

November 1, 2009



IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE—SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Sharing The Mission

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

From The District Superintendent

Are We Seeking Members or Making Disciples?

Lutheran pastor Michael Foss argues that the central challenge facing many congregations today is to shift their self-understanding from being cultures of membership to cultures of discipleship. When Foss describes what he means by a culture of membership, he turns to the model of the health club. Writes Foss:



I don't want to push the analogy too far, but for the sake of illustration, let's think of the membership model of church as similar to the membership model of the modern health club. One becomes a member of a health club by paying dues (in a church, the monthly or weekly offering). Having paid their dues, the members expect the services of the club to be at their disposal. Exercise equipment, weight room, aerobics classes, an indoor track, and swimming pool—all there for them, with a trained staff to see that they benefit by them. Members may bring a guest on occasion, but only those who pay their dues have a right to the use of the facilities and the attention of the staff. There is no need to belabor the point. Many who sit in the pews on Sundays have come to think of church membership in ways analogous to how the fit crowd views membership in a health club.

Foss argues that this understanding has misplaced the true purpose of the church and distorted its nature. The point is not membership. The church does not have clients, members, or consumers of goods and services. The point is discipleship. The church exists to form and sustain individuals and a people who are followers of Jesus Christ, who are his disciples. Rather than buying into a consumer model, the church does more; the church redefines our true needs. The church teaches people to forgive one another and calls them to love even their enemies. It unites them with others who are also committed to this way of life.

Nevertheless, perhaps because we have grown so accustomed to thinking of ourselves as consumers of various goods and services, the membership mindset is hard to break.

Congregations and clergy seemingly have often misconstrued or misunderstood the closing scene in the Gospel of Matthew where Jesus meets the disciples on a mountain and charges them with the Great Commission: “Go therefore and make disciples on of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20). Somehow it seems we have heard Jesus say, “Go therefore, and make members...”

Yes, congregational leaders must take seriously the experience of congregational members, but the church is not driven simply by people's needs and wants, lay or clergy. It is driven by God's dream and purposes for creation. We are ultimately directed by the congregation's best understanding of God's will and way. The owner of the Church is God who has appointed Christ as Head of the Church.

During these times of economic tumult and reports of denominational decline, we are prone to simply strive to meet people's needs or listen to the loudest voice of complaint. We act like it's all about more members and their preferences. In one sense, that is understandable. But it is particularly during times such as these that we most need to return to our basic commitments and take the long view, focusing on the end, the goal, the purpose of all of our striving. Our end is to cultivate thriving communities of faith that bear witness to the in-breaking reign of God that Jesus announces and embodies. We are here to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world”.

“Go therefore, and make disciples...”

Brian

Southwest District Ingathering...

DATE: Saturday, November 7, 2009

WHERE: Greenfield United Methodist Church
108 SW 5th Street
Greenfield, IA
641-743-2715

CONTACT PERSON: Don Richard
Box 216, Humeston, IA 50123
641-877-8441 (e-mail: sdrichard57@yahoo.com)

YOUTH RETREAT: 8:00 p.m. Friday
An overnight opportunity for youth groups (Jr. and Sr. High) to have fun and learn about missions. Cost \$15.
Contact: Deke Rider, Camp Wesley Woods, 1086 Nixon St. Indianola, IA 50125; 515-961-4523.

<u>SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:</u>			
8:00 to 10:30 a.m.	Check-in kits, quilts, woodcraft items, crafts and baked goods	Noon	Lunch served in Fellowship Hall
8:30 to 9:00 a.m.	Music Presentation	1:00 pm	Quilt and woodcraft auction
8:30 to 1:00 p.m.	Bazaar, quilt silent auction		
9:05 to 10:30 a.m.	Mission Project Presentations		
10:45 a.m.	Workshop Service in the Sanctuary		

Ed Kail (Field Outreach Minister)



“Over-Churched” People!

In a recent edition of the United Methodist Reporter, an article titled “Allowing Jesus to Show Up” features an interview with Rev. Jorge Acevedo, pastor of Grace Church, Cape Coral, Florida. This summer I attended a workshop led by Jorge at the School for Congregational Development on the topic of “reaching working-class people”. The work they are doing in Cape Coral through Grace Church is truly amazing and wonderful.

In the article, Jorge refers to “reaching the unchurched, the once-

churched, and the over-churched.” The first two terms were familiar; the second was new, and provoked my thinking. In the article, Jorge was quoted, “The over-churched person is the second son in the prodigal son story, who never left home. ...Churches are filled with men and women who’ve been in church every Sunday, but in their hearts they are very far from God. The intimacy of their relationship with Jesus is but a faint memory. There are a lot of over-churched people who are United Methodists in name, but not Christian by their own testimony. ...They are convinced that everything is OK, and yet they don’t bear the fruit of a faithful follower of Christ.”

This description caught my attention. Does it reverberate with you? Could this be part of the picture of the decline we have experienced in the past 40 years?

Does your congregation throb with the heartbeat of God’s love? Is there testimony each week to the life-changing, life-saving power of

God among the people? Can you see or sense the growth or change in people’s character, from self to Christ-likeness? Does the community around your church ever wonder about the active kindness, outreaching compassion and extravagant generosity of your people—“What’s gotten into them?” Has anybody ever surprised you by showing up to see where your love comes from?



Or are we nurturing a closed circle of “over-churched” people—nice, religious, caring, safe, and unchanged?

I’d be interested in visiting further with you about this. Is this situation acceptable to you?

Your Field Outreach Minister

Ed Kail

Lord, Teach Us to Pray

November 13-14, 2009

The “Lord, Teach Us to Pray” seminar encourages individuals to take another step toward maturity in prayer. The schedule includes time for worship, teaching, testimony, small group experiences and prayer ministry. This seminar has the potential to change lives and to transform churches as participants are challenged to walk in intimacy with God through prayer.



Hosted by Tipton First United Methodist Church
Leadership by Aldersgate Renewal Ministries

Interested? More information and registration materials available at www.tiptonumc.org.

Questions? Contact Pastor Paul Frederiksen at 563-886-2331 or pastor@tiptonumc.org.

How to Get More Members...

Moving Members to Missionaries

With Jim Griffith



April 17-18, 2010
Des Moines, Iowa

Saturday—10:00 AM—6:30 PM
Sunday—8:00 AM—3:00 PM

Topics will include *Aligning Your Ministry to Reach Your Mission Field, Networking with and Gathering Under-churched People, and Developing a Specific “custom” plan just for your church.*

This two-day workshop is designed for a team of people. Each team must include the pastor and a minimum of three key lay people (non-staff), and all must participate in the whole workshop. Because lay involvement is so vital, this has been scheduled for Saturday and Sunday. Pulpit supply needs to be arranged so pastors can fully participate with the team.

Non-Refundable Registration Fee: \$300 for a team of 4-6 people; \$400 if not paid in full by March 1, 2010.

To register, send the name of church and number of attendees along with the registration fee (or minimum of a \$100 deposit payable to: Conference Treasurer

Iowa Conference of The United Methodist Church
Attn: Leadership Dev. Minister for Evangelism New Ministry
2301 Rittenhouse Street
Des Moines, IA 50321
Phone: 515-974-8926
scott.hibben@iaumc.org

Camp in the fast lane...

Is it just me or has this fall flown by? We’re already needing coats and hats to go outside, the flowers have died and there has been SNOW! In October! TWICE!! As a good friend recently told me, “I just love fall...both days of it!”

Change is happening all over...and fast! Not only did the seasons seem to switch on a dime, change is happening all around camp. At the beginning of this month, we welcomed the United Methodist NOMADS to Okoboji for a 3-week project. Their time here is going quickly, and the change they are bringing is profound! Half-way through their stay, two

cabins have been completely re-carpeted, another cabin has been painted, the retreat center has had oak wainscoting installed, the new maintenance building has received a roof and siding and the wagon has had some major repairs just in time for fall hayrides!! Whew!

It’s in busy, full, changing times like these when we have extra appreciation for having a place set aside to slow down. Many groups have already held a fall retreat at camp, and many more are coming. How about you? If your church/family/group has had a fall like we have, a retreat could be the perfect opportunity to get away and recharge. Come on out for a hayride, campfire, a weekend or longer! We’ll do

the cooking, you do the relaxing. Come see the change around camp, and maybe experience a little change in yourself.

See you soon!

Keith
Camp Director

“Camp gives kids a world of good!”

Okoboji United Methodist Camp & Retreat Center—Spirit Lake, IA 51360
1-866-856-9862
Okoboji.camp@iaumc.org
www.okobojiencamp.com



Happenings in Hispanic Ministries



Pastor Ruben Mendoza recently shared this report with the congregation of Broadway UMC in Council Bluffs. Since Ruben works with our district Hispanic Ministries Team to extend our outreach to Latino people all over the district, we reprint the article here for you.

Three Years

On September 3, we completed three years of Hispanic/Latino ministry at the Broadway Church. In these three years, we have begun a ministry which has significantly strengthened and been beneficial to Broadway. The testimony of Broadway United Methodist Church has been well-known in the Iowa Annual Conference. Many other conferences in the US have asked for advice and orientation to begin their own ministries using the example of Hispanic ministry here at Broadway.

The Hispanic/Latino ministry in the Southwest district now has eight ministries helping Hispanic people to improve their lifestyles in all aspects of society.

In Council Bluffs the Broadway Hispanic ministry includes:

- ministry to prison inmates in the Pottawattamie County Jail,
- social help provided by the Centro Latino and Justice for Our Neighbors in Omaha that, although located in Omaha, receives support from our district and helps people in our ministries.

In Broadway Church, we have approximately 100 Hispanics who are ministered to by the Word of God weekly. Many more have been a part of our church at some point, but they have returned to their countries of origin for different reasons.

Each and every week, we record the sermons of the Hispanic/Latino ministry on video to share with other district and church ministries. These videos are helping other Hispanic ministries grow and have impacted more people in our conference.

In the Pottawattamie County Jail, we have been ministering for two hours per week, and the ministry has been continuous there for two years.

We have also visited other conferences in Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Florida, and North Carolina with the goal of learning and making better our work in this district and conference even as we share with them. Tennessee will be the next visit with the goal of supporting their conference Hispanic/Latino ministries.

As a family we have learned a great deal in these three years and we have had some wonderful experiences. My children now speak two languages and have been very happy. My wife Yolanda, and I are very excited and content to work for such a great church as Broadway United Methodist Church. Thank you for your continued support of me and my family.

May God bless your lives and our ministry together through Broadway United Methodist Church. We thank you for your continued support of this ministry which is so important to our Hispanic/Latino communities.

Experience Hispanic Ministry in Worship!

The district Hispanic Ministries Team invites you to join the Spanish-speaking members of Broadway UMC in Council Bluffs in worship on Sunday, November 22nd, at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary of the Broadway church. Churches in the south quadrant of our district are especially invited to bring groups of people, whether a youth group, Sunday school class, missions group, or some other bunch of interested people.

You will be able to experience the feeling, vitality and faith of the worshiping community as you take part in the congregation's ongoing worship life. Translation will be provided for those who don't (yet) speak Spanish. Refreshments will be offered after worship.

Plan now to attend! If you have questions, feel free to contact the Broadway church office: 712-322-7741.

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.

Fall is Surely Here!



It is chilly this morning as I write this. As we are winding down our Mission work for the year, I would encourage you to start right now in getting your 2009 mission giving report in order. Check with your treasurer and see what they have sent to Conference. Get your books out, see what else you can contribute to. Why is your church involved in mission? Every member should know the answer to that one. The scriptures tell us that mission is the activity of a loving, caring God who

desires that all people have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10). Mission should not be an optional program of the church, but its central and key responsibility. God's light shines in every corner of the earth and joining in God's mission is to witness the presence of God in places where God is not known, acknowledged, served or heeded. It is up to you Mission Chairs in the local churches to enlighten your congregation and get them enthused to do the mission work of our Lord. You need to keep a record throughout the year of activities and giving not sent through the confer-

ence. An example would be of course, pantry giving, Christmas boxes, etc. Put a dollar value on this for your giving record. Thank you all and your churches for what you so generously do and give each year. I so enjoy hearing from all of you and going through each year's records.

Blessings to you all,

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

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



District At-Large Members

Please let the Southwest District know of anyone you would like to nominate from your church to serve as a District At-Large Member for the 2010 Annual Conference. You can either call the office at 712-243-8573, or e-mail Shirley Lewis (District Administrative Secretary at Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org). Deadline for submitting nominations is January 1, 2010.

Apportionments Do What?



Have you ever wondered what our Conference Apportionments accomplish, in terms of ministry and mission? Have you ever wished for help in developing a

“stewardship moment”, or call for the offering?

Check out the Iowa Annual Conference website: www.iaumc.org! At the bottom of the home page is a box titled “Featured”, and in it is a link to a

page called “Thank You Notes”. This page will contain stories of what our “connectional giving” accomplishes throughout the state of Iowa. It's not just institutional maintenance and organization—it's changed lives! Look and see!

Apportionments

Congratulations to all Southwest District Churches who are Current and/or Above in Apportionments Paid as of September 30, 2009!!!!

Adair—75%	Cumberland—75%	Marne—75%
Casey—75%	Pine Grove—76%	Buck Creek—75%
Wiota—83%	Dunlap—75%	Massena—75%
Bedford—83%	Dow City—75%	Bridgewater—83%
Brooks—75%	Elliott—75%	Avondale—77%
Carbon—75%	Summit—75%	Noble—75%
Carl—75%	Guthrie Center—75%	Fontanelle—75%
Carson—75%	Bowman Chapel—75%	Pisgah—75%
Mt. Hope—75%	Monroe Chapel—100%	Mondamin—83%
Braddyville—75%	Bagley—75%	Gray—80%
Shambaugh—77%	Yale—75%	Persia—75%
Northboro—75%	Linden—75%	Riverton—75%
Blanchard—75%	Dawson—75%	Stuart/Mt. Vernon—75%
Mercer Center—100%	Cooper—75%	Hawthorne—75%
Sharpsburg—75%	Bayard—75%	Villisca—76%
Council Bluffs (Broadway) - 75%	Defiance, Salem—75%	
Council Bluffs (Fifth Ave.) - 75%	Magnolia—75%	
Council Bluffs (Hazel Dell) - 75%	Macedonia—100%	
Council Bluffs (St. Mark's) - 75%	Strahan—86%	

Supporting SW District Ministries

It is requested that the SW District Churches prayerfully consider supporting the SW District Ministries through the District Askings (Voluntary).

2009 DESIGNATIONS

\$2.50 to the Missional Congregation at Carter Lake

\$1.00 to SW District Hispanic Ministries

\$0.25 to Aldersgate Camp

\$0.25 to other district programming

\$4.00—Total Per Member

2010 DESIGNATIONS

\$2.50 to the Missional Congregation at Carter Lake

\$1.00 to SW District Hispanic Committee

\$0.50 to District Grants Team for Emerging Ministries

\$4.00—Total Per Member

Southwest District Epiphany Party!!!



Mark Your Calendars!!!

Southwest District Clergy Epiphany Party!

Friday, January 15, 2010

*The Southwest District Office is eagerly planning this year's Epiphany Party! We are anticipating a great evening, with delicious food and great entertainment! This year we will be holding the event at the Griswold Community Center, located at 601 2nd Street, in Griswold, Iowa. We will begin with a Welcome and Fellowship time at 5:30 p.m. with the buffet dinner (provided by "Our Daily Bread" in Griswold) starting at 6:00 p.m., followed by the evening's entertainment. **Please contact Shirley Lewis at the District Office with your RSVP (712-243-8573). Cost to attend is \$12.00 per person.***

Upcoming Events!

- **November 3, 2009**—RIM Group Meeting—9:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.—District Office
- **November 3—13, 2009**—Shirley Lewis (DAS) - Vacation
- **November 5, 2009**—Deepenings Book Study—District Office—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
- **November 7, 2009**—Ingathering—Greenfield UMC—10am—2pm
- **November 11, 2009**—Small Church Group Seminar—District Office—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
- **November 12, 2009**—New Pastor’s Seminar—District Office—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
- **November 22, 2009**—Hispanic Ministry Worship Service—Council Bluffs (Broadway) - 7:00 p.m.
- **November 26 & 27, 2009**—Thanksgiving Holiday Celebrated—District Office Closed
- **December 3, 2009**—Deepenings Book Study—District Office—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
- **December 9, 2009**—Small Church Group Seminar—District Office—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
- **December 10, 2009**—New Pastor’s Seminar—District Office—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- **January 15, 2010**—Epiphany Party—Griswold Community Center—5:30 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.

- **Oakville, IA is trying to get 11 families back in homes by Christmas. Teams needed!** Tayna Lantz, the rebuild/volunteer coordinator in Oakville, IA declares that Oakville has decided to rebuild! They are buying homes, rehabbing them and selling them back to flood survivors who want to come back to Oakville. They desperately need volunteers! If you can organize groups of 10, 2 of them skills and 8 willing to learn, that would be wonderful. Any number of workers will help. They have sleeping/shower accommodations and lunch is served weekdays at the community center. **Cedar Rapids needs volunteers too!** They are currently working on 32 homes — some of them are minor repairs, most of them are major rehabbing. To volunteer call 1-877-393-1607 or go to www.iaumc.org/volunteer.

- This year’s **Charge Conferences** are well under way. Please don’t forget to **get all of your forms submitted to the District Office in a timely manner.** Thank You!
- Save The Date!!! United Methodist Advocacy Day—Monday, February 1, 2010—Visit the **Advocacy webpage** at 222.iaumc.org for more information or contact Kristin Clark Nolan, 515.974.8911/kristin.clarknolan@iaumc.org. Sponsored by the Social Justice and Mission Ministry, Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.
- The online application process for Impact Community Grants and criteria can be found at umcom.org/impactcommunity, or if you need further information regarding these grants, you can e-mail impactcommunity@umcom.org.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:



- **Rev. Terry McClain (Elliott)** who is scheduled to have neck surgery on Wednesday, November 11, 2009. It is expected that he will be away recuperating for approximately 3-4 weeks.
- **Pastor Nan Allen (Retired), Stuart**, who is undergoing chemotherapy for cancer.
- **Rev. Tom Boomershine’s (Council Bluffs—Epworth) wife, Winter**, has had to have her surgery rescheduled for November 3rd. Please pray for comfort and healing.
- **Rev. Keith Pals’ (Irwin-Kirkman-Defiance Salem) Sister-In-Law, Ronda Pals** of Mason City has terminal cancer and has been placed in Hospice.
- **Rev. Ken Ferguson’s (Carroll) Mother-in-Law, Loretta Hosack**, who suffered seizures last Tuesday, 10-20-09, and is in St. Anthony’s Hospital in Carroll, IA. It has since been revealed that she has 2 brain tumors. It is possible that she may be transferred to a larger hospital should the need arise.

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