portion of the available funds. You may also pass the application on to a hunger relief agency in the district.

Application for Hunger Relief Grant Due Date March 1

Name of Project _____

Address _____

Contact Person _____ Telephone _____

Tax Identification Number _____

Number of Households Served _____ Number of Individuals Served _____

Area served _____

Narrative, to include how the money would be used: _____

Signature of Person Making Application _____

Please send by March 1 to Jean Sheets, 1930 Echo Avenue, Britt, IA 50423, 641-843-4582
sheetsec@ncn.net

Scholarships for 2010-2011

Now is the time to start thinking about scholarships for the 2010-2011 school year. The Iowa United Methodist Foundation will award approximately 175 scholarships to undergraduates, graduates, and seminary students for the 2010-2011 school year. Visit their website at www.iaumc.org and click on "Scholarships". There, you'll find the qualifications for each scholarship and the application forms. All applications must be postmarked by March 15, 2010. Please follow the directions carefully, as incomplete applications and/or late applications will not be considered. Please share this information with your students.



The Staff at the North Central District would like to wish everyone a safe & happy New Year!
We Thank you for all you do for the Church and many others!

Blessings, Rev. Dennis Tevis, Rev. Jon Gaul,
& Alanna Warren



The Conference Board of Church and Society announces

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

takes place **March 19 – 22, 2010**, in Washington DC.

This year's theme is **A Place to Call Home:**

Immigrants, Refugees, and Displaced Peoples.

And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the

Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.'

Jesus had no place to lay his head. Neither do tens of millions of migrants, refugees and displaced persons. Be a part of an action weekend addressing this global injustice. Join hundreds of faith-based advocates in taking action on U.S.

legislation that will welcome immigrants, protect refugees, and prevent displacement of millions. Visit the conference website to learn more

<http://advocacydays.org>

A featured speaker at one of the plenary sessions will be our own

Bishop Minerva Carcaño, of the Desert Southwest Conference.

The Conference Board of Church and Society wishes to announce that three scholarships for \$500 each are available. You may write for an application form to Judy Kading at judykading@yahoo.com or call 641-740-7066 or write to her at

803 Golden Shores, Creston, IA 50801.

Act now to receive the lowest conference registration rates and low conference

hotel rates at the conference site, the Double Tree in Crystal City, VA.

Join over 700 activists for intense and informative sessions and return to the

annual conference ready to share information.

LDM for Young Adult & Generational Ministry **515.974.8944**

The Vision Action Team from the Wesley Foundation at Collegiate United Methodist Church in Ames

is looking for opportunities to share their experiences as college students with youth groups from United Methodist congregations in Iowa . They offer several different venues, including programming similar to what they do with the Wesley Foundation, giving students an idea of what is offered at Collegiate/Wesley, and programming that involves question and answer time about college, God and life in general. The Vision Action Team is prepared to facilitate a youth group, give a presentation or just hang out. For more information or to schedule your group, contact Jim Shirbroun at jim@cwames.org.

**United Methodist Church—Iowa Area
2301 Rittenhouse St.
Des Moines, IA 50321**

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North Central District Newsletter

MUMMS Helps with Flood Recovery in Oakville

Mobile United Methodist Missionaries (MUMMS) is an outreach ministry in southern Iowa supported in part by apportionment dollars. Peg Egbert, the director of MUMMS, writes about a recent mission trip she coordinated:

“One of my favorite old hymns is, “Open My Eyes, That I May See, glimpses of truth thou hast for me. “Wow, did our eyes ever get opened when we traveled to Oakville as a work team. We were small in numbers, but oh, how GOD worked that week! It rained, the wind blew, the temperatures dropped, but the work went on. Through it all, much was accomplished on the homes. But even more important was the relationships that were formed.

“One of the homeowners worked along side our team, served them tea and cookies and shared her frustrations of losing everything. None of us can imagine what this town has been through. I had the pleasure of meeting the mayor, a member of the United Methodist Church. What a spirit she has! Then there was Tonya, the women who schedules all the teams, lines up the jobs, orders materials and also works on the sites when needed, including tearing off roofing! Have you gotten it yet? The people in Oakville are tough, determined and know that with God, all things are possible.

“Much work is yet to be done! The United Methodist Church there has wonderful facilities and a meal is served to all volunteers every day at noon. Even when the snow flies, there will be finishing work to be done, so please, please go for a day, three days or a week.. **OAKVILLE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS!**

“Go and work. Your eyes will be opened!”

