



Fort Dodge District Connection United Methodist Church

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EVEN THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY

In the last several days people across the nation have reflected on the unimaginable in the face of the tragic shootings that happened on the campus of Virginia Tech University. In this last week I have found myself reflecting on that tragedy while at the same time reflecting on Lectionary passages for the 4th Sunday of Easter. We face tragedy even as we reflect on the resurrection faith. Even as we do so we realize that there may be times when we must bear witness to the Christian faith, and yet feel that we have no answers. That may be the case in the immediacy following senseless tragedy. It may be when someone you love experiences illness, death, or other kinds of loss. Later someone will thank you for your support and you will not recall what you said. But you will have been an effective witness to your faith.

Jesus dealt often with people who were called upon to witness when they felt they had no answers. He encouraged them not to worry about what they would say in certain situations, but to trust in His presence in those times. They were encouraged to be open to God always. Their focus was not to be on “what” or “when” or “how”, but on WHO. For them and for us it is not to focus on the problems or difficult questions, but to focus on Christ. When that happens the rest of the picture becomes clearer.

The writer of Psalm 23 reminds us of how it might happen. He speaks of the time spent in green pastures and by still waters, where he shifts from focusing on the hurts to focusing on God. Even if answers do not come he still affirms “He restores my soul.” He may have gone back to the same situations and unanswered questions, but with a new perspective for confronting life. The situations have not changed, but the psalmist has changed. God has become the central focus, not the pain or the problem. In the face of that which happened in Virginia the poignancy of the words “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me” grip our hearts.

The message to early Christians and to Christians today is to focus not on the difficulties of life but on Christ. An important prayer of the early church was simply “Come, Lord Jesus.” The answer to our deepest prayers is the promise of His presence. We read the Bible, not just for answers, but to get caught up in the story of people who know that, no matter what, we are not alone.

Remember, when we feel moved to have all answers, our calling is not to have all the answers, but to bear witness for Christ, and to trust even as we wait for answers.

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.

APPORTIONMENT % AS OF 3/31/2007

Ames Calvary	17%	Grand Junction	25%	Perry First	0%
Ames Collegiate	25%	Hope Parish		Rippey	32%
Ames First	25%	Bagley	17%	Fairview	25%
Ames Korean	0%	Yale	25%	St. John's Radcliffe	25%
Beaver Yoke	0%	Linden	25%	Ellsworth	0%
Boone First	25%	Dawson	0%	Rockwell City	17%
Boone Marion St	0%	Cooper	17%	Jolley	25%
Boxholm	0%	Bayard	34%	Scranton	25%
Pilot Mound	30%	Hubbard Salem	25%	Greenbrier	24%
Lehigh	0%	Huxley Trinity	8%	Slater	13%
Otho	25%	Cambridge	25%	Sheldahl	8%
Collins	25%	Jefferson First	1%	Stanhope Grace	8%
Loring	18%	Lake City Union	13%	Story City Grace	17%
Colo	5%	Lohrville	8%	Stratford Calvary	2%
Dayton	17%	Lanesboro	17%	South Marion	8%
Harcourt	0%	Mackey	25%	Homer	0%
Eagle Grove	9%	Maxwell	25%	Duncombe	25%
Faith	0%	Napier	22%	Webster City Asbury	0%
Farnhamville	15%	Nevada First	34%	Webster City Faith	11%
Somers	9%	Ogden	25%	Kamrar	17%
FD Epworth	11%	Our Savior UMC	25%	Woolstock	25%
FD First	13%	Panora	22%	Vincent	26%
FD Riverside	8%	Paton	7%	Bethel—Zearing	22%
FD Trinity	8%	Churdan	0%		
Gowrie	13%	Peoria	0%		



The Fort Dodge District Office will be
closed May 28th
 In Observance of
 Memorial Day.



“Growing as Generous People: Stewards of Money”

The theme for the 2007 session of the Iowa Annual Conference is “Growing as Generous People: Stewards of Money.” Set to convene at the Hilton Coliseum, on the campus of the Iowa State University in Ames, on Thursday, June 7, 2007. For more information go to <http://iowasite.brickriver.com/page.asp?PKValue=1049>



FILL THE TRUCK June 7-10, 2007

Help available

45 minutes before Morning Session,

1 hour after the afternoon sessions and during noon break.

Parked in Northeast Corner of Hilton Parking Lot, parallel to Lincolnway

KITS NEEDED AS OF MARCH 20, 2007, PRIORITIZED BY UMCOR

SEWING KITS (\$18)

3 yards of sewing cotton, solid or print
1 pair sewing scissors
1 pkg of needles
1 spool of thread
5-8 matching buttons
Wrap notions in fabric. Place in a Sealed one gallon plastic bag.

HEALTH KITS (\$12)

1 hand towel 15" x 25" or 17" x 27"
1 washcloth
1 comb (no pocket size)
1 nailfile or clippers
1 bath size bar soap (3 oz & up)
1 toothbrush in original wrapper
1 tube of toothpaste (same as bulk instructions)
6 adhesive bandages
Place items in sealed one gallon plastic bag.

LAYETTES (\$35)

6 cloth diapers
2 shirts or onezees
2 baby washcloths
2 gowns or sleepers
2 diaper pins
1 sweater, open in front
2 receiving blankets
Bundle items on one blanket, close with diaper pins.

BULK NEEDS:

Hand towels
Toothpaste, 4.5 or larger, exp. date, January 2008
Metal nail files or fingernail clippers
Child's blunt scissors
Pencil sharpeners
Cloth diapers
Ruled paper, wide lines



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.

May 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
	Gary on Vacation →					
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Gary on Vacation →						
13 Mother's Day	14	15	16	17	18	19 District Conference Webster City Faith 2:00 PM—5:00 PM
Cabinet →						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Memorial Day District Office Closed	29	30	31		



2007 UM Merit Application

Pastors/Churches are invited to nominate ONE student from each local church to be considered to receive one of the United Methodist Student Day Merit Awards. Download the criteria, guidelines and application at http://iowa.brickriver.com/files/oWebsite_Page_Files/UM_Merit_Award_Application_07_FV52X8YX.doc. Please note the **June 15, 2007** deadline. Applicants must be Iowa United Methodist students who will be attending a United Methodist college, university or seminary this fall. Application material should be mailed/mailed to the MERIT SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE at the address found on the application. United Methodist Student Day Merit Awards are made possible through local church support of the United Methodist Student Day offering each fall.

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 & Ruth Anne Petrak
by email at
ronruthanne1507@msn.com
or by phone at



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:

Simpson Sessions

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

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

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

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!

Go to the Health Screening, Walk/Run or Give Blood At Annual Conference

Annual Conference attendees have the option of participating in three Wellness activities this year.

Blood Drive: In conjunction with Mission Day there will be a Blood Drive. Come to Scheman Rm 299 8 am-Noon on Saturday June 9th. You must be at least 16 years old, weigh > 120# and be in general good health. The process takes approximately 1 hour. One person's single donation can save up to 3 other persons' lives. There are 35 time slots available. Contact Kae Tritle at bktritle@msn.com to register. .



5K Fun Walk/Run: By popular request, a fitness activity has been arranged. This will take place along a easily-accessible route near Hilton Coliseum on Saturday morning during the Mission Activities time, approximately 10:30-noon. In support of Pastor Jennifer Meyer of Dubuque who is walking to Annual Conference on behalf of AIDS victims, the Wellness Committee is encouraging you to collect pledges for the UMC's Global AIDS Fund. 3 options to participate:

- 1) Join the walk for fun and fellowship without gathering pledges
- 2) Collect pledges from your home community and walk with us for the Global AIDS fund
- 3) Or organize a walk/run/bike event in your own community and collect pledges to bring to Annual Conference.

Contact Kae Tritle at bktritle@msn.com for more information.

Health Screening: On Thursday June 7, & Friday June 8th, 5:30 am-8 am; clergy, spouses of clergy, and laity on the conference health insurance are encouraged to participate in this event. Included are: a blood-pressure measurement, a self-serve weight measurement, and the following

lab tests; glucose, complete blood-cell counts, cholesterol (LDL, HDL, & triglycerides), magnesium, phosphorus, calcium, thyroid, BUN (blood urea nitrogen) and a thyroid level. Men also have blood drawn for a prostate serum antigen. Contact Kae Tritle



at bktritle@msn.com to pre-register.

Appointments for mammogram screenings are also offered on Friday, 6/8. These need to be scheduled in advance through the McFarland Clinic by calling (515) 239-4458. Appointments are being taken through May 18th. You need to call in advance for an appointment due to clinic policy. Walk-in appointments are not allowed.

Lighten-Up With God: Those persons who enrolled in the Lighten-Up With God program in 2006 will be receiving information and the opportunity to register their weight loss prior to conference. The Board of Pensions is offering Cokesbury gift cards to those who lost weight. Persons may also weigh at Annual Conference.



"We take our lead from Christ, who is the source of everything we do. He keeps us in step with each other. His very breath and blood flow through us, nourishing us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love." (Eph 4: 15 The Message)

May we serve God in a variety of ways. See you at Annual Conference.

*Kae Tritle, RN
Wellness Coordinator*

May 2007 Iowa-Nigeria Partnership

Show me the Money!

Funding for Iowa-Nigeria Partnership projects may be sent through your local church to the conference treasurer on the monthly remittance form marked #230 (if not designated for any particular project) or #231 (if for designated project/program). As chairperson I receive a monthly report. Twice a year our INP committee reviews the projects and programs that we support so that money given in Iowa is then sent to the Board of Global Ministries in New York. This money is designated for specific projects/programs in Nigeria where the money is wire transferred to the Area Financial Officer who then appropriately distributes the money.

INP News Continues on next page

INP CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

When we have a work group from Iowa going to Nigeria, we hand carry money and distribute it personally to the persons responsible for the programs/projects who have to sign for the money with a report to follow about the use of it. This distribution of money and accounting procedures has worked well for us over the past six years. You can rest assured that money given in Iowa gets to the proper project/program. The Nigerians are extremely grateful for the financial faithfulness of the Iowans since 1989.

United Methodist Women on the Go

Yearly the United Methodist Women of Nigeria hold a weekly event somewhere in their conference for Bible Study, worship and fellowship. Women bring their babies, children, pots, food, sleeping mats and high enthusiasm arriving by foot, on the back of a truck, motorcycle, in a van, bus or car. The attendance in 2006 was 23,000+!

Iowans to Nigeria

Fifteen persons will be traveling to Nigeria June 16th. The airline tickets are in hand, the orientation session is over, the Nigerian visas have been applied for and suitcases are being packed. Each person can take 100 pounds in two suitcases so believe me we will be laden with medications and medical equipment, seeds, books, teaching materials for health care professionals, altar clothes, layettes and anything else we can cram in. The team has been asked to bring the following equipment: stethoscopes, sphygmomanometers, sterilizing unit, centrifuge machine and several laptops (used but working). If anyone is able to provide us with any of this equipment we would be thrilled. Please let me know soon. We are desperate for as many laptops as we can secure! Do you have one? Groups wanting to help support the team with financial gifts for travel related expenses are welcome to do so. Designate your giving: #230 Summer Team to Nigeria!

Calling Iowa School Teachers!

Again, we emphasize that we are formulating a list of Iowa school teachers to help in the support of their counterparts in Nigeria. A variety of ways to support Nigerian educators is available. Contact me with your name, address and phone.

Beverly Nolte

515 237 8544

E-mail: bnmedical@aol.com



From Behind the Razor Wire May, 2007

A little invitation from the Women at the Well:

YOU ARE INVITED!

We are scheduling visitors every week at the well these days. If you or your church want to worship with us, just call or e-mail Pastor Arnette at the addresses below.

Why would we want to do that? Let me give you just a sampling of the comments we hear after worship:

“I am simply amazed at the depth of their faith.”

“The prayers – oh when they pray – it comes from so deep within.” “It really expanded my understanding of the body of Christ.”

“It’s unbelievable that faith can grow in a place like this. It really reminds me of how blessed we are to have a community and a church to call our own.”

“They really sing with gusto!” And, most often, at least one person says, “What an amazing experience. I don’t think I have words to describe it yet, but I have certainly been blessed.” So, come. Join us at the Well and taste the Living Water offered freely.

Address:

2100 Center Street
West Des Moines, IA 50265-2229
515-267-1090
pastorarnette@msn.com

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Fort Dodge District Newsletter
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