



Sharing The Mission

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

From The District Superintendent

“She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.” Luke 2: 7 CEB



The Biblical story of Christmas in Luke’s Gospel lacks many of the elements that we often consider necessary for a perfect Christmas. There were no gifts. There was no table-heavy banquet. Family and friends did not gather round the Christmas tree. Instead, Mary and Joseph were far away from home and had to celebrate the arrival of their firstborn in an animal manger because “there was no place for them in the guestroom.” (CEB)



No place for the Son of God! How scandalous was that? The Savior of the World was born displaced from his home. Furthermore, he intentionally displaced himself from the privileges of being in the form of God and “emptied himself by taking the form of a slave” for the redemption of all. (Phil, 2:6-7)

Through Jesus’ displacement, he set the tone of the new creation he came to establish. In the animal manger at Bethlehem, Jesus communicated that he would always be found in the most unexpected places of our world.

Still today, Jesus can be found in the midst of displacement and rejection. He can be found in the midst of political and social tension. Jesus can be found in the midst of economic crisis and violence. Jesus places himself in the midst of infirmity and even in the midst of grief and death.

Friends, may this Christmas be an opportunity for us to displace ourselves from our conventional celebrations of Christmas long enough to seek Jesus in the most unexpected places amongst the most unexpected peoples. May we all find the Christ Child in the midst of the *new places and new peoples* of our communities. And *there* may we find the greatest gift of all- not earned or deserved, but freely given--- **God with us.**

May your Advent and Christmas be Holy,

Brian



Cement for Christ's Church (in Abuja, Nigeria)

Do you know that a bag of cement (110 lb) is only \$13? That's 2000 naira in Nigeria! The "to be constructed" United Methodist Church in the Federal Capital of Abuja needs cement for their new church building. As a new church start, they are operating under new and strict city building codes. With various challenges before them and considering the strategic location of Abuja as the new capital of the nation of Nigeria, church members embarked on the huge project of church construction. Under the leadership of Rev. Matthew Daniel Dangombe, a plan is in place for an edifice that will include a Church/Sunday School building with conference hall, a guest house with guest rooms. This is a BIG project but trusting God to lead the way, the Abuja UMC Building Planning Committee requests assistance from their Iowa Partners.

When we Iowans travel to Nigeria on a yearly basis, we fly to and through Abuja. Rev. Matthew meets us at the airport, transports the team to a hotel just opposite the church site and returns us back to the airport for our onward flight to Yola. It would be wonderful to be hosted in the new church guest quarters!

Construction has already been started on the church property with cement block laid to the window level. Your gift of \$13 can buy a bag of cement to continue to cement the block walls of the UMC of Jesus Christ in Abuja, the new capital in the middle of the country. Gifts may be sent to the Conference Treasurer with notation: INP, #230, Abuja UMC.

Beverly Nolte—5221 Village Run Ave., #604, Des Moines, IA 50317—515-266-4186 (Home)

Ed Kail (Field Outreach Minister)



The Joy of Giving:

At the cluster Charge Conferences this fall, I had the privilege of telling about my experiences with the United Methodist Churches of Malawi, Africa. I shared their strategies for making new disciples and creating new places for new people as they proclaim, demonstrate and live the Kingdom of God. They have amazing faith, tremendous commitment, creative intelligence, compassionate



hearts, and courage to attempt whatever God directs. What they lack are material resources, as 75% of Malawians live in absolute poverty, on less than \$1 per day.

Several people asked how they might be able to contribute some of their

resources to help UM brothers and sisters in Malawi. I recently received word from Herb Mather, a General Board of Global Ministries consultant for Malawi, announcing some new channels through the mission-funding program we call The Advance.

The General Board of Global Ministries has approved new "Advance" numbers for Malawi. Go to: <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/advance/>. Click on the red and white icon that says, "Give now to The Advance of your choice." Type in **Malawi** in the "Find Projects" box on the new screen. Note the following new listings:

- **00203L Malawi Nationals in Mission**, for gifts to support "Persons in Ministry" such as Agricultural Specialist, Lester Mhone; Health and Nutrition Specialist, Mercy Niryongo; the Conference Treasurer, Amon Kamala and such.
- Numbers four and five are for the support of our missionaries, Sylvia and Teddy Crum.
- Six through nine are numbers that coincide with the four focus areas adopted at the last General Conference and cover most of the projects that partners contribute toward.

You can remit funds through the Advance Office in order to get funds to

Malawi quicker. Your church can send a check to **Advance GCFA, P.O. Box 9068 GPO, New York, NY 10087**. Include the Advance number for your gift, the specific project you are supporting, and the name of your local church. The money will be transferred to Malawi on a monthly basis, and conference apportionments paid will cover any of the expenses involved in international exchange.

Consider either diverting or matching some of the money that you will spend on Christmas gifts this season. As Michael Slaughter says in his book, "Christmas is not YOUR Birthday!" Experience real joy in providing crucial resources to the leaders and workers of our churches in Malawi.



And if you want to appreciate what your ongoing giving through the United Methodist Connection accomplishes, visit the "Thank You Notes" page on the Iowa Conference website: <http://www.iaumc.org/pages/detail/1646>. There is joy in giving, when you know you are making a difference in someone's life!

Ed Kail
Field Outreach Minister

Called to Serve Features Modern-Day Circuit Rider

On June 29, General Board employees had a rare opportunity to meet a modern-day circuit rider. The Reverend James (Buck) Buckhahn visited our agency as part of the Called to Serve series, which enables staff to hear first-hand from the participants we serve. "Pastor Buck" as he'd called by his faithful in the Churches of Faith and Hope Circuit, rode his motorcycle over 470 miles to be our guest chapel leader and to speak to employees about his unique ministry. Dressed casually in a red shirt, black slacks and bandana, Pastor Buck sat down with David Foster and those gathered in Wesley Hall to share his story of ministry and mission.



Born and raised Lutheran, Pastor Buck was first introduced to Methodism in 1971 while attending technical college in Morrison, Illinois, when a friend brought him to a "hippie" service—complete with guitars, food and hugs. It was there that he first experienced the Love of God working through others, and thus began a life-long transformation to the Methodist faith.

Pastor Buck started his ministry in 2001 after working for an engineering consulting firm for 25 years. He graduated from the School of Lay Ministry in 2004 and was given his first part-time appointment serving two local churches in the Southwest District. His ministry grew by leaps and bounds in 2008 when his district superintendent and field outreach minister came to him with a unique proposition—accept a full-time appointment to a seven-point charge as a novice local pastor—something almost unheard of in The United Methodist Church. Not one to back down and always hoping to serve full-time, Pastor Buck accepted the appointment and began working with his seven new churches, each with its own unique challenges and opportunities.



The seven churches that make up the Churches of Faith and Hope Circuit came together with a common need—to fund a full-time pastor. Pastor Buck works with an eight-person "worship team" composed of lay people and clergy-in-training who rotate between the seven churches, ministering to their rural parishioners. This unique approach allows the parishioners to hear God's spoken word in different voices, while also serving as a "training ground" for his team to test their calling—true connectionalism at work. Previously, each relied on part-time or student pastors who needed to move on from the churches because of new assignments and school requirements. Now with the addition of Pastor Buck and his team, each church has the resources it needs.

Since accepting the call to serve, Pastor Buck has learned to work on God's timetable, knowing he can't do God's work on his own or just when he feels like it. It's a 24/7 job that has brought non-stop blessings to his life.

This article was printed in the July 8, 2011 Pulse Express that is published by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church.

From Your Missions Chair

December Greetings!

As we see another year close, I wish each of you a very blessed holiday season. I received an email this morning that the revised Rainbow Covenant Book will be on-line very soon. Go to the Conference website and you will find it. I hope you are winding down your work for the Rainbow Covenant Reports. Check each spectrum and make sure you have given enough for your members to qualify in each color.



We are starting to work on the itineration of Karen Ujereh in the SW District in March. I will be contacting some of you after the first of the year and placing her for visits. She will fly into Des Moines, and as I understand it, will need transportation. More on this later. If you are interested in hosting her, please call and let me know, and we will see how it works out.

Leann Baker
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Clergy Family Fun Day—at Okoboji Camp!



Join friends and families for a fun and uplifting day away this winter at Okoboji camp! Sledding and tubing, cross country skiing, games and activities for kids (indoor & outdoor), great food, fellowship and Worship! You are invited!

Who: Clergy and Families from the NW and NC Districts
When: Saturday, January 7th (overnight accommodations available, contact camp)
What: A Day to PLAY together!
Where: Okoboji Camp—South Campus—New Hope Retreat Center
Why: ‘Cause you deserve a break!
Cost: FREE!



Please RSVP to camp office at 866.856.9862 or info@okobojicamp.com

Thanksgiving in the Flood Zone

Thanksgiving has come and gone. Families gathered, food was prepared, shared, thanks was given. Then in many cases, the weekend became a glut of football and shopping. Sound familiar? My Thanksgiving was something totally different. For the first time in my life, I spent Thanksgiving weekend without my family. I celebrated on Tuesday night with my sons and my mother at a local steak house. Then packed my bags and car and headed to Fremont Co. to prepare for the volunteer work days that had been called for Friday and Saturday to help families affected by the flood.



I spent a joyous day sharing Thanksgiving with Kelley and Jim, who live in Hamburg. Their home was not affected by the flooding. Both are members of the Fremont Co.. Long Term Recovery Team. While many spent Black Friday shopping, the LTR team hosted 35 volunteers over two days! We worked on yard cleanup on two homes in Hamburg. We worked on three farm homes west of Hamburg; all had taken 5-6 ft. of water in the basements, and were not accessible for four months.

Two of the basements needed to be completely gutted. One was an unfinished basement with lots of stuff still in it, including ruined antiques and a chest freezer full of rancid food. This one is now emptied out and power washed. The yard is cleaned and mowed. The second home was a large ranch with a fully finished basement that had mold growing everywhere on the walls and ceilings. The team filled a 30 cu. Yd. dumpster, and it is mostly down to the bare studs and foundation walls. The third home was already 95% cleaned. They had a small amount of mold growing on the floor joists overhead. We spent hours scrubbing it away by hand, then the homeowner and I donned our suits, masks, gloves and goggles, and misted every surface in that basement with bleach water to kill the rest and prevent regrowth. The family will be moving back in this week!

There is much more work to be done. Contact me if you can help. All of the volunteers this weekend gave selflessly of their own time. All went home tired and sore, with aching muscles and happy hearts and souls. For some of us, it was the best Thanksgiving ever!

Contact Me...Vicki Wedemeyer— swidumcdrc@gmail.com—(712) 249-6703

Happenings in Hispanic Ministries

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

The III Latino Conference took place on October 15th, in Des Moines, with all the Hispanic Ministries of Iowa attending. All the Hispanic Ministries met at Pleasant Hill, Oakwood UMC, who were very friendly in welcoming us. We all felt very content having our United Service in their church. We were accompanied by Superintendent, Brian Milford, of the Southwest District, who enjoyed the celebration.



I want to give recognition to those who were involved in the planning of this event, who are so very important to the Hispanic Community of this Conference.

The Hispanic Ministries really enjoyed the companionship, talks, activities, food and of course, the great spiritual celebration with which we ended our III Latino Encounter IAUMC.

One of our greatest blessings is that as time goes by this group gets stronger, not only in number, but in Spirit and unity. With the presence of approximately 150 kids, young adults and adults, this was a larger attendance than the past 2 events.

We thank God because the Hispanic Ministries of this Conference of Iowa is no longer a dream, plan or talk. Now it's a reality that gets stronger and stronger.

“And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.” Mark 16:15 (RVR60)

Rubén Mendoza

Foundations for New Communities of Faith



Laypersons, is God tugging at you to start something new in your community, to reach people that our churches are failing to reach right now? If that's you, then we invite you to become part of the new “*Foundations for New Communities of Faith*” training that we will be offering in 2012. Patterned after the Jim Griffith new church start boot camps and the PATH 1 Lay Missionary Planting Network, participants will be equipped with the necessary practical skills to begin new communities of faith right in their own towns, neighborhoods and settings, including:

- Identify your mission field and the most effective models for reaching new people, there
- The Seven Seasons of planting
- The Top 10 planting mistakes
- Why lay led initiatives work best in these contexts
- How to build a launch team
- How to network with and recruit people
- The practical benefits of local church and new community of faith partnerships
- How to launch a new community of faith
- Hands on coaching as you actually do it—Starting your planting
- And more!

This training is offered at the same time the School for Lay Ministry holds classes at Simpson College in Indianola. It is open to all laity (and interested clergy), not just SLM graduates. Classes will be held **January 6-8, March 2-4, May 4-6, and November 2-4**. Tuition for participants is \$100 per weekend which includes three (3) meals and instructor handouts. Scholarships are available through the Board of Laity. There are two hotels in Indianola, and Wesley Woods also welcomes persons for the weekend when they have space.

To request a registration information packet, *to be sent at a later date*, contact Barb Mann: barb.mann@iaumc.org / 515-974-8905 or for more information about this class, contact Scott Hibben, Iowa Conference Leadership Development Minister for Evangelism and New Ministry: scott.hibben@iaumc.org / 515-974-8926. Thank you.

Southwest District Apportionment Status (As of 10-31-11)

A Special **Congratulations** and **Thank You** go out to the following churches who have sent in **100%** of Apportionments for 2011:

Anita UMC
 Wiota UMC
 Bridgewater UMC
 Council Bluffs (Hazel Dell) UMC
 Gray UMC
 Macedonia UMC

Manilla UMC
 Mercer Center UMC
 Monroe Chapel UMC
 Oakland UMC
 Stuart/Mount Vernon UMC
 Magnolia (Closed 7-10-11)

Congratulations and **Thanks** also go out to the following churches who are **on track for full payment** by the end of 2011:

Adair-83.35%	Blanchard-83.33%	Bagley-83.33%	Noble-83.31%
Atlantic, First-79.74%	Locust Grove-83.33%	Yale-83.33%	Grant-74.98%
Bedford-82.50%	Lenox-92.78%	Linden-83.33%	Orient-75.21%
New Market-75.00%	Sharpsburg-83.34%	Dawson-83.33%	Fontanelle-83.36%
Brooks-83.33%	Broadway-83.33%	Cooper-83.36%	Panora-83.29%
Carbon-83.33%	Trinity-83.34%	Bayard-83.33%	Pisgah-83.34%
Carl-83.33%	Cumberland-83.33%	Defiance, Salem-83.34%	Mondamin-83.33%
Carroll, First-81.90%	Dunlap, First-83.35%	Logan-76.77%	Ross, Calvary-75.00%
Carson-83.33%	Dow City, First-83.33%	Malvern-83.33%	Shelby-83.33%
Mt. Hope-83.33%	Summit-83.33%	Wesley Chapel-75.73%	Shenandoah, First-77.90%
Clarinda, First-83.33%	Griswold-75.00%	Maple Grove-74.82%	Riverton-83.33%
Norwich-94.87%	Bowman Chapel-75.32%	Marne-83.33%	Silver City-75.00%
Braddyville-83.33%	Hancock-75.00%	Buck Creek-83.33%	Elliott-83.46%
Shambaugh-83.82%	Silver Creek-75.00%	Avondale-83.32%	Villisca-75.00%
Northboro-83.53%	Hastings-90.46%	Modale-99.83%	

A word of encouragement to those churches who have fallen behind and need an extra effort before year's end.

“Intersections: God and Us”



•Please note that the **Creighton Retreat Center** has rooms available for overnight stays. Room fees for one night's stay ranges from \$28-\$30 per person depending on the room. If staying more than one night, the rates drop to

\$23-\$33 per person per night. For more information, call Terri Lou Duggan at 712-778-2466.

- All Clergy are encouraged to participate in the **Southwest District Days Apart for 2011-2012**. Please put the following dates on your calendar and plan now to attend: **January 9, 2012**; **February 27, 2012**; **March 12, 2012**; and **April 16, 2012**. All of these will be held at the Creighton Retreat Center, located at

16493 Conrail Avenue, Griswold, IA.

- **PLEASE NOTE: FLOOD RECOVERY** efforts in SW Iowa are ongoing. We **NEED** your help and there are many ways you can make a difference. Contact SW Disaster Recover Coordinator Vicki Wedemeyer at 7 1 2 - 2 4 9 - 6 7 0 3 swidumcdr@gmail.com



God's Blessings to You This Christmas Season

From the Southwest District Office Staff

Brian, Ed and Shirley

Upcoming “District” Events!

- **December 8, 2011**—Deepenings Book Study—10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.—District Office
- **December 12, 2011**—District Hispanic Ministries Team Meeting—6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m.—Oakland UMC
- **December 23, 2011**—Observance of Christmas Eve—District Office Closed
- **December 25, 2011**—MERRY CHRISTMAS!
- **December 26, 2011**—Observance of Christmas Day—District Office Closed
- **January 2, 2012**—Observance of New Year’s Day—District Office Closed

PLEASE NOTE: The Lectionary Group that meets at the SW District Office will discontinue until after the first of the year. Thank You!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!!

NEW PLACES FOR NEW PEOPLE!

DATE: March 11, 2012
TIME: 2:00—5:00 P.M.

SAVE THE DATE!

District Summit on Hispanic Ministries

Saturday, January 28, 2012
Time and Location to be Announced

If there are Hispanic/Latino People in your community, YOU ARE INVITED!

Watch for further details.

Upcoming “Conference” Events!

- Bishop Julius Calvin Trimble has announced his intention to nominate **John H. Moorlach, Esq. to become the next Chancellor for the Iowa Annual Conference.** Mr. Moorlach is an attorney with the firm of Whitfield & Eddy P.L.C. He is admitted into practice in all of Iowa’s state, federal and bankruptcy jurisdictions and is a member of the Iowa state bar. He served as a law clerk to the Hon. Robert W. Pratt, Chief Judge for the United States District Court for the Southern District of Iowa. The Conference Chancellor serves as the legal advisor to the Bishop and the Annual Conference. A chancellor is nominated by the resident Bishop and elected by the Annual Conference.
- **Youth Strike for Christ 2012** is tentatively scheduled for February 3-5, 2012 in the new upper floor of Veterans Auditorium in Des Moines. For more information, contact Bob Morris—YSFC Core Team Chair at bobmorris@mahaska.org or 641-660-6717.
- **2012’s Annual Conference** is scheduled for **June 2—5, 2011** at the Hy-Vee Hall in Des Moines, IA. Don’t forget to mark your calendars!
- **New Places for New People—Training for Laity**—beginning January 2012 at Simpson College in Indianola. Open to ALL Laity (and interested clergy). Classes will be held January 6-8, March 2-4, May 4-6, and November 2-4. Tuition is \$100 per weekend which includes three meals and instructor handouts. For more information, contact Barb Mann at barb.mann@iaumc.org / 515-974-8905 or Scott Hibben at scott.hibben@iaumc.org / 515-974-8926.

Please Pray For...

- **Rev. Melissa Drake (Hancock-Silver Creek)**, whose Father, Kyle Drake, suffered injuries from a recent fall.
- **Rev. Karen Berg (Stuart/Mt. Vernon-Menlo)** who is now at home recovering from knee replacement surgery.
- **Rev. Dwight Grosvenor (Griswold)** who is struggling with the results of his knee replacement surgery.
- **Rev. Clark Christian (Dunlap-Dow City)** who is recovering from knee replacement surgery.
- **Rev. Gerald “Bud” Wiser (Retired)** who is at home recovering from heart valve replacement surgery.
- **Rev. Ed Kail’s Mother, Maxine**, who is recovering from a heart attack.
- Those who are suffering with health issues: **Rev. Bob Dodder (Retired); Pastor Mark Lewis (Churches of Faith and Hope Circuit); Denny Meyer (Member of Atlantic, First UMC), Connie McAlpine (Council Bluffs).**
- **Rev. Dean Surface (Retired)** as he recuperates from injuries sustained in a recent fall, and that future decisions made will be guided by the Lord.
- **Rev. Dan Grauer (Epworth—Salem: Associate)**, his wife, and their family, as they deal with some personal issues.
- **General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegates** as they prepare for the 2012 General Conference that God’s will be discerned.
- **Those displaced from their homes** because of flooding in Western Iowa.



The United Methodist Church

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

Southwest District Newsletter

Sent With a Prayer To:

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



Southwest District Office Contact Information!

<p>The United Methodist Church Southwest District Office 1201 E. 7th Street Suite 300 Atlantic, IA 50022</p> <p>(Located on the corner of 7th & Plum, Next to The Rolling Hills Bank)</p>	<p>Office Hours: 8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday</p> <p>Telephone Number: 712-243-8573</p> <p>Fax Number: 712-243-8574</p> <p>Office E-Mail: Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org</p>	<p>Brian Milford—Conference Superintendent: To reach the Superintendent, please call or e-mail Shirley Lewis, DAS.</p> <p>Ed Kail—Field Outreach Minister (FOM): Ed.Kail@iaumc.org</p> <p>Shirley Lewis –District Administrative Secretary Shirley.Lewis@iaumc.org</p>
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