

May 1, 2010



IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE—SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Sharing The Mission

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

From The District Superintendent

MISSION FITNESS

Getting “physically fit” is unsettling. My personal program is riding a stationary bicycle at the local YMCA three times a week. “Spin Class” involves a bicycle, loud music and an instructor with a microphone who constantly challenges us to work hard. “Increase the tension, increase the speed, don’t forget to drink water, stand up, sit down, stand up”...until thankfully, after 60 minutes he says, “Get off the bike.” Every instruction he gives us involves a decision to unsettle my body, adjust my load and limbs in a way that, while familiar, is also jarring and treacherous!



Growth of all types requires effort. When we give up positions of comfort and safety by willfully taking risks that upset our equilibrium, we grow. As in riding a bicycle, deciding to advance in our shared mission requires that we repeatedly choose to leave each place of safety along the way by taking destabilizing motions into *new uncharted territory*.

The columnist David Brooks wrote recently that we can only grow in life and work if we are willing to move through a series of *regulated errors*. Every decision and action produces partial failures (some things work out as planned, but there are always unexpected consequences as well), and these must be corrected by fresh moves that lead to yet more “errors” and the need for further corrections.

Our journey of faith involves a series of corrections as we try to live into our belief that Jesus Christ is Lord. In every circumstance I try to ask myself, what does it mean for me that Jesus Christ is *my* Lord, today, here and now? What does it mean for us as the Church, the Body of Christ, to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord? How will we live that out in our personal life and in our life together?

John Wesley taught that we are called to “go on towards perfection,” we are to grow ever more deeply in love with God. That type of growth requires that we leave past practices and mistakes behind and commit ourselves to the rigors of continuous learning and transformation. The status quo must be unsettled so that we can move toward higher ground.

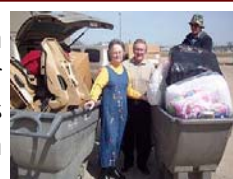
Striving toward our mission to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” means that we must unsettle what is known, familiar, and relatively comfortable in order to advance, learn, innovate and adapt. Doing that work together, in teams that respect the others’ insights and contributions, is the most reliable and effective way to move toward our goals.

How about it? Are you ready? As we refocus ourselves as individuals and churches on forming disciples for Jesus who will change the world, let’s share ideas, ask for help, link arms and move forward on this adventure of faith! Now is the time to get FIT with the mission!

Brian

Small Churches, Big Hearts

Nelva and Tom Petersen serve God through the United Methodist Churches in Dunlap and Dow City, Iowa. Recently, they took a carload of items from their churches—over 172 pounds of handmade quilts and fleece blankets. All this was a gift that will give comfort and hope to those in need at the Open Door Mission and Lydia House in Omaha. What is really special about this is that the whole town helped. Fabric was donated, squares cut, designs pieced, and some sewed and quilted. The quilts will be given to a homeless family, a hurting veteran or a baby. These blankets will also show that others care and compassion can come in many sizes and ways.



These generous servers also collected hundreds of pounds of items from linens to car seats. How wonderful to have a community come together to make a difference in the lives of the hungry and homeless. All it took was just one phone call from Nelva to make a big difference in her community and the lives at the Open Door Mission and Lydia House.

Ed Kail (Field Outreach Minister)



Taking Our Mission Seriously

I want to let you in on the conversation that we've been having among circles of district leadership, clergy and laity. It begins with a question: What if we took seriously our mission to "make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world" - so seriously that we committed ourselves to accountable action? What if we committed ourselves to reporting next year a new profession of faith for every 100 members in our current membership?



Suppose we put all other "business as usual" on hold for a year and prayed for God to open doors with

people who currently are not connected with God or pursuing any life of discipleship? And the suppose we did whatever it took to prepare ourselves to nurture people in faith and in discipleship—to know Jesus, believe Jesus, love Jesus, follow Jesus, and share Jesus with others.

We would take the focus off of church—we know how to do church with our eyes closed. We would instead focus on our communities, on people who don't know the good news of Jesus and God's Kingdom, on people who are in the grip of a life that is not happy, or satisfying, or fulfilling, or free. And we would commit ourselves to loving them toward God and God's Kingdom, whether or not they ever participated in or joined our church.

And we would measure our faithfulness in discipleship by our behavior, not our words. First, is the love of God and neighbor evident in our lives? Second, do we regularly and consistently worship God individually through prayer and corporately as a body? Third, are we generous in giving of ourselves:

time, talent and treasure? Fourth, are we regular and consistent in acts of practical service in Jesus' spirit, if not in Jesus' name? And fifth, have we shared our faith with others through word and/or deed so that they are drawn closer to God and God's reign and rule in life?

Each of us disciples would be willing to be held accountable for these behaviors, and not hide within the church statistical reports of attendance. The real proof of discipleship would be in our communities, outside the church: Is our piece of the world any different because we United Methodist Christians are there? The call is to be world-changing disciples!



What do you think? Would you give it a try? If so, I'm here to help.

Ed Kail

Field Outreach Minister

You Are Invited!!!

You are Invited
To a seminar on
Including the
Mentally Chal-
lenged In Your
Worship!



The Commis-
sion in Ministry With Persons With
Disabilities is sponsoring the seminar
during the Annual Conference ses-
sion in Des Moines. Staci Holms will
be presenting during the evening
meal of the first day of the 2010
IAUMC, June 5th.

To see the brochure and to obtain the

invitation letter and registration form,
please follow the following directions.

To receive the meal, you will need to
pre-register!

Register Now! No Pre-Registration,
No meal.

Go to the **Home Page of the Iowa An-
nual Conference**—www.iaumc.org

Click on the **2010 Annual Conference**
link.

Then click on the link:

**[For information on the 2010 Annual
Conference to be held in Des Moines
Iowa click here](#)**

Then click on:

2010 Events Information
(<http://iaumc.org/pages/detail/1685>)

Look down the menu for, and click on,
Inclusion for People with Disabilities

Then look directly under that new tab
where you will find *to the right* of the
lower “home” icon that if you click on
it, it will open up the side menu where
you will find the invitation letter and
the REGISTRATION form.

Thanks! Rev. Jud Stover—CMPD
Chair

Opportunities for Grants!

Has your church been thinking about start-
ing a new outreach ministry or a new wor-
ship service? If so, there are two opportu-
nities coming soon through the district that
may help provide your church with some
funding to start or to continue a recent
outreach ministry.

The Unified Grant application for 2011 is
now available. The Unified Grants are for
churches in the district who would like to
start outreach ministry or continue an out-
reach ministry in one of the three follow-
ing areas:

**Community and Institutional Minis-
tries:** *These funds are for Shalom Zone
Ministries, emerging ministries, connec-
tional agencies, and health ministries,
including parish nurse programs.*

Hispanic Ministries: *These funds are for
support of Hispanic/Latino ministries and
programming.*

Parish Development: *These funds are for
new congregational development and re-
vitalization of existing congregations.*

The SW District currently has a number of
ministries that are using Unified Grant funds
to provide new outreach with residents of this
area. These include the Nodaway Valley
Free Medical Clinic, Shenandoah Hispanic
Center and Salem UMC’s Manna Campus
outreach.

The Unified Grant application is due to the
SW District office by **June 13, 2010** and
funding will begin Jan. 1, 2011.

The Unified Grant application and instruc-
tions are available online through the Iowa
Conference web-site:
<http://www.iaumc.org/forms/detail/492>

The district’s Matthew 25 application is sepa-
rate from the Unified Grant and will be avail-
able in the next month. These funds will help
support new or recent SW District ministries

in the following areas: ministries with
the poor, with persons who are chroni-
cally ill or have special needs, and with
children from families with limited re-
sources, and Hispanic ministries. There
are many ministries occurring in the SW
District with support from Matthew 25
funds, including after school programs,
childcare programs, Hispanic ministries
and others. Funding for Matthew 25
ministries will begin January 1, 2011.

If your church has been thinking about
starting something new, now could be
the time to take the next step! There are
many churches in the district that are
showing the love of God in new and
innovative ministries and the SW Dis-
trict Grants Team encourages other
churches to take that step, too. Ques-
tions? Contact Shari Stucker, chairper-
son of the district Grants Team.

Kids Against Hunger®

On April 10th, the Atlantic 1st UMC
Youth Group led youth and adult lead-
ers from ten other churches in Cass
County in packaging 20,000 meal kits
for school children in Tanzania,
through the “Kids Against Hunger”
program. This event was a first-time
effort in this area of Iowa. Letters were

sent to 44 church youth groups in Cass
County, asking for both donations and vol-
unteers.

“We raised \$5,000, and had 77 volunteers
to package the 20,000 meal kits,” said
Steve Green, organizer of the event. “It
was amazing; everyone worked hard and

had a great time together. To see the
young Christians working together was
rewarding and fulfilling.” Among the
denominations represented by the volun-
teers were: Roman Catholic, ELCA Lu-
theran, Church of Christ, United Presbyte-
rian, Evangelical Free Church and United
Methodist Church.

From the District Mission Secretary...

Greetings this beautiful spring day! I think we all are so ready for this beautiful time of year after our surprising winter. We tend to forget just what winter can bring. But, as we prepare for the season ahead, I invite you to also prepare your "Mission Work" in your local church. Our District Conference is May 2nd and you are invited to share in the wonderful stories we have in the Southwest District. Shari Stucker is providing a digital projection for us that will show and tell many of our accomplishments, including the Rainbow Churches. Jon Waltz is planning a great display for everyone to enjoy in the basement area, I believe...joys, successes, and information for you and your church. Be sure and look for this. We had a display last year, but it wasn't advertised much and so not as much participation as we would have liked. I will have a table of some new materials available from Cokesbury that you can view and order if you like them. The new Rainbow book is on the conference website and there is so much information there for you to use and enjoy. If your church cannot access the website, the District Offices will provide you with a copy of the book. If you go the annual conference, there will be a display there of materials, etc. There are so many opportunities for us to "be a part of a much larger picture" in the mission world. I hope your mission work is going well, and you will be blessed! There are wonderful stories out there!



Leann Baker
2011 Vail Ave.
Clearfield, IA 50840
641.336.2354

Okoboji Camping News



Below is an excerpt from an article written by Kevin Witt, director of Camp and Retreat Ministries at the General Board of Discipleship. Kevin is concerned that

intentional links form between powerful camping experiences and the on-going nurture of a deeply caring faith community. Here are some of his suggestions:

1. "Energetically encourage children, youth and adults to participate in Christian camps and retreats and create ways to be aware of who attends from your church and your community.
2. Develop on-going strategies for welcoming those who return and provide opportunities to hear about the highlights of their experience. Show that you care by celebrating what is important to them.
3. Be intentional about incorporating meaningful aspects of the camp-retreat experience into the local church setting, in order to build on the seeds of faith that are planted. This may be a song which the congregation can learn, symbols of the experience in the worship setting, sermon or study topics, testimonies and stories, the chance to use new leadership skills in the local church community, etc.
4. Perhaps the most beneficial step a congregational leader could make is to participate in camp/retreat events yourself and develop partnerships with Camp/Retreat Center Staff. The connections you will make with the participants themselves can have life-long implications.

Rarely will you have the opportunity to develop the depth of relationships with persons from your congregation and beyond. Living together in Christian community for an extended period of time at a camp or retreat opens so many doors.

5. See Camp and Retreat Ministry as an important extension of your own congregation's ministry. Get involved and support it with your prayers, your presence, your service and your gifts. Watch lives change before your eyes as they become open to the moving of the Spirit in their midst in these special settings.

Walleye Weekend Getaway—May 1-3: Take part in an Iowa Lakes Classic! Come to camp and enjoy this annual fishing tournament that brings anglers from far and wide in the hopes of winning the \$10,000 tagged fish! Your registration fee provides you with two-nights lodging and a full Fisherman's Breakfast Buffet on Sat. and Sun. mornings! So grab some friends, family or other fisherman for some food, fun and FISHING...Talk about a great weekend! \$60.00/person

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 1-866-856-9862.

Local Church Camp Celebration: Do you have a Camp Sunday (or Wednesday) celebration planned yet...a time to share about the good news of our conference Camp & Retreat ministries? If not...PLEASE DO...there's still plenty of time! Everyone needs to know that camp is a fun, effective and exciting way to help children, youth and families grow in faith! The activities and opportunities campers experience at camp will stick with them for the rest of their lives! Our staff is ready to help too! Just let us know!

Bulletin Bites: Okoboji Camp is introducing a new program called "Bulletin Bites". "Bulletin Bites" are basically just a sentence or two from camp, for you to include in your Sunday worship bulletins, church newsletters, or any other place you see fit. You will receive "Bulletin Bites", via e-mail, a couple times a month as a way to keep your congregation "in-the-know" what what is happening at camp! Thanks, in advance, for helping to make sure these "Bites" find their way to the folks in your church!

Thank you for all you do for the Iowa Camp and Retreat Ministries!

Happenings in Hispanic Ministries

Here are some thoughts from Rev. Ruben Mendoza, Hispanic pastor at Broadway UMC, Council Bluffs—and beyond!

One more loss.

Through the Hispanic/Latino ministry of Broadway United Methodist Church we have experienced the arrival of many Hispanic people. They come from various countries as well as from various cities in the United States. They are a people with different cultures even though they speak the same Spanish language. There are both complete families and families that only have a progenitor. In the majority of cases it's the mom with her children. As they arrive at Broadway, we experience welcoming each of them. Then as children are born, we enjoy with the parents the arrival of a new member to our church.

Just as we experience the arrival of people we also experience many goodbyes to many people leaving for different reasons. Some families have had to go back to their country because of immigration problems and it is very painful to let them go. Other families have been separated leaving their children in this country as their parents return to their country because of immigration problems. Experiencing all these goodbyes is painful for those left behind, but there is always the possibility of one day seeing them again.

On March 29 this year, we experienced for the first time the loss of one of our Hispanic members because of death. The family is very grief stricken and our ministry also is grieving with them. Our sister, Victoria Escobar, was born March 10, 1923 and died March 29, 2010. She lived with her daughter and son, Dora Olivo and Vicente Escobar. Her youngest son, Ricardo Alfonso Escobar, lives in California. She attended our worship for the last time on February 28. We enjoyed seeing her at church as she was always smiling. She had a sweet personality and her eyes reflected tenderness that transmitted peace to anyone's heart that stood by her side. She left us behind. On earth we will not see her again, but we have hope, to one day see her in heaven with our heavenly father and to see all of our loved ones that have gone from this life.

Jesus told his disciples, and through John, told us, "Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know. (John 14:1-4)

Thanks be to God for the assurance we will see each other again!

Rubén Mendoza

31st Thanksgiving Ingathering

We all celebrated the 30th birthday of the Thanksgiving Ingathering in 2009 with amazing results! Thank you everyone for responding so generously!! This year, our 31st, and great potential for a record year.

The new Ingathering Booklets should have arrived at your church by now. Inside the booklet you will notice a new additional kit for UMCOR, The "Birthing Kit". The items requested are much different from the Iowa-Nigeria Birthing Kit. NOTE: The UMCOR Birthing Kit has a MISPRINT!!! "3 pieces of clean string" should read "each 12" long", NOT "each 12' long". If you are preparing the birthing kits for both UMCOR and Iowa-Nigeria, please mark on the box which project it is for, so there is no confusion.

Also, the correct e-mail address for the youth event contact person for the Mt. Pleasant site is: (Jason Collier) cjyouth@iowatelecom.net.

If your church has not received the 2010 Thanksgiving Ingathering Booklets, or you have any questions, please contact Ranee & Gaylen Goettsch at 1-800-228-2853 (or e-mail) ranee.goettsch@hotmail.com. Also, Gene & Lois Novak at 319-377-2092 (or e-mail) lgnovak@aol.com.

Please pray for the Thanksgiving Ingathering and its mission to "care for the least of these". Pray for the various ways you would like to be a part of the 31st Thanksgiving Ingathering!
In Christ's Service,

Ranee & Gaylen Goettsch
Iowa Thanksgiving Ingathering Coordinators



Wellness Activities at Conference

Even though Annual Conference has moved to a different place and is on different days of the week, several of the long-standing wellness activities are continuing. Listed below are the activities and events sponsored by the Wellness committee of the Conference Board of Pensions...



- ◆ **Foot'n It for Relief:** Saturday, June 4th, 7 am to 9:30 am. Join us on a 5K walk/run to raise monies for the Fit Challenge Disaster Relief Fund. The route will be from Principal Park to Grey's Lake along the Meredith Trail. A registration fee of \$15 will go towards Disaster & Flood Relief. Contact Willy Mafuta at w.mafuta@mchsi.com to register and for more information.
- ◆ **Wellness Screening:** Open to **all** clergy and spouses (part-time and full-time), ministry candidates/students even if you aren't on the conference insurance. Monday and Tuesday mornings 5:30 am—8:00 am in HyVee Hall. Included is: a blood-pressure measurement, a self-serve weight measurement, and the following lab tests; glucose, complete blood-cell counts, cholesterol (LDL, HDL, & Triglycerides), magnesium, phosphorus, calcium, thyroid, BUN (blood urea nitrogen) and a thyroid level. Men also have blood drawn for a prostate serum antigen. Pre-registration is encouraged. Contact Kae Tritle at bktritle@msn.com.
- ◆ **Mammogram screening:** Open to all clergy spouses on Monday, June 7. You must have an appointment. Call Iowa Radiology at 515-226-9810. American Cancer Society guidelines apply: over 40 years old, no lumps or problems, and your last one was over 1 year ago. You will need your insurance information and co-pays may apply.
- ◆ **Pedometer Walking Program:** Increase your daily physical activity by walking. Clergy, spouses, and others on the Conference Health Insurance program can sign up for the Virgin HealthMiles "go-zone" pedometer. A UMC logo pedometer is also available for laity to purchase.
- ◆ **Wellness Program and Wellmark Informational displays:** Located in the exhibit area of HyVee Hall. Both the Wellness Program and Wellmark will have information regarding healthy lifestyles, self-care strategies, walking, and other benefits included with your health insurance. Open Saturday through Tuesday to all Annual Conference members and visitors.

I invite you to participate in the above activities as you are led and are able. Please take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and relationally in the midst of our ministry celebration called Annual Conference.

Kae Tritle, RN
Wellness Coordinator

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 Monday & Tuesday.

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

2010 Annual Conference

2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

167TH SESSION

Hy-Vee Hall
730 Third Street
Des Moines, IA

Saturday, June 5

10 AM—Opening Worship
6:45 PM—Clergy Session
6:45 PM—Laity Session

Sunday, June 6

9:30 AM—Ordination &
Commissioning Svc
4:30 PM—Memorial Celebration

Monday, June 7

4:30 PM—Retirement Celebration

Tuesday, June 8

11:30 AM—Closing Worship &
Fixing of Appointments
12:30 PM—Adjournment of the
Annual Conference Sessions

Upcoming Events!

- **May 2, 2010**—Spring District Conference—2:00 p.m.—Atlantic, First—800 Poplar
- **May 6, 2010**—Multiple Staff Workshop—9:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.—West Des Moines UMC, 720 Grand Ave., West Des Moines, IA
- **May 6, 2010**—Deepenings Book Study—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.—District Office
- **May 7, 2010**—A Day Apart—10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.—Creighton Retreat Center
- **May 12, 2010**—Small Membership Church Seminar—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.—District Office
- **May 13, 2010**—New Pastor’s Seminar—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.—District Office
- **May 21, 2010**—District Office Closed
- **May 31, 2010**—Observance of Memorial Day—District Office Closed

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Iowa Annual Conference

June 4—8, 2010

*Hy-Vee Hall
730 Third Street
Des Moines, Iowa*

“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 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.
- **REMINDER!** **Ministry Appraisal Forms** are due in the District Office **May 1st**. The form can be found on the Conference Website under “Forms”.
- How are you assisting the families of our service men and women? Child-care...weekend retreats...a letter...care packages...all tokens of God’s love. Check out the website: www.Beyondtheyellowribbon.com which was set up by a United Methodist Military Chaplain to give local churches and communities ideas on supporting our troops and their families.
- Congratulations go out to all the High School and College graduates in the Southwest District!!!
- 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.
- **MFSA Regional Gatherings**
 - ◇ Saturday, May 1st—10:00 a.m.—Fellowship UMC, Muscatine, IA

PLEASE PRAY FOR:



- **Rev. Kathleen Cramer (Ross, Calvary-Gray)** as she recovers from open heart surgery at Clarkson Hospital in Omaha, NE.
- **Pastors and Congregations** facing pastoral transition this year.
- Lori Wiser (**Rev. Gerald “Bud” Wiser’s (Noble-Grant) Daughter**, who is recovering from heart transplant surgery.
- **Rev. Jaye Johnson’s (Riverton-Sidney-Thurman) father, Dan Johnson**, who has been diagnosed with lung cancer.
- The **family of Karl Hertz, the funeral director in Malvern, Iowa**, who recently passed away. The entire community and surrounding area are grieving this loss. Prayers are also requested that comfort and peace will be given to all concerned.

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