



## ***Monday Musings***

***June 15, 2009***

***Rose M. Blank***

***Conference Superintendent***

***Southeast District***

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Greetings,

I spent the past two afternoons working at the district parsonage on the spaces I call flower beds. Because of my schedule and the weather not always cooperating, they were more like weed beds than flower beds. So my husband Jeff and I spent hours and hours making them look more like the flower beds they are intended to be. It brought back reminders of when I was in 4-H years ago. There's lots of time spent planning, preparing the soil and finally the planting. Then there's the waiting for the results of the hard work to be made visible. Like this past Sunday's gospel text with the parables of the seed, there is great trust in planting seeds. While not all of what I planted was seed, some were plants, none the less, there is waiting and trusting that what was planted will come to bear the beauty and the fruit of the labor one anticipates. Yet we know from the gospel lesson, all things come to pass in God's time.

All the working in the dirt, the planting of seeds, the truths of the parables of the seeds, invites us to think about new beginnings. We will be saying good bye to some of the pastors on the district who will be moving on to other ministries or retiring. We will also be greeting some new pastors as part of our fellowship here in the Southeast District. Each one brings their own gifts for the building of the body of Christ, not only in their respective churches but also in our shared ministry throughout the District.

As we think about these times of beginning, I share with you the words from a prayer by Ted Loder in his book *Guerrillas of Grace*. (p. 99)

"Help me to be a beginning for others, to be a singer for the songless, a storyteller to the aimless, a befriender to the friendless; to become a beginning of hope for the despairing, of assurance for the doubting, of reconciliation for the divided; to become a beginning of freedom for the oppressed, of comfort for the sorrowing, of friendship for the forgotten; to become a beginning of beauty for the forlorn, of sweetness for the soured, of gentleness for the angry, of wholeness for the broken, of peace for the frightened and violent of the earth.

Help me to believe in new beginnings, to make a beginning, to be a beginning, so that I may not just grow old, but grow new each day of this wild, amazing life you call me to live with the passion of Jesus Christ.”

Grace and peace,

*Rose M. Blank*

### *Upcoming Events*

**June 20** – The Iowa Annual Conference Older Adult Ministry Council is sponsoring a workshop entitled “Aging and Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” on Saturday, June 20, 2009, from 9:00-3:30 at the Walnut Hills UMC, 12321 Hickman Road in Urbandale. Rev. Dr. Richard Gentzler, Director of the Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministry with the General Board of Discipleship will keynote the event. A \$25.00 registration fee (due by June 1) includes all materials, lunch and breakout sessions. Contact Christine Anders at 515.244.6209 or [Christine@dmfirstchurch.org](mailto:Christine@dmfirstchurch.org) for more information.

#### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**

**January 18** – We will be hosting a Winter Party for our district clergy and spouses. Because it is later in January, we are not calling it an Epiphany Party this year! It will be in the Social Hall at Iowa Wesleyan College again. More details will follow in the coming weeks.

### *Announcements*

**All are invited to the 25th Anniversary celebration of Cliff and Betsey Neipert.** It will be held on Saturday, July 11th, 4-7 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church in Riverside, Iowa, where Betsey serves as pastor. No gifts please - only the gift of your presence. Their wedding was on July 6, 1984 in West Liberty at the United Methodist Church. The Rev. Don Thompson officiated at the service. We are not mailing individual invitations, but church newsletters and local newspapers are the venue we are using to invite folks. If you have any questions, be sure to let me know. Thanks for your help.

#### **CAMP TRANSPORTATION GRANTS**

Funds are available from the Southeast District to cover transportation costs for campers from our district attending other United Methodist camps in Iowa this summer. The Southeast District Council has agreed to designate District Askings for Golden Valley camperships in 2009 toward this ministry in an effort to honor the intent of the mission dollars.

To apply for transportation funding for the 2009 camping season please submit relevant information on a 2010 District Grant Application (online at [Southeast District Grant Application.pdf](#) or available from the district office). The deadline for receiving transportation grant applications will be Sept. 1, 2009, following the camping season.

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Matthew 25 Grant applications for 2010 are due **June 30, 2009**. For an application, click here: [Matt 25 Grant Application](#)

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The ministry appraisal forms were due in the Southeast District office on May 1. The Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committees from the following churches have not yet submitted their forms:

- Ainsworth Community
- Bettendorf, Asbury
- Bettendorf, Quad Cities Korean
- Brighton United
- Burlington, Asbury
- Burlington, Grace
- Burlington, Spring Grove
- Fort Madison, First
- Fort Madison, Santa Fe
- Kalona
- Keokuk, Emmanuel
- Keokuk, Melrose-Sandusky
- Keokuk, Trinity
- Long Creek
- Letts-Island
- Mount Pleasant, First (Pat Youngquist)
- Muscatine, Moscow
- Muscatine, Peace
- Muscatine, Wesley
- New London
- Park View, New Hope
- Trenton
- United Church of Crawfordsville

## ***Prayer Concerns***

Nancy Bender's surgery is now scheduled on June 18.