

August 1, 2009



IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE—SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Sharing The Mission

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

From The District Superintendent

Abundant Life

“Finances are tight and our numbers are dwindling. The congregation looks to me to turn things around. Frankly, I expect that of myself as well. Isn’t that my job?” So asks a pastor of a congregation that has been experiencing decline for many years. I hear this often, the belief of many congregations *and* pastors that when a congregation is declining it is the pastor’s job to fix it. Sometimes those of us in denominational leadership positions perpetuate this expectation as well.



But here is the hard truth. If you are a member of a congregation that is experiencing decline, whether the congregation thrives is ultimately up to you and the other members of your church. Your pastor can teach, guide, lead, support, inspire, coach, even cajole. But in the end, congregational health is a function of how people in the congregation relate to one another, how they relate to God, and how they relate to the community. A congregation is a microcosm of the greater church, a local manifestation of the body of Christ. In John’s Gospel, Jesus says, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly”. (John 10:10). How do we as congregations embody abundant life for our members and for our surrounding community?

A congregation that takes seriously its call to be the body of Christ brings people into a loving, life-giving relationship with God and others that actually changes lives. This is the nature of God’s realm, where RELATIONSHIPS are what it is all about. People find real hope in the midst of the despair of their lives. They experience belonging that overcomes their loneliness. They extend and receive forgiveness rather than vindictiveness or hatred. They discover a sense of purpose and direction inspired by God. They learn to live in gratitude and joy even when the circumstances are dire. Although a pastor can teach and preach this message, the message has power only to the extent that the people in the congregation live it and practice it in relationship with God and with one another. Practicing love, forgiveness and life-giving relationships changes members, congregations and communities. Witnessing such a compassionate life-style draws in others who want something similar for themselves and their families.

I am suggesting that declining congregations have lost connection with the church’s basic mission of helping people experience a personal relationship with God and inviting them to live the gospel message of life and hope. It takes all of us to turn this around. How could we live Christ’s compassionate love in such a way that the entire world, even our corner of the world, would be changed because The United Methodist’s are in town?

In Faith Together,

Brian

School for Lay Ministry Registration Currently Open

Jesus tell us in Matthew 20:28 *“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

Several years ago dedicated people with great vision initiated the School for Lay Ministry in the Iowa Annual Conference. Since that beginning in Indianola, the school has expanded adding campuses at Morningside in Sioux City and at Cornell in Mount Vernon. The purpose of the school is to prepare people to follow in Jesus’ footsteps by serving. The program provides supplemental leadership training to facilitate ministry in Iowa United Methodist churches. We can be the best servants when we are trained, informed and well prepared. The school offers 12 weekends over a three year period covering 12 carefully selected ministry areas. Schools are scheduled to begin this fall at all three campuses.

You will gain knowledge and insight that will be a tremendous asset to your pastor and your church. Additionally, you will grow personally beyond your expectation. You will build relationships that will enrich your life and you will surely become much, much closer to our Lord and Savior. I don’t know of any church in the conference that could not use more trained lay persons in their ministry. I invite you to prayerfully consider this opportunity.

Detailed information, dates, and registration forms can be found under [SLM Downloads](#) on the School for Lay Ministry website: www.iaumc.org/slm. Or feel free to contact Barb Mann at barb.mann@iaumc.org or 515-974-8905.

Ed Kail (Field Outreach Minister)



Summer is for Mission!

During summer months, many if not most of us like to get outdoors and be active. That impulse is a perfect motivator for engaging in some “hand-on” mission. Recent communications from our director of Disaster Recovery indicate that there are plenty of projects needing workers—from Waterloo, through Cedar Rapids, and down to Oakville, Iowa. All you need to do to link in with the effort is to go to the www.iaumc.org website and click on “storm recovery,” or call 877-393-1607. Some friends have invited Myra and me to join them on a work trip to Oakville over the Labor Day holiday. Why not invest a holiday in the Gospel in action?



Another phenomenon of summer is garage sales. A lot of useful stuff passes through those events, whether done by individuals or sponsored by organizations. I recently learned that some of our ecumenical partners who work with refugee resettlement have material needs that could be addressed by some creative “garage sailing.” Here’s the note I received:



This fiscal year (October 08—September 09) we have resettled over 320 individuals, and the next three months, our traditionally “busy” months, are still to come! Last year we resettled about 311 people total. Because of this increase in families arriving, we have an increase in need of household items. We are looking for churches, youth groups, and organizations to partner with and hold donations drives. If you would like to coordinate a donation drive with a group you are involved with, or have a suggestion of someone to contact, please let us know! We’d be happy to come and give a presentation about the program. Any suggestions are greatly appreciated! Many thanks!

Below is a list of items we currently have a need for—you could pick one

or a few of them to collect in a drive.

Things we are out of:

Dust Pans, Brooms, Pillows, Shave Cream, Hair Picks, Fans, Alarm Clocks

Things getting down to the last two or three:

Kitchen towels, Deodorant, Cutting Boards, Graters, Silverware (Especially knives), Kleenex, Vacuums

Things we will be needing soon:

Blankets, Towels, Comforters, Twin Sheets, Small Rugs, Telephones, Toilet Bowl Brushes

*Michelle Raymer | Community Resource Supervisor, Refugee Lutheran Services in Iowa
3116 University Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50311
Phone (515) 271-7364
Fax: (515-271-7479
www.Isiowa.org*

Perhaps you know of a similar United Methodist agency or mission or local organization with similar needs. How about “sailing a garage” for them this summer?

Ed Kail

Field Outreach Minister

Five-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation

God of Many Names

August 9-14, 2009

American Martyrs Retreat House
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Presenters: Dwight & Linda Vogel
Clergy Members of the
Iowa Conference

Details and application materials:

www.iowa5day.org

OR

Contact: Jerry Oakland
Retreat Leader
(712) 732-5458

jerrvoakland@iw.net

The Academy begins Sunday, August 9 with dinner at 6:30 p.m. and ends Friday, August 14, following lunch. On Sunday evenings we will have a time of welcome and orientation, covenant group sessions, and a Eucharist celebration. Each day following includes curriculum sessions, times for silent reflection, discussions with faculty, covenant group meetings and services of Eucharist, Morning Prayer, and Night Prayer.



The Academy for Spiritual Formation

- Open to laity and clergy, of all denominations—to any person searching for a deepened faith
- A time of celebrating holistic spirituality—using gifts of mind, body and spirit to grow in Christ and
- A way to help fill the deep spiritual hunger that characterizes many lives
- A program of Upper Room® Ministries, sponsored by the Spiritual Formation Steering Committee of the Board of Discipleship of the Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

Aging and Ministry in the 21st Century—Submitted by Betty Milford (CB—Broadway)

This workshop was keynoted and led by the Rev. Dr. Richard Gentzler in Urbandale on June 20. Dr. Gentzler is the Director of the Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministries for the General Board of Discipleship. He began by pointing to stereotypes of aging and defining later life, with new insights and updated statistics. One hundred years ago, the life expectancy was 47 years, today it is close to 78 or 80. Retirement lasted 2 years, on average, 100 years ago; now 20-30 years in post retirement years is not unusual. The new aging culture sees the need for empowering values of independence, activity, well-being and service. However, aging adults often continue to feel a sense of lost roles, relationships and meaning and the church needs to be aware of this. The church is

also one of the last institutions where inter-generational activities are possible, but churches need to be acutely aware of pre-serving these opportunities.

Dr. Gentzler divided the three phases of retirement into active (Go-Go), passive (Slow Go), and final phase (No-Go), and admonished churches to address all three. His suggestions for older adult ministries were numerous. One church has utilized a speaker phone so that a shut-in can read the scripture for Sunday morning worship. Another church sees to it that homebound members are joined by someone from church for lunch once a week. Another has created a “ritual for moving” when persons are moving from a long time home to a facility where they will receive needed care. The ritual included help with boxing belongings, a tour of the house to share

memories both of joy and sadness, inviting neighbors in, and singing hymns. A blessing of the new residence and frequent visits from church members are all a part of the ritual, also. Another suggestion was to actually hold VBS in a nursing home. Another church provides a Sunday afternoon worship service four times a year, to acknowledge that arthritic bones sometimes don't really loosen up until later in the day.



Grants of up to \$2,500 are available for use in 2010 and 2011. More information regarding these grants can be seen on www.aging-umc.org.

Trauma Summit



As pastors, we have all faced trauma in our own lives, the lives of our parish, community and world. In the midst of natural disasters, homicides, suicides, immigration raids, addiction, economic changes and job loss, many of us pastors feel ill-equipped to

help those in our lives to work through these traumas. The Trauma Resiliency Model (TRM) promotes healing in adults and children suffering from trauma thought integrative interven-

tions that link mind, body and the human spirit. Dr. Leitch will come to Iowa to share this model with us.

.4 Continuing Education Units (CEU) will be offered for the entire program on Monday. If you choose to attend the Sunday optional program, we will offer an additional .1 CEU.

Sunday, October 4, 2009

First UMC

Indianola, Iowa

This event is free to all who choose to attend—clergy and laity. No registration required.

Monday, October 5, 2009

New Hope UMC

Des Moines, Iowa

The cost for this event (clergy only) will be approximately \$15.

A letter will be mailed to all clergy in late July to early Aug. regarding cost & registration information for the October 5 event.

Pilgrims and Foreigners—By Rev. Rubén Mendoza (Council Bluffs—Broadway UMC)

The Rev. Rubén Mendoza serves on the staff of Broadway UMC in Council Bluffs and also is a primary leader on the District Hispanic Ministries Team. Articles by Rubén appear regularly in the church newsletter at Broadway. The Hispanic Ministries Team has asked that they be reprinted in the district newsletter, for wider circulation as an example of the special perspective Rubén offers as a permanent resident immigrant and pastor. Watch also in the months to come for updates on the expanding work of Hispanic Ministries in the SW District.



Treat Foreigners Well.

“You shall not molest or oppress an alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt. You shall not wrong any widow or orphan.” *Exodus 22:20-21*

“Radical Hospitality” was the theme at the Iowa Annual Conference. It is a theme that is easily found throughout the bible and depicted in the above passage. I will comment on this passage in this article.

The verses that we have studied and continue to study demonstrate that God cares in a special way for foreigners, as well as for widows and orphans.

Because of this, we can infer that God is the protector of oppressed humanity, of the poor, of orphans, of widows, of foreigners, of those who are suffering from illnesses, and of all who suffer in some way.

God is love, and he has transmitted his love for humanity through his Word. God sees in his children the perfect tool to transmit his love to those who suffer.

We, as children of God, have been converted into ambassadors of all that God has planned for this earth. That is, we are representatives of God and we have to act to help those who are suffering. In reality, God sees the necessities of this world in our eyes, and the best way to help a suffering community is through our hands. The best way to feel the necessities of this world is through our hearts.

It is a great responsibility to be a child of God, but it is also a great blessing to be able to understand the will of God in this world. When you see the look of satisfaction in the face of a person you have helped or welcomed, you are seeing the result of the work God wants us to accomplish.

God bless you. Feel proud of being a child of God and for being his hands, his eyes, his mouth, and his heart to give a sense of hope to a suffering world. - - *Pastor Rubén*

Becoming a People of Prayer

Do the clergy, laity, and/or the congregations in your District need to deepen their personal prayer experience, revitalize congregational prayer or develop prayer ministries in their local churches? If so, they might be interested in “Becoming a People of Prayer”, September 17-19, 2009 in Nashville, TN which will include plenaries led by Bishop Minerva Carcaño, Rev. Tommy Hays, Rev. Juanita Rasmus and Rev. Jim Walker as well as workshops and worship. For more information or to register, go to <http://www.gbod.org/peopleofprayer/>



Do You Know a Young Person Whom God is Calling to Ministry?

Scholarship Assistance is available for EXPLORATION 2009 through the Iowa Conference Young Adult Ministry Office. EXPLORATION 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. The 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 Methodist church.

Participants will be able to:

- Gain an understanding of God’s Call in your life
- Discuss the nature of ordained ministry in The UMC
- Talk with admissions staff from United Methodist schools of theology
- Hear about steps into ordained ministry
- Participate in workshops related to your own questions and interests
- Meet others who are considering their call into ordained ministry
- Talk with people engaged in a va-

riety of ministries
EXPLORATION 2009 will be held November 13-15 at the Sheraton Hotel in Dallas, Texas. For more information, or to register for EXPLORATION, please visit www.gbhem.org/exploration or www.explorecalling.org.

For **information about scholarship assistance** or if you would like your name included in a pool of participants who might be interested in traveling together, contact Eric Guy at eric.guy@iaumc.org or 515.974.8944.

Ministry to the People of Carter Lake

Dear Members of the Southwest District:

For the past several years, your faithful contributions to the Carter Lake UMC have enabled our Conference and Connection to have a significant ministry to the people of Carter Lake, Iowa, the only point in Iowa west of the Missouri River. Without your support this meaningful ministry would not have been possible. We would like to say "thank you," in a very tangible way.

On Sunday, August 16th, we would like to invite representatives of your charge, perhaps members of your Missions Work Area, to join with us in a Worship Celebration at 11:00 a.m. and a special meal fol-

lowing. We will provide the food, beverages, dessert, and table service, we only ask that you join us, and if possible let us know how many will be coming from your location.

The Rev. Karen Nichols Dungan, Assistant to the Bishop for Connectional Ministry and a member of the Carter Lake Charge Conference, will be the preacher of the morning.

Come and meet some of our 19 children who have gone to Iowa United Methodist Camps this summer. Join in joyous worship with our young congregation. Come and see the improvements to our building

which have been made over the past 18 months. Enjoy the delicious meal of some world famous (or at least locally famous) church cooks. Most importantly, let us express our heartfelt gratitude for your support.

We are easy to find. If you become lost, call and we'll come and get you. We look forward to seeing you in August.

Grace and peace,

Mark D. Heath, Pastor
On behalf of your church in Carter Lake

Youth Strike for Christ—BRING YOUR YOUTH GROUP!!!

PORTABLE FAITH

FEBRUARY 5-7, 2010

YOUTH STRIKE FOR CHRIST

MARRIOTT HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER
DOWNTOWN DES MOINES, IOWA

THE WEEKEND INCLUDES:

- Keynote Speaker, Kelly Croy
- Praise band
- Awesome Praise & Worship
- Small Group Sessions
- Room for two nights at the Marriott Hotel
- Meals on Saturday and Sunday
- Entertainment Groups
- Music Concerts
- Free T-shirt—And much, much more...

REGISTRATION INFO:

- * Visit our website for more information and pricing.
www.youthstrike.com

For More Information

Contact: Jim Oberbroeckling
E-mail: joberbroeckling@iowatelecom.net
Phone: 641-842-4136



Apportionments/Connectional Giving

Having a difficult time with understanding what **Apportionments/Connectional Giving** is all about? You are not alone and THERE IS HELP! Contact Ed Kail, Field Outreach Minister for the District. He and the District Stewardship Team would be glad to schedule a conversation with you and/or your congregation or committee.

Matthew 25 Grants—Do You Have a Project?



Are you working with the poor, the hungry, the disadvantaged, the oppressed, the lonely and forgotten, the vulnerable? If so, your ministry project could qualify for

financial support through the Matthew 25 Grant program. Applications are available through the district office, or on the district webpage of the iaumc.org website. If you have any questions about the program, contact Sheri

Stucker, Chair of the District Grants Team, at stuckers@hotmail.com, or Ed Kail, Field Outreach Minister at ed.kail@iaumc.org. The deadline for completed applications to be in the District Office is **August 15, 2009**.

Next Step Conference—New Ministry Idea!!!

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.ankenfumc.org/content.cfm?id=2203>

Blessings...

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

Mark Your Calendars!

September 24, 2009

“Stirrings on the Road”



**Coffee gatherings with our
Conference Leadership Development
Ministers**

9:30—11:00 a.m.—Carson UMC

1:30—3:00 p.m.—Casey UMC

A Conversation with Young Adults

Ministry with young adults needs to come from a spiritual center of Biblical and theological groundings rather than based on the “right” technique. It begins with the intentional willingness to be in conversation with young people rather than assuming that we know what “works.”

Saturday, October 24, 2009

9:30 am—3:30 pm

Collegiate UMC

Ames, Iowa

\$25 Registration fee per person Due by October 15

Register online at www.iaumc.org/yaconversation

Young Adult Ministry Grants

Grants are now available for ministries focusing on Young Adults (age 18-35) in the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church. The grant proposal process is flexible and is designed to promote creative approaches to Young Adult Ministry. Grant applicants are encouraged to submit innovative ideas for funding consideration.

Some examples of ministry requests *might* include: internships for young

adults, mentoring projects with young adults, funding assistance to employ young adults in ministry settings, ministries welcoming young adults into faith communities, mission/service projects centering on young adult involvement, ministries encouraging faith formation for young adults.

Three grant application deadlines (**April 1, July 1, and November**

1 of each year) are being offered to allow for emerging ministry needs. Application should be made at least **two months** prior to the date by which you hope to receive funding. Grant applications and additional information is available at www.iaumc.org/yagrants.

Upcoming Events!

- **August 6, 2009**—RIM Group Meeting—9:30 a.m.— District Office
- **August 6, 2009**—Deepenings Book Study—Place: TBD
- **August 12, 2009**—Orientation for New Pastors to the SW District—10:00 a.m.—District Office
- **August 16, 2009**—Strahan's 125th Anniversary!
- **August 16, 2009**—Ministry Worship Celebration for all Members of the SW District—Carter Lake UMC—11:00 a.m.—Special Meal following.
- **August 19, 2009**—Professional Interviews begin!
- **September 3, 2009**—Deepenings Book Study—District Office

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
- **September 24, 2009**—LDM Coffees—9:30—11:00 a.m. (Carson UMC) - 1:30—3:00 p.m. (Casey UMC)
- **September 26, 2009**—DCMC Planning Retreat—8:00 a.m.— 4:00 p.m.—Montgomery County Historical Society Building—2700 N. 4th St., Red Oak, IA
- **October 13, 2009**—Healthy Ministry Workshop—Harlan Community Center—706 Victoria St., Harlan, IA—Registration: 7:30—8:30 am—Workshop: 9:00 am—4:00 pm—Cost: \$15.00 to be paid upon arrival at registration
- **October 22, 2009**—A Day Apart—Creighton Retreat Center—16493 Conrail Ave.. Griswold, IA

Intersections: God and Us”



- The next **DCMC (District Connectional Ministries Council—formerly District Council on Ministries) Planning Retreat**

will be held on September 26, 2009 from 8:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. at the Montgomery County Historical Society, located at 2700 North 4th Street in Red Oak, IA.

- All Clergy and Diaconal Ministers are being asked to reserve October 13, 2009 from 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. for the next **Healthy Ministerial Relationships Workshop**. The Workshop is **mandatory** for all clergy and diaconal ministers and retired clergy who are hired by or appointed to a local church. The workshop will be held at the **Harlan Community Center, located at 706 Victoria Street, in Harlan, IA**. Lunch will be provided.
- All Clergy are invited to the Southwest District's "**A Day Apart**" on October 22, 2009

at the Creighton Retreat Center, located at 16493 Conrail Ave., Griswold, IA.

- You Think You Are Ordinary? Think again. The **Young People's Ministries** is sponsoring "Youth 2011, "MORE THAN" - Purdue University July 13—17, 2011, AND Sacramento, CA July 27-31, 2011
- The **2009-2010 Southwest District Directory** is now available. Please contact **Shirley Lewis (Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org)** if you would like to have a copy e-mailed to you.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:



- **Rev. Kirk Seagren (Dexter—Redfield)** who is missing. His wife, **Rev. Lilian Gallo-Seagren (formerly of Guthrie Center—Bowman Chapel)** and daughter, **Jane-Anne**, would also appreciate prayers during this very difficult time.
- **Rev. Annette (Ruhs) Kruse (Guthrie Center—Bowman Chapel)** whose mother passed away on July 10, 2009.
- **Rev. Lanette Pollock-Plambeck (Atlantic, First)** whose father passed away July 15, 2009.
- The **Missouri Valley UMC Youth Group** (25 youth and 6 adults), who are on a mission trip to Martin, S.D. They will be painting houses, doing minor repairs & providing VBS for the children of the Ogallala Indian Nation (70 kids a day). They will be returning on August 1st.
- **Rev. Gordon Scott (Villisca-Nodaway)** whose sister, Connie Spiker, passed away the weekend of July 25th. Funeral services—Tuesday, July 28, 2009, 10:00 a.m.—Mansfield-Hertz Funeral Home in Malvern, IA.

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