



Monday Musings

January 18, 2010

Rose M. Blank

Conference Superintendent

Southeast District

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Greetings,

During this Epiphany season, we are invited to behold the wonder of God in Christ revealed to us in a multitude of ways. I have been rereading Macrina Wiederkehr's book *Seasons of Your Heart: Prayers and Reflection*. In her section on Epiphany she refers to the parable from Matthew's gospel that compares God's kingdom to the yeast that leavens the dough. (Matthew 13:33) She writes: "It is becoming clear to me that Christians are meant to be leaven for our society. We are called to rise in all directions with the healing presence of our lives. Part of the noble task of our vocation is to help people discover the hint of eternity that flows through the inner rivers of their beings. This hint of eternity will nurture their hope. Hope is contagious." (pp. 56-57)

As I read the stories of the lives and ministries of the Rev. Dr. Sam Dixon, the head the United Methodist Committee on Relief and Rev. Clint Robb, who organized mission volunteers for the General Board of Global Ministries, it seems pretty clear they lived as "leaven for our society." Both were among the victims of the horrendous tragedy in Haiti this past week. They had gone to provide leadership to work towards bringing about greater health care for the people of this country that is among the poorest nations in the Western Hemisphere. In their work, not only in Haiti, but across the globe they brought the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lives of countless people.

Bishop Trimble encourages us to respond generously in our prayers and in our giving as the United Methodist Church seek to reach out with this same hope of the gospel, this hope that is "the hint of eternity". The need is great and will continue. In the face of this tragedy, we remember the lives of those in our midst in places such as Oakville and Cedar Rapids and other places where lives continue to move forward in hope and rebuilding. They continue to need our generous prayers and our giving. I pray that in this season of Epiphany we will continue to look for those places where God's light and presence is being made known – even in the midst of great tragedy and loss. I pray each one will be

open to the ways in which you can respond to this light that calls us to “rise in all directions with the healing presence of our lives.” I pray that through our ministries we will be empowered by the Spirit of Christ to be the “leaven for our society” as we nurture the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Grace and peace,

Rose

Upcoming Events

January 31, 2010 – Southeast District Church Leadership Training Workshop will be held at First UMC in Mt. Pleasant, IA. Registration will start at 2:00 PM. The workshops will be from 2:30 PM to 5:00 PM. A brochure has been e-mailed to each pastor and each church in our district. To view the brochure, click here: http://www.iaumc.org/console/files/oWebsite_Page_Files/Brochure_JQFRER7C.pdf

February 5-7, 2010 – Youth Strike for Christ 2010 is just around the corner. It will be at the Downtown Marriott Hotel in Des Moines and the Polk County Convention Center. We will have Kelly Croy, Inspirational Speaker, Bob Stromberg, Comedian and the band Harlend. Bishop Julius Trimble will be the guest speaker. Please visit www.youthstrike.com for more information and download registration forms. The early bird deadline is January 1, 2010.

February 20, 2010 – Iowa Wesleyan College invites you to a special day of academics and athletics. You and your family have the opportunity to visit campus, talk with professors and coaches, and enjoy an afternoon of Iowa Wesleyan basketball. When you attend Tiger Spirit Day, you and your family will receive complimentary tickets to watch the Iowa Wesleyan Tigers battle the Waldorf College Warriors.

February 26, 2010 – For the next “A Day Apart for Ministry Professionals”, our speakers will be Phil and Janet Jamieson whose topic will be “Ministry and Money”. It will be held at Washington United Methodist Church from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The cost of lunch is **\$7.00**. Please make your check payable to Washington UMC and send it to the church at 206 West Second Street, Washington, IA 52353-1925. Contact the district office **no later than** February 19 to let us know you are attending. For more information, contact the district office.

March 29, 2010 – The Van Buren County Cooperative Ministries will present a reenactment of the Last Supper at the Farmington United Methodist Church (part

of the Two Rivers Parish) on Monday, March 29, 2010, at 7:30 PM. Contact: Pat Shaw, Coordinator, at 319-293-3899 or by e-mail at patshaw@netins.net.

Announcements

UMCOR has asked us to give you this message: Our hearts are heavy and our prayers are many as we grieve with our friends, families, coworkers and relational ties in Haiti. Our Jurisdiction sends so many teams to Haiti that we are compelled to respond in many ways. Please consider making a donation to the UMCOR International Disaster Response Advance #982450, memo line: Haiti. UMCOR will help us reach out to and through our Methodist connections in Haiti. Your response will help UMCOR gauge its response.

You can also give online [at the UMCOR website](#). Thank you.

Simple Living for Congregations: April 2010 Learning Event for Leaders”

Central District Field Outreach Minister, Martha DiSilvestro, and a team of Central Iowa ecumenical leaders have been working to bring high quality Alban Institute learning events to Central and South Central Iowa.

One part of that work has resulted in this series of events hosted by “The Center for Renewal” at Grandview College in Des Moines. Alban authors speak and engage in Q & A on contemporary topics for local church vitality. [Click here](#) for more information and an event brochure.

A second part of that work is “SPLASH”, a 2-year continuing education immersion event for clergy and laity meeting for 6 overnight seminars covering a range of “Sacred Practices of Spiritual Leadership” in congregations. Twelve Alban authors are featured throughout. For more information about Splash: www.sacredpracticeseries.org

Prayer Concerns

We ask for continued prayers for the people of Haiti and for the rescue workers who are in Haiti from around the world.

Prayers are requested for Richard Eis, retired pastor, who is undergoing surgery at Mercy Hospital in Cedar Rapids on January 19, 2010.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

February Birthdays

2/1 Arley Ellingson
2/1 Bonnie Peterson
2/2 Diane Pippert
2/6 Roberta Gimmy
2/13 Vicki Homan
2/15 John Tunnicliff
2/18 Janice Shafer
2/19 Gerry Kahler
2/20 Goldie Laymon
2/20 Linda Renken
2/21 John Howell
2/27 Richard Sebeniecher

February Anniversaries

2/10 Doug and Ethel Reynolds
2/14 Bruce and Susan Ursin

If we have missed anyone, please contact the District Office.