

March 1, 2010



IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE—SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Sharing The Mission

“Making Disciples...Developing
Leaders...Transforming The World”

From The District Superintendent

LENT

The Holy Season of Lent has begun and we in the church have entered a time of self-reflection and renewal. These 40 days offer us an opportunity for intentional self-examination and opportunity to experience the spiritual disciplines of our faith. Prayer, Fasting, Self-Denial, Reading and Meditating on God’s Word are the means by which God’s grace is made real to us during this season of renewal.



The second chapter of the Letter to the Philippians instructs us to “work out your own salvation in fear and trembling.” Whatever that means, it sounds like we need to take the instruction seriously. The Book of Genesis recounts the story of The Creation. The first question God asked Adam (Genesis 3:9) is, “Where are you?” Later in the story, God asks Cain, “Where is your brother?” (Genesis 4:9). These two questions are good for us to ask ourselves during this time of Lenten reflection.

“Where are you?” Where are you in relationship to God and Jesus Christ? Are you living well? Is your life in balance? Are you standing on a “firm foundation?” Are you eager to engage the question or would you prefer to shrink in the shadows and avoid it all together? Do you know where you are?

And the second question, “Where is your brother?” Where are you in relationship to others? How are those relationships? When we are met by Christ, as he sits upon the seat of judgment looking at us filled with mercy and compassion and love...I imagine it is this second question that will challenge us the most, “Where is your brother?” You thought this salvation thing was all about YOU, but what about the others? Where are they? Are they with you? Have you thought about them as you worked out your salvation?

Once we know where we are in relation to Christ, we must then examine our relationship with others in relation to Christ.

Friends, Lent is a time for renewal. Where are you? Where is your sister/brother?

May your Lenten journey be Holy,

Brian

*“You must work out your own salvation in fear and trembling...”
-Philippians 2:12*

Missouri Valley United Methodist Youth Group

For the third straight year, the Missouri Valley United Methodist Youth Group brought to life the Cricket County cast. This year's production was the Cricket County's Christmas Carol, where hillbillies past, present and future take the stage in this version of Dickens' classic tale. Those that attended this year's Epiphany Party in Griswold on January 15th were graced with the opportunity to see this production.



The youth group, directed by Pastor Kim Crummer, has put on the dinner theater for the past three years as a major fundraiser for the youths' mission trips. They have taken two trips to date and are planning a third to Carthage, Texas in July 2010. The youth group typically does painting and teaches bible study for those less fortunate.

The kids put a lot of time and effort into the dinner theater. They start practicing mid-October and practice twice a week. There are about 20 youth members with anywhere from 14 to 22 taking the trip. Other fundraisers the group has done are such things as a car wash, taco bar, potato bar, Casey's pizza cards, and they are currently selling insulated travel mugs.

Ed Kail (Field Outreach Minister)



Learnings from "Form A" (Part 2)

During the snowy days of late December, 2009, I took some time to review the copies of "Form A" that each church submitted at their charge conference last fall. Here are some more things that I noticed.

Missions is another theme that runs through the reports. It is really impressive to see how many of our congregations are consistently contributing to some mission project, or several projects. Because of variations in reporting on Form A, I can't say how many churches are "Rainbow Covenant" churches. Some are "3rd mile" givers beyond the spectrum of the rainbow of missions—from local to international. But there is a **LOT** of compassionate mission going on. AND, we have only scratched the surface of possibility in

transforming the world through our mission work.

I was impressed that 6 of our charges are involved in Angel Food Ministries, a program for providing low cost food to local residents in need. Only one of those churches could be termed to be large. This community ministry through food is something even the smallest congregations can do, particularly when they partner with other churches in their area. There is ample room for growth!

You all responded well to the Disaster Recovery efforts here in Iowa. It appears that about 36 churches took special offerings for disaster relief, either in response to the Bishop's FIT Challenge, or on their own initiative. A number of churches also provided help through in-kind donations like flood buckets. There were at least 17 work groups from the SW district that did disaster recovery work in Iowa. And there were also another 15 Volunteer in Mission teams that traveled outside of Iowa, and even outside the USA, to serve Christ in situations of great need. I think that is FANTASTIC!

And I know that we haven't "broken a sweat" in doing what Christ invites us to do in mission. What if we really got serious, and committed ourselves to

double these figures in the next year, particularly the work team numbers? Suppose we became willing to inconvenience ourselves for the sake of others, in the love of Jesus—not to mention sacrifice?



One more comment: One of the questions asked of churches on Form A is: "Have you conducted an annual stewardship campaign?" One church responded, "No; should we?" My response is an emphatic, "Yes!" But more needs to be said. Ideally, stewardship will be a comprehensive emphasis on God's abundance and our response through giving time, talent and treasure to God's mission. Developing stewardship should be a year-round activity that is connected to faith development and the making and maturing of disciples of Jesus. If your "annual campaign" is only about raising money for a budget, forget it! Send a letter and move on—but know that you have missed out on a vital venture of faith: Christian stewardship.

If I can be of service to you in promoting, enhancing or developing any kind of mission or stewardship, give me a call!

Ed Kail

Field Outreach Minister

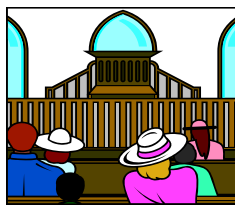
Southwest District Conference & Pre-Conference Training/Review

Celebration of Mission and Ministry And Pre-Conference Training

Sunday, May 2, 2010
First UMC
800 Poplar Street
Atlantic, IA

2:00 pm—5:30 pm
(Childcare Provided)

The Southwest District Conference will begin with a registration and Fellowship time beginning at 2:00 pm and include celebration of the SW District mission and ministry. A special offering will be received to support *Haiti Disaster Relief*.



The following persons are members of District Conference according to the Iowa Conference Rules of Order: All clergy, local church lay leaders, president of UMW, UMM, and UMYF from each local church, lay members of Annual Conference,

equalization lay members from each local church, district-at-large members of Annual Conference and all members of the District Council on Ministries and district committees. **(Please be sure that these persons in your congregation receive this announcement.)** Any material that needs to go into the District Conference Packets must be turned into Shirley at the District Office by **Friday, April 23, 2009.**

The pre-conference training session will begin at approximately 4:30 pm for all persons who will be attending annual conference. Please be sure to bring your Pre-Conference Manual.

Could You Serve on an Annual Conference Committee?

The SW District has the following vacancies on Annual Conference committees. We are looking for individuals to serve on the following:

- Board of Camps—need a layperson with either finance experience or Christian Education experience
- Board of Global Ministries—layman
- Youth Representation to Agencies—younger than 18 at appointment
 - ◊Equitable Compensation
 - ◊Human Resources
 - ◊Nominations

- ◊Church & Society
- ◊Global Ministries
- ◊Archives & History
- ◊Christian Unity
- ◊Commission On Religion and Race (CORR)
- ◊Commission on Disabilities

YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATION TO AGENCIES—18-30 years old at election; 4 year terms

- ◊Council on Finance & Administration (CFA)
- ◊Equitable Compensation
- ◊Sessions
- ◊Pastoral Care & Counseling
- ◊Nominations
- ◊Resolutions

- ◊Board of Discipleship
- ◊Disabilities



Also needed is a Chairperson and Quadrant Representatives for the District Nominating Committee.

Anyone interested in service should contact the Southwest District Office at Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org. Those interested will be sent committee descriptions, preferably by e-mail.

Serving is a way to answer Christ's call to make disciples.

Lay Speaking Classes Are Coming Soon!



Lay Speaking Classes are being offered again in the Southwest District! One basic course and one advanced course will be offered on **April 9-10, 2010** at At-

lantic, First United Methodist Church, 800 Poplar, Atlantic, IA. If interested in receiving a registration form for the classes, please contact Shirley Lewis (District Administrative Secretary) at Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org or call 712-243-8573.

In **October, 2010**, there will be two advanced courses offered at Salem United Methodist Church in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Future information regarding those courses will be forthcoming.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

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."

Visit the conference website to learn more...<http://advocacydays.org>

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.

Wazzup at Okoboji???



The 2010 camping materials are in!

Packed with 1000's of fun, faith filled life-changing opportunities, the 2010 IAUMC camping catalog and Okoboji

brochure offer something for everyone of all ages—it's almost unbelievable! Day camps to 5-night events, Pre-kindergarten through high school, family camps, volunteer/service opportunities, leadership training and much more. We have enough materials for every child, youth, young adult and family in your congregation. CALL US and we'll get you as many as you need!

What's New at Okoboji? So much is happening this summer at Okoboji, and we CAN'T WAIT to share it with YOU!!! We've got your old favorites, new surprises...SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

First of all, we're continuing the Journey! Or...maybe we should say continuing with Journeys! The new Journey program is quite a hit, and it's here to stay! To make choosing what YOU want to do at camp even more fun, we've thrown in some new Journey choices! To check them out, and learn more about what Journeys are, take a look at the Journeys section in this catalog or visit www.okobojiicamp.com. This summer our "shorter" camps have also

experienced some changes, with the introduction of "Short Stacks". These 2-night camps for 6-9 year olds have all the fun you're used to, plus a few new surprises! Check them out!

So...what's new? Everything! Whether you are a day camper ready for that new overnight experience, a 2-nighter ready for a new week-long adventure, or a past camper ready to try out some new Journey choices or Specialty Camp, it's easy to see that there is always something new waiting for you at camp!

Camp Ambassadors! New Outreach Opportunity! An Okoboji camping experience has been part of countless people's faith stories beginning in 1915. Camp Ambassadors work within their local churches to continue the tradition of sharing the mission and ministry of an Okoboji camping experience! Our goal is to make it easy...even FUN to share this powerful opportunity! New resources include printed materials, videos and handouts all designed to help children, youth, young adults and families learn of life changing camp and retreat opportunities at Okoboji United Methodist Camp. Each United Methodist Church in NW Iowa will receive a 2010 Camp Ambassadors packet. To request additional copies, please contact us at camp. Email or call 1-855-856-9862.

HELP! Children, youth and families in YOUR churches or places of ministry need to know about camping opportunities! Camp is a place where many of your colleagues, friends and family members have made decisions about faith in their lives! *Camp is a mountain-top experience in many people's faith stories.* Maybe it's in yours too? A camping experience CONTINUES to be part of today's children, youth and families faith story! **THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR CAMPING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE FAMILIES IN YOUR CHURCH!!**

Camp Sunday—Do you have a Camp Sunday celebration planned yet? If not...PLEASE DO! Everyone needs to know that camp is a fun, effective and exciting way to help children, youth and families grow in faith! There's plenty of time to schedule a special day to focus on the good news of our Iowa Camping Program! The activities and opportunities campers experience at camp will stick with them for the rest of their lives!

The staff at Okoboji is here to help! We would love to help you plan your Camp Sunday celebration. Just let us know!

"Camp gives kids a world of good!"

www.okobojiicamp.com—1.866.856.9862-

info@okobojiicamp.com

To My Mission Friends of the Southwest District...

As I write this note to you, I am anxiously awaiting your Rainbow Covenant Reports! I have several, but many more need to come in. I am so proud of all that you do and I wish I could tell everyone of your many successes. My main item of business right now is to urge you to get started on your 2010 mission work. Start early and it will go much better. Please go to the conference website and go to Missions menu and you

will find much information. There will be an update to the book, but I cannot tell you when it will be out. Be sure to check in the book and the updates as there are several items that have been removed. Midwest Distribution in Chatham, IL is one that even I do not know of the status right now. It was done and so it might be in. So, please check if you have any doubts and don't send money thinking it has a number and will count,

up your good work. Plan and then initiate! Keep your people informed of all mission work in the Iowa conference. There is much to do!



Leann Baker
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Clearfield, IA 50840
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Happenings in Hispanic Ministries

While the disaster in Haiti is very much in our minds, we would do well to remember that the world's people in need are just outside our doors, in our own communities. Here are some thoughts from Rev. Rubén Mendoza, Hispanic pastor at Broadway UMC, Council Bluffs—and beyond!

IT IS A BLESSING TO GIVE

In this life, there is no one poorer than someone who cannot give to someone else who has need of more necessities to sustain life. God's Word invites us to give, and tells us that it is better to give than to receive. Giving is a decision we can make because of the love God has placed in each one of us.

One of the clearest examples regarding the importance of giving in the Bible is from Matthew 25:35-40. "I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me." The righteous will then answer him, "When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we ever see you a stranger and welcome you in our homes, or naked and clothe you? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?" The King will reply, "I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me!"

In this passage, we find that all we do to others or for others is as though we do it to God himself. That is why it is such a great blessing to give.

Today in the world there are so many problems caused by hunger, war and natural disasters that create great needs for humanity. The most recent, of course, is the tragedy in Haiti. Each one of these needs that continue to exist is yet another opportunity for us to give and receive the blessing of God.

Rubén Mendoza

United Methodist Student Merit Day Scholarships

United Methodist Student Merit Day Scholarships are provided by the Iowa Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. Churches in the Iowa Conference are invited to make one nomination per church for this scholarship. Guidelines and an application (due by March 15, 2010) are available at

www.iaumc.org (follow the links under "Ministries" and then "Youth and Young Adult Ministries"). United Methodist Student Merit Day Scholarships are funded each year through the United Methodist Student Day Offering (celebrated on Sunday, November 28 in 2010). Other scholarship assistance is pro-

vided through the Iowa United Methodist Foundation (www.iumpf.org) and through the United Methodist Division on Ministry with Young People, United Methodist Board of Higher Education and United Methodist Higher Education Foundations (www.gbod.org/youngpeople).

Mission Workers Brave Crocodile-Infested Waters To Deliver Food

An ecumenical team of mostly southwest Iowa Christians fed, taught and provided medical care to villagers in Costa Rica during a mission trip Jan. 15-24. The group also helped with construction of a church sanctuary and a private home. The team of 15 included eight members of Broadway United Methodist Church, two from Emanuel Lutheran Church, two from Church of the Brethren in Kingsley and one each from Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in Glenwood, Monroe United Methodist Church in Walnut and a church in Graeagle, Calif. We had an 80-year-old and a 17-year-old," said Lea Kuper, one of the organizers. Team members stayed with host families in Costa Rica, which is about 10 degrees north of the equator. Besides the hot climate—the average temperature there is about 94 degrees—visitors had to contend with geckos, giant beetles, mice and ants.

The area, which is predominantly agricultural, produces pineapples, bananas, sugar cane, palm oil and corn, Kuper said. In recent years, a banana plantation closed, leaving 10,000 people without jobs. Inhabitants of several villages on the property may be forced to move by the new owner.

The project developed after a trip to Guatemala fell through, said Sue Jungman, another of the trip's organizers. When the destination in that country became violent, organizers contacted the Volunteers In Mission office in Omaha, which recommended Fred Curry's Rice and Beans Ministry.

"We had rice and beans every meal but one," she said. "That was 10 days." They also had eggs for breakfast, pancakes and locally grown fruit. "The bananas and pineapples were wonderful," Kuper said. The their main focus was getting food for others. "We fed 52 families while we were there," Jungman said. "The week we were there, 200 kids came to vacation Bible school." The group distributed 52 bags of food, Kuper said. "One sack would feed a family of four for four days," she said.

Distributing the food was an adventure, at times, Jungman said. Team members went by river one day to a hotel run by an American couple, who lent them an ATV and wheelbarrow for transporting the bags down a long path. Mission workers prayed with each family after giving them food. "But then it got dark," she said, "and there were no lights on the boat, and there were crocodiles in the river, and there were no life jackets. I was scared to death!"

Part of the team took a van with open sides and a platform and became a mobile Bible school, traveling to different villages singing, teaching lessons and playing games. Accompanying that group was the Rev. Ruben Mendoza, associate pastor at Broadway United Methodist Church. "(The Rev.) Ruben (Mendoza) was our bridge between the two cultures," Jungman said. Spanish is the primary language in Costa Rica. We really developed some nice relationships," Jungman said. Said Kuper, "They ate with us, and some of them would come in and help us get some of the crafts ready for the next day."

Team members watched as construction workers installed concrete walls for the new sanctuary at Lilly of the Valley Church in Sierpe, Kuper said. They helped the congregation set up chairs and equipment for an outdoor service.

"Something I'll never forget is, we took communion at the site of their new sanctuary there, and we were the first ones to ever take communion there," she said. Church officials dug a hole where people could bury personal memorabilia, Kuper said. "We'll never see it again, but we'll always be a part of the sanctuary," she said.

On their last night there during a special service, team members presented a new sign to church officials.

Article Taken From Council Bluffs "Non Pareil" - 2-12-10

In Memory Of...

In Loving Memory of
Rev. Marlene Brown
Henderson-Macedonia-
Wheeler Grove



4-26-41 To 2-10-10

Iowa VIM Training Event!

Saturday, April 17, 2010
9:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
405 Prairie Street
Guthrie Center, IA

Contact: Rev. Annette Kruse
641-332-2408

Instructors: Dan and Jean Houston

Upcoming Events!

- **March 2, 2010**—RIM Group Meeting—9:30 a.m.—District Office
- **March 4, 2010**—”Deepenings” Book Study—10:00 a.m.—District Office
- **March 10, 2010**—Seminar for Pastors of Small Churches—10:00 a.m.—District Office
- **March 14, 2010**—DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS!
- **March 16, 2010**—New Pastors’ Seminar—10:00 a.m.—District Office
- **March 17, 2010** - District Ministry Team Meeting—3:00 p.m.—District Office
- **March 19, 2010**—DCOM Interviews—9:00 a.m.—District Office
- **March 30, 2010**—District Lenten Worship Event (A Day Apart) - 10:00—3:00 p.m.—Creighton Retreat Center, Griswold, IA
- **April 2, 2010**—GOOD FRIDAY! -

District Office Closed

- **April 4, 2010**—HAPPY EASTER!



SOUTHWEST DISTRICT
SPRING CONFERENCE

MAY 2, 2010

Atlantic, First UMC
800 Poplar
Atlantic, IA

2:00 P.M.

“Intersections: God and Us”



- You Think You Are Ordinary? Think again. The **Young People’s Ministries** is sponsoring “Youth 2011, “MORE THAN” - Purdue University July 13—17, 2011, in Sacramento, CA July 27-31, 2011.
- The District Office has two copies of the DVD entitled “Journey of the Kit.” This DVD is 5 minutes long and follows the selection and preparation of InGathering kits made in local churches to their final destination in Nigeria. It reaffirms the need for the kits and how they are happily received by recipients in Nigeria!
- Do you have training, skills, or interest in research? Are you interested in the Annual Conference as an organizational system? The Committee on Planning and Research has a couple of openings. The committee meets 4-5 times a year. Members do research for the conference—surveys, project evaluations, demographics, environmental scanning, data for decision-makers, etc. Lay or clergy. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. For more information, contact Jim Davis (515) 268-3360 or jimdavis95@msn.com.
- The online application process for **Impact Community Grants** and criteria can be found at um-com.org/impactcommunity, or if you need further information regarding these grants, you can e-mail impactcommunity@umcom.org.
- **MESA Regional Gatherings**
 - ◇ Sunday, February 28th—2:00 p.m.- Collegiate UMC, Ames, IA
 - ◇ Sunday, March 7th—2:30 p.m.—Storm Lake UMC, Storm Lake, IA
 - ◇ **Saturday, March 13th—10:00 a.m.—First UMC, Atlantic, IA**
 - ◇ Sunday, April 25th—3:00 p.m.—St. Luke’s UMC, Dubuque, IA
 - ◇ Saturday, May 1st—10:00 a.m.—Fellowship UMC, Muscatine, IA
- The Southwest District would like to encourage all churches to hold a “Camp Sunday” where all children would be encouraged to find and attend a camp this summer. Should you have any questions about the camps, you can contact Keith Shew at Camp Okoboji, or Deke Ryder at Wesley Woods. For handouts regarding the two camps, please contact the Conference Center. They would be happy to provide you with all the material needed.

PLEASE **PRAY** **FOR:**



- Family and Friends of **Rev. Marlene Brown (Henderson-Macedonia-Wheeler Grove)** who passed away Wednesday, February 10, 2010.
- **Jeff Leden, Husband of Rev. Leila Blackburn (Griswold)** as he deals with health issues.
- The **People of Haiti** and all of the rescue workers and volunteers.
- **Rev. Kathleen Cramer (Ross, Calvary-Gray)** as she recovers from open heart surgery at Clarkson Hospital in Omaha, NE.
- Family and Friends of **Pastor Melodee Carstens’ (Marne-Buck Creek)** Father, John Menefee who passed away Thursday, February 25, 2010. Funeral services are Monday, March 1, 2010 at the Panora Funeral Home at 10:00 a.m.
- **Pastors and Congregations** facing pastoral transition this year.

The United Methodist Church

*Southwest District Office
1201 E. 7th Street, Suite 300
Atlantic, IA 50022*

Southwest District Newsletter

Feel free to cut out the following contact information and place in a convenient location.



Southwest District Office Contact Information!

**The United Methodist Church
Southwest District Office
1201 E. 7th Street
Suite 300
Atlantic, IA 50022**

(Located on the corner of
7th & Plum, Next to
The Rolling Hills Bank)

Office Hours:
8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.
Monday thru Friday

Telephone Number:
712-243-8573

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Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org

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