

Fort Dodge District Connection United Methodist Church

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THE SUN IS SHINING! THE SON IS SHINING!

One of the realities of life is that at times the weather is not what we hope for. Days are cloudy; snow falls (sometimes quite deep); rains come; the temperature is too hot or too cold; the winds come as tempests rather than gentle breezes. At times when the skies are cloudy and overcast someone may say “I wish the sun would shine again.” It is as if the weather conditions are like the state of one’s spirit on such days. However the trust of the situation is that the sun is shining – even when we cannot see it. The sun still warms the earth – the earth still rotates and revolves around the sun in predictable fashion. The sun always shines. It is always at the center of the solar system. It can always be relied on. It is one of God’s graces. No matter what the weather conditions, the sun still shines.

In a similar vein, there are times when, if we are truly honest, our spiritual condition is like cloudy days. Clouds cause us to wonder whether there is hope for life being better. Dreary days of the spirit seem to blur the realization of some deeper truths. Speaking in terms of the weather we know that no matter what “the Sun still shines.” As the Easter people (with a slight variation) we know that the same truth still holds: **THE SON STILL SHINES**. His name is Jesus – He is God’s Son. The testimony of the Easter faith is that no matter how deep any darkness (with none deeper than on Good Friday) the **SON STILL SHINES**.

As Christians we have a message to share. Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. We are claimed for service as part of a church that bears witness to the Light – that we might reflect the light that comes from Christ. No matter who we are, where we are, or what our circumstances are, the truth is sure: **THE SON STILL SHINES!** By bearing witness to that Light you might be the one who helps bring light to someone’s darkness.

As Easter people may the Light of the World shine in our hearts and on our pathways forever.

Gary L. Armstrong





Fort Dodge District Conference
Saturday, May 19, 2007
2:00 P.M.—5:00 P.M.
Webster City Faith

As it is stated in the Iowa Annual Conference Journal: The district conference shall be composed of all the clergy, diaconal ministers, deaconesses, the church lay leader, the president of United Methodist Women, president of United Methodist Men, and president of United Methodist Youth Fellowship from each local church, the lay

member(s) of the annual conference from each charge, equalization lay members of the annual conference, the district lay leader and associate district lay leaders, the president of the district United Methodist Women, the president of the district United Methodist Men, the district director of Age-Level Council, District Youth Ministries Council, all district Council on Ministries members and such other persons as the district conference may determine.

2007 IOWA UNITED METHODIST ANNUAL CONFERENCE
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY, AMES, IA

PAGE INFORMATION

A **Page** is a youth who runs errands, carries messages, distributes materials and waits upon members of a legislative or decision making body. Since the Iowa United Methodist Conference is a decision making body as it receives reports, acts upon recommendations and develops programs and policies for the future, **Pages** are needed to assist in its operation and to serve the 1800+ members who attend.

When you serve as a **Page**, plan to do nothing else. You may be busy from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. most days. You are expected to arrive on time for sessions and work at your assignment during the Conference Session.

Arrangements are made for all **Pages** to stay in one section of rooms in one of the dorms at Iowa State with two to a room. The meals are in the dining hall of the dorm and we, as a group, will have the opportunity to eat together. Meal tickets (provided by the Annual Conference) will be available when you arrive.

While serving as a **Page**, we request that you wear appropriate clothing: Clean and nice looking jeans or slacks (not ragged or with holes). T-shirts will be provided for each day. Be sure to bring very comfortable shoes as you do a lot of walking.

Pages are responsible for their own cost of lodging and transportation to and from Conference at Ames. If you drive your car, plan to park it for the duration. An offering is taken at Annual Conference to assist the **Pages** with these costs.

Thirty-two (32) young people (**must have completed 9th grade through 12th grade**) will be needed to serve as **Pages** during Annual Conference.

Your application to serve as a **Page** **MUST BE RETURNED BY APRIL 15, 2007.**

After April 15, we will let you know if you have been selected to serve as a Page. All Pages are asked to arrive on Wednesday, June 6, 2007, by 2:30 p.m. Annual Conference is June 7-10, 2007. All costs are to be paid to us on your arrival at Conference.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Rev. Gary & Marlene DeGeest (Page Co-Directors)
1900 Redwood Drive
Atlantic, IA 50022

e-mail: revgary@metc.net (or) mgdgeest@msn.com

Phone: 712-243-3156 (O) 712-243-4460 (H) 712-249-2459 (C)

Calling ALL Ushers!

Once again, we are in need of Ushers for Annual Conference, June 6-10, 2007. Ushers are adults who provide a ministry of hospitality, service, and order. Duties include greeting members and visitors of the Annual Conference, providing assistance in emergencies, and ensuring that only authorized persons enter the voting area of the Annual Conference. More information and application forms are available at the Iowa Annual Conference website (<http://iaumc.org>); click on the "Annual Conference" link. Or you may contact the Director of Ushers, Rev. Lorinda Hoover, at hoovmoss@iowatelecom.net, 712-297-8381.

IOWA CONFERENCE DISTRICT CHANGES

As the Iowa Conference changes 8 districts on July 1, 2007 the churches that will be part of the North Central District will primarily be located in the following counties: Boone, Calhoun, Cerro Gordo, Franklin, Hamilton, Hardin, Humboldt, Greene, Kossuth, Story, Webster, Winnebago, and Wright. Charges that bridge district boundaries will be located in the district where primary church office and parsonage are located. Charges that will be in the North Central District are:

Ackley-Geneva
Alden-Popejoy-Williams
Algona
Ames, Calvary
Ames, Collegiate/Wesley Founda-
tion
Ames, First
Boone, Marion Street
Boxholm-Pilot Mound-Lehigh-Otho
Britt
Buffalo Center
Clarion
Clear Lake
Collins-Loring
Colo Corwith-Wesley
Dayton-Harcourt
Dows Alexander-Dows
Presbyterian
Eagle Grove
Eldora
Ellis
Faith UMC (Humboldt-Gilmore
City-Rutland)
Farnhamville Yoke-Somers
Fenton
Forest City-Crystal Lake
Fort Dodge, Epworth
Fort Dodge, First
Fort Dodge, Riverside
Fort Dodge, Trinity
Garner
Gifford
Gowrie
Grand Junction
Hampton
Hansell-West Fort
Hubbard, Salem
Huxley-Cambridge
Iowa Falls
Jefferson, First

Kanawha
Klemme-Goodell
Lake City Union
Lake Mills
Lohrville-Lanesboro
LuVerne-Livermore
Mackey
Manly-Bolan
Mason City, First
Mason City, Hispanic Ministries
Mason City, Wesley-Grace
Maxwell
Meservey-Thornton
Morgan-Bradford-Lee Center
Napier
Nevada
Northwood
Ogden, Community
Our Savior (Manson-Pomeroy)
Owasa
Paton-Churdan
Radcliffe, St. John's-Ellsworth
Renwick-Goldfield
Rockwell-Swaledale
Rockwell City-Jolley
Rowan Yoke (UM-UCC)
Scranton-Greenbrier
Sheffield-Chapin
Slater-Sheldahl
Stanhope Parish (UM Disciples)
Story City, Grace
Stratford Calvary-South Marion-
Homer-Duncombe-McGuire Bend
(UB)
Swea City
Thompson
Titonka-Burt
Ventura
Webster City, Asbury
Webster City, Faith

Woolstock-Vincent
Zearing, Bethel

Charges that will be located in the South Central District are:

- Hope Parish (Bagley-Bayard-Cooper-Dawson-Linden-Yale)
- Panora

Charges that will be located in the Central District are:

- Peoria
- Perry-Rippey-Fairview

District Offices for the 8 Districts will be:

- Northwest—Storm Lake
- North Central—Webster City
- Northeast—Waverly/Cedar Falls
- Southwest—Atlantic
- South Central—Osceola
- Central—Altoona
- East Central—Cedar Rapids
- Southeast—Mount Pleasant

2007 Iowa Annual Conference
Of The United Methodist Church

Celebration of Mission and Ministry
Thursday Evening
June 7, 2007

The Iowa Conference in Ministry: Children and Poverty

Guidelines for Program Boards, Program Commissions, Program Councils, United
Methodist Women, United Methodist Men

A. Participation in the Celebration

1. What parts of your ministry touch children in positive, missional ways?
2. What parts of your ministry touch persons—especially children—who are in poverty?
 - a) Acts of mercy (e.g. alleviation of hunger)
 - b) Acts of justice (e.g. systematic change that eradicates the causes of hunger)
3. How will you share vividly these ministries—in video, in audio, in picture, in performance? (using DVD, CDE, presenters, performers, script/description)

DEADLINES: Request for assistance from Conference Communications need to be in the Communications office by February 23, 2007. - darci.hartman@iaumc.org

Completed presentation materials need to be in the Connectional Ministries office by April 1, 2007. - karla.haynes@iaumc.org

- B. Inclusion in the Celebration of Mission and Ministry book to be distributed at Annual Conference: Pictures, stories, lists, statistics, about any and/or all of your ministries.

DEADLINE: Copy and pictures and/or graphics submitted electronically to Connectional Ministries Office by May 1, 2007. - karla.haynes@iaumc.org

THE BISHOP, THE WESLEYS, AND US

Iowa United Methodists will join Bishop Gregory and Cynthia Palmer on a Wesley Heritage tour to England Aug. 6 through 14, 2007. During this faith-based travel experience we can form bonds of Christian friendship with fellow travelers, get to know our Bishop and Cynthia better, and see many of the places which represent our spiritual heritage as part of the world-wide Methodist tradition.

This year we will be observing the 300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley, a founder of the Methodist movement and world-renowned hymn writer.

The basic tour includes Aldersgate Street and St. Paul's Cathedral in London, both significant places in John Wesley's religious experience.

We will visit Epworth, home of the Wesley family, and Bristol where Charles lived for much of his adult life and where he wrote many of his 6,000-plus hymns.

We will also see other well-known landmarks, including Oxford University, William Shakespeare's home, Coventry Cathedral, and the villages of the Cotswolds. In addition, a London pre-tour and an extension to Scotland are available.

It is time now to look at your calendars, talk with your friends and your pastor, and move toward making your decision to travel on this Wesley pilgrimage.

**For further information you may contact
Ron and Ruth Anne Petrak by email at
ronruthanne1507@msn.com or
by phone at (515) 262-3691.**



**Youth Annual Conference
Planning Underway**

Save the date for Youth Annual Conference, a leadership development event for United Methodist youth in grades 6-12! YAC will be held June 29- July 1, 2007 at Simpson College in Indianola. The theme for YAC '07 is "It's Your Network". YAC includes workshops, worship, keynote speaker, crazy auction YSF fundraisers and the opportunity to grow in your leadership ability and connect with other United Methodist youth in Iowa.

**Early Bird registration - \$85 by May 1, 2007;
Regular registration - \$100 by May 25, 2007.
Plan now to attend!**

Ministry Inquiry Retreats

Retreats are held six Saturdays during the year at various sites in the Conference.

The Retreat Schedule is as follows:

July 1, 2007
Ames Collegiate/Wesley Foundation

- **September 8, 2007**
To Be Announced

For more information or to register go to:
<http://www.iaumc.org>
Boards, Agencies & Tasks Groups—Board of Ordained Ministry. Or Contact:
David Glenn—Burns, Wesley Foundation
2422 College St,
Cedar Falls, IA 50613-3655
E-Mail: Wesley@cfu.net
Phone: 319-266-4071

Take some time to check out the Fort Dodge District Lay Speaking Website
<http://web.mac.com/hoovmoss/>

SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY

The Theme for **School for Ministry 2007** is "The Fullness of Christian Worship: Exploring Theology, Practice and Formation. The School for Ministry 2007 web site is now up with complete information about the faculty and facilities.

This year's faculty includes **Don Saliers**, renowned author, lecturer and authority on Christian worship. Joining Dr. Saliers on the faculty are: **Barbara Day Miller**, Assistant Dean of Worship and Music at the Candler School of Theology; **Matthew Berryman**, Associate Pastor at Orange Park United Methodist Church in Jacksonville, Florida, where he has developed and leads worship services designed to provide a way through the divide between so-called "contemporary" and "traditional" camps; and Bishop **Gregory V. Palmer** who will lead a session on "Full Bodied Preaching."

Dates for the School: **April 10, 11 & 12**, at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown. Brochures and registration forms will be mailed in January. In the meantime, please visit the web site at www.schoolforministry.org for complete information.

If you have questions, send your questions to DeLane Wright at dewright@mchsi.com

School For Lay Ministry

The School for Lay Ministry is for Lay persons who desire to grow in lay leadership and transform their faith journey.

Classes starting soon in the following locations:

Morningside Sessions
March 9-11, 2007

Simpson Sessions
March 2-4, May 4-6, November 2-4, 2007
March 7-9, May 2-4, November 7-9, 2008

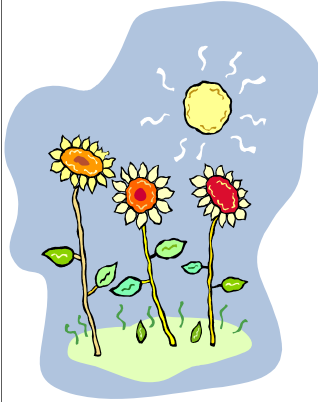
To learn more contact:
Barbara Mann Registrar (all locations) 515-974-8905
Avon Crawford Dean—Simpson 515-225-2289
Sue Mullins Dean—Morningside 515-583-2156
Ann Glime Dean—Cornell 563-856-4375

Or visit the website—www.iaumc.org,
click on Ministries & Services—Connectional Ministries —
School for Lay Ministry

HAPPY EASTER FROM THE FORT DODGE DISTRICT OFFICE



Health Habit Renewal



April: green grass, warm breezes, and trees full of leaf buds; all signs of nature's regrowth and renewal. Nature's renewal motivates us to work in our yards, prepare our gardens and flower beds for planting, wash windows or clean out closets. Spiritually we participate in the ultimate renewal, Christ's resurrection.

Usually by this time of year our health habits are in need of renewal, as well. During the winter months, it is easy to lose interest and motivation to be active and to eat healthy. In life's every day struggles, it is often easy to follow the path of least resistance and to continue in unhealthy patterns. It does take an effort to move towards a more healthy balance of stress management, moderate eating, and some form of physical activity every day. And even though we may say "What's the use? I'll never lose this weight, or I don't like exercising, I'll never be able to do this" God's word says differently:

"So, we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside; where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace." (2 Cor. 4: 10 The Message

Just as God is working at renewing nature, he is working at renewal in us. As you reflect on about your health habits, ask yourself these questions.

- **Look at what you want to change.**
Is it weight loss, becoming more fit, or being less stressed?
- **Then look at what is and what isn't working.**
Are you eating the wrong foods, bored with your usual exercise routine, or are too many things competing for your attention.
- **Next, look at what is and isn't possible about your lifestyle.**
Do you eat many of your meals out? What is a different physical activity that you enjoy or would like to try? What parts of your day can you control?

Now that you have done an evaluation process, open yourself to the creative process of the spring season and God's Spirit. Be receptive to new possibilities and different ways of accomplishing your goals.

Here are some methods to help you improve your health habits.

- Make your health goal a priority. Your health-fulness is important to you, God and your families.
- Practice strategies of staying on track. Plan your meals, learn to say no, listen to your energy levels.
- Invite your family, friends, and colleagues to help you. Most of us need a support network when we work on lifestyle changes.
- When you hit a stumbling point, revise your plan and goals. Don't quit.
- Most of all, stay connected to God, the Source of Life.

May these thoughts help in renewing your journey towards health-fulness.

Blessings,

*Kae Trittle, RN
Wellness Coordinator*

Iowa-Nigeria Partnership News April 2007

Meet Bishop Kefas Kane Mavula

At the West Africa Central Conference held March 1-5, Rev. Kefas K. Mavula was elected bishop of the United Methodist Church of Nigeria. Bishop Mavula served as assistant to Bishop Dabale and presently is Principal of the Junior Secondary School in Jalingo. Kefas and his family will reside in Jalingo, where the UMC Secretariat is located.

The church has one annual conference with two provisional conferences due to the unprecedented church growth in Nigeria. Most African bishops say they do not fully understand why their churches are growing at such a fast rate, but most believe it of the love of Jesus. Improving lives through evangelism, health care, education, etc. encourages church growth. Please pray for continued blessing on our Nigeria brothers and sisters and their new bishop.

Off to Nigeria

Our individual volunteer, Ron Wilmot of Akron, heads for Nigeria on June 11 followed by a 10 person medical/construction team on June 16. It is my privilege to lead this group which will be my fourth trip to Nigeria. We can use the following things: small hotel soaps, tooth brushes/toothpaste, bandages, band-aids, etc. Marcus Beebe, Elaine Jones and Anne Hartman are from Cedar Rapids, Sue Kromminga from Shell Rock, John Hall of Beaman, James Lierow and I from Des Moines as well as two nurses from Cincinnati and Glennys Ulschak of CT. Let me know if you are able to contribute medical supplies for our trip.

Roof the Chicken House

To keep those hens laying at the Agricultural Center at Zing, an old leaky roof needs to be replaced to the tune of \$1000. A few new tractor parts would rejuvenate the tractor for use in time for spring plant-

—CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE—

Iowa School Teachers Support Nigerian Teachers

As active or retired teachers, elementary, secondary or college level, you know the success in helping educate children and youth. Our example is the Great Teacher, our Lord Jesus Christ, who taught his disciples and followers using a variety of teaching methods. Here's how you may help Nigerian teachers:

Support a Nigerian UMC teacher by providing a \$10 per month stipend

Fund teachers to attend in-service workshops at \$25 per teacher (15 teachers)

Give a subscription to an educational magazine (Scholastic, National Geographic, etc.)

Contribute to the School Library Fund to construct a library on the Junior Secondary School campus (total cost \$20,000 but any amount will be appreciated to make it happen)



Beverly Nolte
515 237 8544
e-mail: bnmedical@aol.com



From Behind the Razor Wire Pastor Arnette Pint

Many prison congregations are named "Dysmas," which is the name given to the repentant thief on the cross next to Jesus. His name is not found in Scripture, but was given by the early church. He is the patron saint of prisoners.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR YOU, DYSMAS?

By Ed Nesselhuf, the Prairie Pastor/Poet

What was it like for you, Dysmas,
When you heard the knock on the door?
And you heard the jangle of armor and swords
And you knew who the soldiers came for!

Did your throat turn dry as a desert?
Did your hands get clammy with sweat?
When you knew in your heart your luck had run out
It was time to pay up your debt.

What was that like for you, Dysmas?
When they led you away in chains?
You knew that a pardon would not be an option.
Did fear run deep in your veins?

Your days on the run had now ended
When they slammed the door of your cell.
And any hope vanished like mist in the wind
And you knew that you'd just entered hell!

What was that like for you, Dysmas?
When the gavel fell with a thud?
And death was the sentence for all of your crimes

When the judge said, "You'll pay with your blood!"
Did you do some soul searching, Dysmas?
As you counted your remaining days?
Did life get more precious with time running out?
Did you regret not changing your ways?

What was it like for you, Dysmas?
When they stretched you out on a cross?
And hammers drove spikes that tore through your flesh?
Did you think your whole life was a loss?

And what made you defend this Jesus,
Nailed and hanging alongside of you?
When a third one had mocked this supposed Son of God,
You replied, "We just got what we're due."

But it struck you as wrong to see innocence die.
What about him touched your heart?
You asked him to remember you when he rose.
Apparently faith made a fresh start.

Now, what was that like for you, Dysmas?
When Jesus answered he wouldn't forget
And promised you paradise that very day.
He would take on himself all your debt!

Could you believe the promise he gave you?
Or was it just too good to be true?
You had nothing to offer except your own need.
Why would God want a person like you?

Yet the answer is written in Scripture.
The heart of our God is revealed.
A life that's all twisted and broken and bent
Is mended and pardoned and healed.

Do you realize what you've done, Dysmas?
What you've allowed the whole world to see?
That if there's room in the Kingdom for someone like you,
There's got to be room there for me!

Leadership Development Minister and Field Outreach Minister Information Is Posted; Job Descriptions and Applications Are Available On Website

Complete job descriptions and applications for the Leadership Development Minister (LDM) and Field Outreach Minister (FOM) positions have been posted on the Conference website. The action represents the latest phase of the work of the Implementation Committee as it puts into effect the reorganization voted by the 2006 session of the Iowa Annual Conference.

The four Leadership Development Ministers - for Evangelism and New Ministry, Social Justice and Mission, Young Adult and Generational Ministry, and Camping and Christian Formation are available at: www.iaumc.org/ldm. In addition to the detailed descriptions, a link to the LDM application is included. The job description for a Field Outreach Minister can be found at: www.iaumc.org/fom. A link to the application is also available there. Applications for the positions will be received until the positions are filled. All applications are to be submitted electronically to the addresses provided on the cover page of the applications. The applications are "form fillable" .pdf's. Adobe Reader 7 or 8 is required to take advantage of the "fillable" feature. (The latest version of Adobe Reader is available at: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>) Information can be included in the appropriate areas, saved, and then forwarded as an attachment to an e-mail.

Fort Dodge District Newsletter
United Methodist Church-Iowa Area
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