

May 1, 2009



IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE—SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Sharing The Mission

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

From The District Superintendent

One of the children in our preschool class was preparing for the Easter program, I stopped to listen. He was trying to sing, “I just want to thank you Lord for making me, me!” What came out was “I yust want to thank you Yord for making me, me!”



I like that! Let’s “Yust thank the Yord”!

M. Douglas Meeks says of the Church, “The household of Jesus Christ begins with the dancing and laughter of Easter, or it does not begin at all.” How are we doing with our “dancing and laughter” quotient?

When you get down to it, the resurrection, the resurrection of Jesus, or our resurrection, is a great mystery that cannot be fully explained or comprehended. (Despite last Sunday’s sermon!) It is also an exciting adventure. The poet speaks of our resurrection as a journey, an adventure into an unknown sea. Oh, that we could die with a sense of our dying as a new chapter to a well-lived life, that we could see even death as an adventure, an exciting adventure toward God! And that we could entrust those who have died whom we love on this great adventure as well.

Exultation is the going
of an inland soul to sea,-
past the houses, past the headlands,
into deep eternity!
(Emily Dickinson, c.1859)

I invite you to joyously celebrate the great Good News of our Resurrection faith. We in the Southwest District are traveling together as disciples of Jesus Christ on this journey of faith as we celebrate the triumph of life over death, the victory of hope over fear and the Great Good News that love is stronger than hate!

Indeed, “Let’s yust thank the Yord!”

Brian



A SW District Day Apart for Clergy—“Developing Non-Anxious Leaders in Anxious Times”

Creighton Retreat Center

Griswold, Iowa

Friday, May 8

10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

.4 CEU's
Will Be Offered
To Those
Attending This Event!

Led by The Rev. Bill Selby of *The Center for Pastoral Effectiveness of the Rockies*, Bill has worked with over 290 pastors (including the Nebraska Conference Bishop’s Cabinet and Orders/Fellowship groups). Over the past nine years Bill has been teaching clergy ways to manage themselves and their anxieties while living and working in the midst of anxiety-producing systems. Bill uses a “pastoral” model of systems theory and focuses his attention on enabling clergy to be healthier leaders of their church. This Day Apart seminar will focus on developing and maintaining healthy communication skills. **A registration fee of \$25** will help defray the costs of lunch, facility and speaker. Early registration is encouraged since space is limited. Contact Shirley in the District Office to register. Please make checks payable to “Iowa Annual Conference.” We hope you can care for your soul by participating in this helpful Day Apart!

Ed Kail (Field Outreach Minister)



“Do You Have a Good Idea?”

How can you tell that you have a good idea as you try to envision God’s call for you and your church?

Here are some criteria for evaluating ideas, suggested by Gil Rendle, formerly of the Alban Institute:

1) Does it sound “a little bit crazy”? If not, you probably have not left room for God to inspire or guide you, or to show you a better way. Think of all the examples in



the bible when the way of God defied conventional wisdom or common sense—Easter, for one.

- 2) Will we have to learn something in order to do this? If not, you are left with only your old ideas to work with, and they have produced the results you currently are living. Are you content with more of the same? If not, you’d better start learning!
- 3) If we are to succeed in this, will we need to change? If not, then you are committed to remaining in your “comfort zone.” A faith-full idea will stretch you, cause you to grow, and open you to new possibilities that will call forth new abilities.
- 4) Is this something actually within our power to do? Too often, our ideas depend upon someone else’s acting or re-

sponding in a certain way. This is particularly true for ventures in outreach—“if only they would do such and such, our plans would success!” However, we have no power to change anyone but ourselves. The circumstances we have the power to change are our own, not someone else’s. Let’s be clear about our ability and responsibility.



I hope you are vigorously “seeking the Kingdom of God and God’s righteousness”, striving to discern God’s will and way for you and your church. If I can help in that process in any way, just give me a cue, or a clue. In the meantime, as you envision your mission, try these ideas on for size!

Ed Kail
Field Outreach Minister

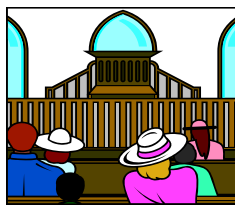
Southwest District Conference & Pre-Conference Training/Review

Celebration of Mission and Ministry And Pre-Conference Training

Sunday, May 3, 2009
First UMC
800 Poplar Street
Atlantic, IA

2:00 pm—5:30 pm
(Childcare Provided)

The Southwest District Conference will begin at 2:00 pm and include celebration of the SW District Mission and Ministry. A Special Offering will be received to support *Flood 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 Confer-

ence, 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.)**

The Pre-conference training session will begin at approximately 4:15 pm for all persons who will be attending annual conference. Please be sure to bring your Pre-Conference Manual.

Next Step Conference

Dear Colleague,

Our church people are inviting your church people to join us for a Conference on October 23-24.

We are calling it the “Next Step Conference” because we will be sharing some approaches to ministry which have worked for us and which might provide some helpful ideas as you consider future steps in ministry at your own church. These ideas range from multi-site ministry to puppet ministry. They include sports evangelism, children’s ministry, mission partnerships, and vitalizing your church organizational structure by moving from committees to ministry teams.

Dr. Doug Anderson, Executive Director of the Bishop Rueben Job Center for Leadership Development, will provide the keynote address on Friday evening and will offer a workshop the next day focused on the needs of smaller membership churches. Friday’s bar-b-que dinner will be held in the new facility we have constructed to house sports, recreation, and fitness ministries. Tours will be offered.

We believe the Next Step Conference will help any church, regardless of size, generate ideas to enhance their ministry—and we would be honored if your church would join us in October!

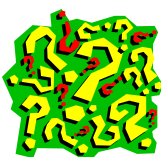


For a preliminary agenda and workshop list please follow the link on our website:
<http://www.ankenymc.org/content.cfm?id=2203>

Blessings...

Bob & Martha Ward, Lead Co-Pastors
Ankeny First United Methodist
Church
515-964-4249

Greetings to the SW District Churches



As I have been pondering what I can do or how I can help you with new ideas in your churches as mission projects, it suddenly came to me... “Ask” and perhaps they can tell you!!! So, that is what I’m doing in this letter. Can you tell me things we might do together that would benefit us all? Is there a meeting you would like to have, perhaps a question/

answer type meeting, a mission fair, a mission day or a combination of displays and Rainbow Covenant question/answer session. What would be helpful to you??? The district is so large I am not sure how to “attack” this problem, but perhaps we could hold a meeting in one of the smaller quadrants. Red Oak has offered to have a meeting of this type. Perhaps this fall we could just forge ahead and try some type of meeting and see how it goes and then learn from it and work on others. We don’t have

to do them all at once. Ideas???? Please send them to me. I also would love to hear from your Mission chairs telling me ideas and events you have to raise money for projects etc. Could you share them?

Leann Baker
2011 Vail Ave.
Clearfield, IA 50840-8011
641.336.2354
leann@iowatelecom.net

“Anxiety always ends up at the door of the Clergy”



The Center for Pastoral Effectiveness of the Rockies

Is coming to western Iowa for the first time, September 21-23rd.

What is the Center for Pastoral Effectiveness of the Rockies? It is a resource created to Maintain Ministers in Ministry, which focuses on Family Systems in the Church. Yes, there are several resources available which also focus on Family Systems, but what makes *The Center* unique is that it is neither a therapeutic nor academic model, it is a “pastoral” model. Everything we do together enables clergy to be healthier leaders both personally and professionally in the church.

As you begin planning your continuing education for the coming year, you might want to consider The Center for Pastoral Effectiveness of the Rockies. Now in its ninth year, over 350 clergy have attended

The Center from five different denominations in one of the Center sites in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming Montana, Nebraska, and Kansas. It is most popularly described as “*the most valuable continuing education experience I have ever attended.*” You can ready more clergy comments and other information at www.pastoraleffectiveness.org or contact a pastor near you, Pastor Dennis Reich in Avoca, IA at pdra-voca@walnutel.net.

Why consider the Center? Because there is a lot of anxiety across the country and our region is no exception. The economy, elections, the war, water, sexual issues, the changing face of the small town as well as the city, all add anxiety to the country. These anxieties ALWAYS end up impacting the church and *especially the life of clergy* both personally and professionally, as well as their families. It is absolutely imperative that clergy reflect on how they

can deal with his anxiety because much of the time the anxiety gets focused, even fixated, on the clergy. How do we manage ourselves so that we can maintain leadership of self, for family, for the church?

This is only one of the issues of leadership that you have an opportunity to work on while attending The Center for Pastoral Effectiveness of the Rockies. Beginning Sept. 21-23, 2009 in the Council Bluffs area (exact location tba), it includes Six Three-Day retreats scheduled over eighteen months and costs only \$1800. Don't let money be the deciding factor. The Center is designed to span three calendar years to make more Continuing Education funds available...just another way of being a “pastoral sensitive model.”

You can register. Just email Rev. Bill Selby at integrity4u@comcast.net.

It's TIME to REGISTER for camp!!!!!!

Okoboji Camp is in its final stages of gearing up for the 2009 camping season. With more camper choices than EVER before. It's going to be a GREAT SUMMER at Okoboji! Children, youth and families from all across the mid-west are registering for 2009 events RIGHT NOW! But...WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP!

New Okoboji camping DVD available! Visit www.okobojicamp.com. Multiple length/High Quality/great to show during worship, Sunday school, fellowship times, etc.

GET THE WORD OUT! Children, youth and families in YOUR churches or places of ministry need to know about camping opportunities! Camp is a place where 1,000's of people have made decisions about faith in their lives! PLEASE SHARE CAMPING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE FAMILIES IN YOUR CHURCH!

New for 2009!

- **Bus transportation** to Okoboji! Don't feel like driving all the way to camp? Want to start hanging out with camp staff and friends even sooner? Then grab the bus to Okoboji and we'll take care of the rest! The bus will depart

from Atlantic, IA and make pick-up stops in Denison and Sioux City before arriving at camp in time for check-in. You'll get full details, including departure times, when you register. All aboard!

- **New Program**—more choices at camp than EVER before!
- **Family discount**—Receive an extra \$25.00 discount for each additional family member who comes to camp in 2009. Any camping event they choose!

Camperships—There is money to help families who need financial assistance to attend camp. Let us know and we'll help you get them signed up. We've NEVER told a family no because of a financial concern.

STAFF OPENINGS—Okoboji is in need of an evening cook, a health care manager and 1-2 male staff to serve as summer cabin leaders. All seasonal staff positions include salary, job training, certifications in American Red Cross CPR & 1st Aid, the opportunity for certification as an American Red Cross Lifeguard, room, board and staff clothing. Staff need to be at least 18 years old and out of high school for one year. *If you know someone who may be interested—LET US KNOW!*

We're here to help! We have fun/user-friendly brochures and catalogs for everyone in your church! We also have great resources for worship and camp Sunday celebrations. LET US KNOW AND WE'LL GET YOU SOME HELP!

Camping events provide children, youth, young adults and families with an opportunity to learn, play, experience God's love in the outdoors, grow in faith in a safe atmosphere, and to reach their personal best! The activities and opportunities that campers experience at camp will stick with them for the rest of their lives! Camp provides the acceptance and support of a Christian community and positive relationships with adult leaders who truly care about children and making disciples for Jesus. At Okoboji, Jesus Christ is shared in song, word, worship and example as campers lives out their faith together in community. Okoboji provides an unforgettable summer experience, where campers can discover and explore exciting activities in a carefully supervised, Christian environment. Lives are changed forever!

“Camp gives kids a world of good!”

See you soon at camp!

Keith Shew
Director, Lake Okoboji United Methodist
Camp & Retreat Center

Disaster Recovery is Still Going On!!

State disaster recovery officials declared in



March that it is unreasonable to think that Iowa can completely recover from the damage of the floods and storms of 2008 in just one year. Some disaster victims are just now getting started on the road to recovery. Your church's volunteer efforts during 2009 could make a world of difference for someone in the flood/disaster zone.

Rev. Melisa Bracht-Wagner, coordinator of VIM work teams in the Linn County area, reported what is involved in restoring a family's home after a flood. She noted that each house is unique, requiring special attention and creative carpentry, but there is a definite order to the rebuild process. She outlined 14 steps, involving recovery administrators, workers, and volunteer specialists and workers, in moving from referral to final "house blessing". It takes roughly 3 months to rebuild a home, start to finish.

The average home requires 2,000 volunteer hours and countless amounts of love, tears, patience, encouragement and prayers. **You can see that there is something you can do to help—volunteer your time, your energy, your skills; make it possible for someone else to do it; or use your imagination, creativity and energy to raise funds to send for recovery work through your church!**

TEAM WORKERS ARE STILL NEEDED FOR JUNE!

Southwest District Lay Speaking Ministries

After a number of calls from folks who had conflicts with the May date for Lay Speaker Training (Women of Faith, District conference, weddings, farming, etc.), we have elected to postpone the May Lay Speaking class to July. We have also included the projected calendar through 2010, so that you can begin to plan accordingly. Sites and course for those trainings will be announced by July 1, 2009.



NEXT TRAINING EVENT: July 24-25, 2009 (at Harlan—First UMC)

Advanced Course 1: **THEME: PASSIONATE WORSHIP—Advanced Preaching** (*Lay Speakers Preach—Dave Swinton, Instructor*)

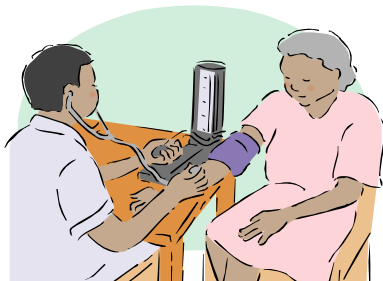
Advanced Course 2: **THEME: Radical Hospitality—Pursuing the Full Kingdom Potential of Your Congregation—**(*Lay Speakers Lead in Evangelism—Lanette Plambeck, Instructor*)

Dates Announced for Upcoming Classes

- October 23-24, 2009 (south quadrant) - Two Advanced Courses
- March 26-27, 2010 (at Atlantic—First UMC) - Basic Course & Advanced Course
- July 23-24, 2010 (east quadrant) - Two Advanced Courses
- October 22-23, 2010 (west quadrant) - Two Advanced Courses

It is the intent of the Lay Speaking Team to offer classes throughout this quadrennium the fourth weekends of March, July, and October. Each year, a Basic Course will be offered at one of the sites. At the most recent training, there were 15 participants in the Advanced Course and 3 participants in the Basic Course. Then next Basic Course will be offered in March, 2010. For those interested in becoming a Certified Lay Speaker and who have not yet taken a Basic Course, they may take their Advanced Course (other than preaching) prior to the Basic, but will not receive certification until after the Basic Course is taken. All Certified Lay Speakers must take an Advanced Course every three years. If you have questions, please contact Lanette at 712-655-3928 or lanette@mmctsu.com.

Help Wanted!



Medical /lab technicians, Paramedics, Nurses, Respiratory therapists, or Doctors Needed to assist with Blood Pressures during Wellness Screening at Annual Conference 5:30 am until 8:00 am on Friday and Saturday.

Contact Kae Tritle, RN at: bktritle@msn.com or call 515-226-8760.

Thank You!

Corning UMC Work Trip to Oakville, IA



March Spring Break found 20 youth and adults working on flood recovery in Oakville, IA. The trip was organized by the Corning UMC but team members were UM's, Presbyterians, and Lutherans from Corning, Lenox, and Illinois. The group worked on homes flooded in June when a levy on the Iowa River broke, putting water in every home in this town with 179 households and 440 people. 80% of the homes were classified as having major damage or as destroyed.

All skills were put to use as the team put up drywall, mudded and sanded it, stained woodwork, put in subflooring and laid vinyl. Team members stayed at Oakville UMC where the church basement is now a dorm complete with showers and the church kitchen is available to cook meals.

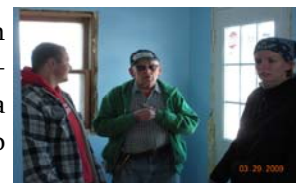


The purpose of a VIM team is to share the love the Christ while our task is to help in recovery. In one home, a team was sent to put in flooring. The young homeowner was overwhelmed with the recovery process, having a wife and young son, and then the situation was worsened when he lost his job in January. He would walk through the home, not speaking to the team and just sit on the sofa. Cathy, a 25 year-old teacher on the team, spoke with him. He opened up to her and for 45 minutes told her his story, even getting the pictures out to show her. His wife said that it was the first time he had spoken to anyone about the flood. Listening and caring is one of the most important parts of a VIM team and Cathy truly understood our purpose and shared the love of Christ with this man while the rest of the team got the floor put down.



Brooks UM Couple Celebrates 35th VIM Trip

Henry and Doris Heaton, members of the Brooks UMC, joined the Corning UMC on the March work trip to Oakville. Helping make this 35th work trip special were 10 members of their family. Three of their children, a daughter-in-law, three grandsons, and two granddaughters and a fiancé joined them on the trip. For five of the family it was their first VIM trip and a chance to learn what Grandma and Grandpa had been doing all these years.



Henry and Doris, both 79 years old, started going on VIM trips in 1995 with a trip to Sager-Brown before the UMCOR Depot was built. They have been to Sager Brown 14 times seeing many changes in the growth of the Depot. Several years they have been on 3 or 4 trips going from Alaska to Panama. Thanks to Henry and Doris for sharing the love of Christ for so many years!

Unified Grants Program Open For Applications

Churches that desire funding for special ministries in Parish Development or in Hispanic Ministries are invited to apply for a grant through the Iowa Conference's Unified Grants Program. Contact Ed Kail at the district office for more information or for an application form. Application forms can also be downloaded from the Iowa Annual Conference website at: http://www.iaumc.org/form_detail.asp?pkvalue=288. The deadline for submission of completed applications to the district office is May 30, 2009.

Anyone Called to Ordained Ministry?

Do you know any youth or young adults whom you think God may be calling into ordained ministry? If so, consider helping them attend **EXPLORATION 2009!** EXPLORATION 2009, scheduled for Nov. 13-15 in Dallas, Texas, addresses The United Methodist Church's need for young clergy by offering youth and young adults who feel God's call a chance to explore that call. This national event is for high school seniors through young adults aged 24 who are considering a call to ordained ministry as a deacon or elder in The United Meth-

odist Church.

The Rev. Tyron Gordon, Dr. William B. Lawrence, Bishop Sally Dyck, and the Rev. Motoe Yamada will be the keynote speakers for the event. Participants will also have the chance to talk with admissions staff from the 13 United Methodist schools of theology, attend workshops, and take part in small group discussions. For more information, or to register for EXPLORATION 2009, please visit www.gbhem.org/exploration or www.explorecalling.org.

Upcoming Events!

- **May 1, 2009**—dCOM Meeting—9:00 a.m.—District Office
- **May 2, 2009**—District Committee on Ministry—9:00 a.m.—District Office
- **May 3, 2009**—SOUTHWEST DISTRICT CONFERENCE—2:00 p.m.—Atlantic, First UMC—Annual Conference training to follow.
- **May 8, 2009**—A Day Apart—Creighton Retreat Center, 16493 Conrail Ave., Griswold, IA 51535
- **May 11, 2009**—Postage Rates increase to 44 cents
- **May 13, 2009**—**June 1, 2009**—Rev. Ed Kail—Vacation
- **May 25, 2009**—Memorial Day—District Office Closed
- **May 30, 2009**—Deadline Date for Parish Development and for Hispanic Ministries Grant Applications

JUNE 4–7, 2009

**The 166th Session
Iowa Annual Conference
Of The United Methodist
Church
Hilton Coliseum**

Theme: Radical Hospitality

“Intersections: God and Us”



- Beverly Nolte frequently has updates on the Iowa-Nigeria Partnership and the needs of our brothers and sisters in Nigeria. If you wish to be included on Beverly's email list, please contact her at: bnmedical@aol.com.
 - **REMINDER...** for those that attend the Annual Conference, and happen to leave the area for the winter, please provide your contact information prior to leaving, so that you can receive your registration mailing and pre-conference manual in a timely manner.
 - Dates and locations have been set for **Youth 2011**, a gathering for United Methodist youth that occurs every four years. **Youth 2011** will be held July 13-17 in West Lafayette, IN and July 27-31 in Sacramento, CA. Visit www.youth2011.org to sign up for event updates.
 - **Matthew 25 Grant Applications** are now available. Be sure to fill one out and get it submitted at your earliest convenience.
 - **Lay Speaking Classes** will be offered for those interested **July 24-25, 2009** at Harlan United Methodist Church.
- PLEASE PRAY FOR:**
- **Clergy and their families** who are facing the transition of new appointments.
 - **Congregations** who will wish their current pastors “farewell” and welcome new pastor’s into their community.



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

Fax Number:
712-243-8574

Office E-Mail:
Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org

**Brian Milford—Conference
Superintendent:** To reach the
Superintendent, please call or
e-mail Shirley Lewis, DAS.

**Ed Kail—Field Outreach
Minister (FOM):**
Ed.Kail@iaumc.org

**Shirley Lewis –District
Administrative Secretary**
Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org