



## *Monday Musings*

*January 17, 2012*

*Rose M. Blank*

*Conference Superintendent*

*Southeast District*

*319-986-2095*

Greetings,

At the beginning of each New Year I find it important to spend time in reflection on "A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition" found on page 607 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Every time I read it I find myself thinking what a huge responsibility to live up to, what a powerful example to live into as I continue on my own journey of faith and ministry. To live into the words of this powerful covenant prayer invites us to give up our own ego, our own agenda, our own power, our own possessive ideas of what we are called to do and be, all for the sake and purpose of opening ourselves to walk on the path of God's calling in our lives as followers of Jesus the Christ. It is a tall order, no doubt. But not one we shy away from because we may think it is so impossible so why should we try. It's a journey, that by grace, we take one step at a time and one day at a time. It's a journey that, by grace, invites us into the fullness of life lived well because of Christ's call and presence in us.

This year as I read and reflected on this prayer I began to connect it with the New Places for New People conversation we are having in the Iowa Conference. You will be receiving more information about how our district is engaging churches in this process. Briefly, every church is invited to "prayerfully discern where God may be leading you and your worshipping community to be engaged in creative relationship building, outreach, and transformational ministries in 'New Places' with 'New People!'"

This will also be a tall order for some, no doubt. It will mean putting aside our own egos, our own agendas, and our own idea of how the church 'should' be. It will cause us to shift some of our priorities. This process is a journey that, by grace, will lead us into renewed life for ourselves, and for our churches as we become engaged in new ministries sharing the love of Christ. I invite you to consider reading the Covenant Prayer using the words 'we' and 'our' to put it in the context of the church body. "We are no longer our own, but thine. Put us to what you will, rank us with whom thou wilt. Put us to doing, put us to suffering....."

As we enter into this process of engaging in creative relationship building, it will involve us putting aside ourselves in order to place ourselves at God's disposal. It will involve us doing things differently, challenging us to get beyond our own walls of the church building and out into the community for the sake of God and the reign of Christ. It is a ministry to which we are invited. I pray you and your church will know the presence of God that is already preparing the way for you as you enter into this exciting time of being the church. As the prayer says: "And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it..."

Peace and all good,

*Rose M. Blank*

## *Upcoming Events*

**January 28 and 29, 2012 - Early Response Team (ERT) training** will be held at Island UMC, 2598 Stewart Rd., Muscatine, Jan. 27-28. (Fri. 6-9 pm; Sat. 8 am – 3 pm). Please contact Becky Bartenhagen with questions or to register. Call 563-264-1537 or 563-260-1099 or email [bartrb@louisacomm.net](mailto:bartrb@louisacomm.net). We ask that registrations be in by Jan. 20.

**January 29, 2012** - First United Methodist Church in Mount Pleasant will be the host for our Southeast District annual learning event on Sunday, January 29, 2012, from 2:30 to 5 PM. For more information, please [click here](#).

Workshops will be offered for many of the committees of the local church, including Staff-Parish Relations, Finance, Trustees, and the Church Council. Participants will be introduced to the basic roles of each committee. New leaders and members of these committees are especially invited to attend. Specialized ministries will be discussed as well, including best practices in stewardship, the role of the treasurer, the role of the financial secretary, developing an intentional discipling system (how to help persons discover and deepen a life of faith), and identifying and applying spiritual gifts of members to ministry.

In addition, workshops also will be presented on a variety of creative ministries being employed by local churches, including community gardening, puppetry, and environmental justice. Make plans to join us for an afternoon of inspiration and support to further our witness to Christ in our communities. For more information, please [click here](#).

**January 30, 2012** – Orders of Elders, Deacons, Fellowship of Associate Members, Local Pastors and Diaconal Ministers –First UMC in Marshalltown.

**February 1-4, 2012** --“We invite you to help Nigerian clergywomen attend the first African Clergywomen’s Consultation from Feb. 1 – 4, 2012 at Africa University, Zimbabwe. The cost is \$1,600 each. You can see the difficulty they face. We are asking clergy in Iowa help make this possible for sisters in Christ. Funds may be marked: INP, #230, Clergywomen Consultation. Please advise Beverly Nolte, ([bnmedical@aol.com](mailto:bnmedical@aol.com)) co-chairperson of the INP, of your support.”

**February 23, 2012 – A Day Apart for Ministry Professionals** will be held at New Hope UMC in Muscatine. The program will be offered by Rev. David Morris. The event will be from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM with registration at 9:30 AM. Please let the district office know if you are able to attend.

**February 26, 2012 – New Places for New People.** The Conference Leadership Development Team is planning this event which will be held at First UMC in Fairfield. It will be from 2:30 PM to 5:30 PM. We will give you more details as we receive them.

**April 22, 2012 – SE District Conference** – Wapello UMC. More details later.

## *Announcements*

**Harry Denman Evangelism Award** - The Board of Discipleship of the Iowa Annual Conference is now accepting nominations for Clergy, Laity and Youth for the Harry Denman Evangelism Awards. Anyone may nominate a person in any of the three categories of Clergy, Laity or Youth (persons age 18 or younger).

Those eligible for these prestigious awards are persons who are effective in helping others to experience the transforming love of God through Jesus Christ. Each annual conference is encouraged to honor one YOUTH (age 18 years or younger), one LAY person and one CLERGY person from their conference each year. Anyone- laity, District Superintendents, or pastors-- may nominate someone from any of the three categories.

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Do you have leaders in your District who need prayer or want to learn more about prayer? You may want to share with them <http://prayer-center.upperroom.org/>, the website for the Living Prayer Center, a 7-day-a-week intercessory prayer ministry staffed by Christian volunteers where they can leave a request to be prayed for by volunteers. There are also articles about prayer there as well as on the Prayer Initiatives website [http://www.gbod.org/site/c.nhLRJ2PMKsG/b.6195985/k.BCBE/Prayer\\_Initiative.htm](http://www.gbod.org/site/c.nhLRJ2PMKsG/b.6195985/k.BCBE/Prayer_Initiative.htm). DS Community url is <http://dscommunity.ning.com/> Wishing you a most blessed 2012!

**Susan W. N. Ruach**

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### *Joys and Concerns*

If you have any joys or concerns you'd like to submit for the next Monday Musings, please contact Jean Carpenter at the SE District Office. You can reach her at 319-986-2095 or [jean.carpenter@iaumc.org](mailto:jean.carpenter@iaumc.org).

### *Birthdays and Anniversaries*

**February Birthdays**

- 2/01 Arley Ellingson
- 2/02 Diane Pippert
- 2/06 Roberta Gimmy
- 2/09 Jan Stiles
- 2/10 Earlene Lekwa
- 2/12 David Bracht-Wagner
- 2/13 Vicki Homan
- 2/15 John Tunnicliff
- 2/18 Janice Shafer
- 2/19 Gerry Kahler
- 2/20 Goldie Laymon
- 2/20 Jim Turner
- 2/28 Lydia Kayembe (wife of Emmanuel Naweji)
- 2/28 Emmanuel Naweji

**February Anniversaries**

- 2/07 Larry and Jeanie Allen
- 2/10 Doug and Ethel Reynolds
- 2/14 Bruce and Susan Ursin