

Something to Start With



Learning and Unlearning

Our ten year old announced to me the other day that he knew the full license plate numbers on both of our vehicles. That might not sound like much of an accomplishment unless it's compared with my own inability, after having these same two license plates for at least the last seven years, to have memorized even one of them. A recurring embarrassment for me is filling out one of those little cards when you check in at a motel that asks for your license plate number. I *always* end up having to go back outside and look.

I know there is a double letter – it might be a “B” – in at least one of the plates. Although both license plates *might* have a double letter. But, if both of them have a double letter I'm no longer sure it's a “B”. Or maybe it's a double number instead. I think I know what the three numbers are on at least one of the plates, but I'm never sure in what sequence they occur. And, just when I think I have the sequence right, I begin to wonder if that's not instead three of the numbers in my wife's Social Security number, or the prefix of one of *eight* phone numbers – all belonging to me or a member of my immediate family – that I have running around in my head, or of one of the untold numbers of computer or internet passwords that I try to keep track of.

I'm convinced that this would all be easier – and perhaps a little less pathetic – if it weren't for the fact that inexplicably lodged somewhere in the recess of my memory is the license plate number of a pickup I owned 15 years ago... CU 1936. And, no matter how hard I try to purge that number from my memory, no matter how much I no longer need it for any reason, no matter how much getting rid of it might free up some space to learn a new license plate number, it's still there.

And I wonder if it's like that with other areas of my life. I wonder if learning something new isn't tied to forgetting something old. I wonder how often I resist doing things a new way simply because the old way still feels comfortable. I wonder how many times I put off making a necessary change because the way I've always done things still seems to be working fine. I wonder, in those times when I don't consider doing something different, how often it is because I'm afraid of having to learn a new skill or develop new leadership, or start a new initiative, or retool myself for new ministry in a new day. I wonder if learning the new might be a necessary step in unlearning the old.

So, here's what I just did... I pushed away from the table. I got up out of my chair. I went outside. I looked at the license plate on one of our vehicles. And I'm going to learn it. It's a small thing. I'll probably forget it from time to time and have to relearn it again. I'll probably continue to get it mixed up and have to sort it out again in the right order. It's probably a foolish thing to waste my time and effort on. But maybe, just maybe, learning this one new thing will help me unlearn an old thing. And maybe, just maybe, that will be a step towards doing new things even when doing old things still feels comfortable. Maybe it will be a step towards making changes even when what I've always done still seems to be working just fine. And, maybe, just maybe, doing this one thing differently will make doing other things differently in order to be ready for new ministry in new days ahead.

Godspeed,

Eric



Special points of interest:

- Youth Service Fund
- Save the Date
- Youth Strike for Christ
- YSF Day at Adventureland
- Youth 2011
- Transition to College

The Youth Newsletter of The Iowa Annual Conference

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Wondering About the Youth Service Fund?

The Youth Service Fund (YSF) is the United Methodist Youth mission fund. YSF funds are raised and administered by youth, for projects, programs, and initiatives that support ministries with youth.

70% of YSF money raised in the Iowa Conference is awarded each year as grants to ministries supported by the Iowa Conference. In 2007, the Conference Council on Youth Ministries awarded 6 grants totaling \$3000.00. 30% of the funds raised in the Iowa Conference are forwarded to the Division on Ministries with Young People (DMYP) of the United Methodist Church. In 2007, DMYP awarded grants totaling \$96,500 to support ministries of discipleship, evangelism, peace, justice, and outreach with youth throughout the world.

Iowa Conference United Methodist youth are the primary contributors to this fund! Local church/Youth groups are challenged to contribute \$2/member to Youth Service Fund (YSF) annually. Youth Service Fund offerings may be sent directly to the Iowa Conference Treasurer. YSF Day at Adventureland and Youth Strike for Christ (YSFC) also contribute to the YSF pool of funds.

Do you have a Dream? Does your youth ministry have an idea for an innovative or creative ministry with youth in your community? Do you need seed money? Apply for an Iowa Conference YSF grant. Download an application [here](#).

Here are a few examples of projects that received money from the Youth Service Fund.

Pass It On Youth, Lovilia, Iowa - \$500.00

Getting a new look and modern, generation-appropriate curriculum.

First UMC, Puppet Ministry, North Liberty, Iowa- \$1000.00

The youth will be taking a mission trip to the Northern Cheyenne Native American Reservation in Ashland, Montana.

Jubilee Project, Inc., Sneedville, TN - \$1000.00

Jubilee Youth Center serve youth who are at the highest risk for drug and alcohol abuse, tobacco use and violence. They treat youth holistically and offer them a safe place to congregate and interact with each other, share experiences and have fun.

Iowa Nigeria Partnership, Des Moines, IA - \$500.00

To purchase bicycles for Nigerian youth workers.

"Let no one despise your youth, but set an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity."
-I Timothy 4:12



SAVE THE DATE

YOUTH WORKERS GATHERING 2009

Friday 24 to Saturday 25 April, 2009

Theme: Youth Ministry for a Technological World

Keynote Speaker: Peggy Kendall

[Click Here](#) for More Information

YOUTH STRIKE FOR CHRIST

GOD TOUR 2009

TAKING IT ON THE ROAD

**FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY
FEB 6 - 8, 2009**

**Polk County Convention Center
&
Downtown Marriott Hotel
Des Moines, Iowa**

**A Faith Building Experience for
7th thru 12th Grade Youth!**

Registration includes:

- Hotel room for two nights
- Meals (All 3 Saturday and Sunday lunch)
- Admission to Concerts and Other Events
- Keynote Speakers
- Small Group Sessions
- Praise & Worship
- Awesome Fun
- T-shirt
- And much, much more

EARLYBIRD REGISTRATION—\$159 PER PERSON
(Postmarked before Jan. 1, 2009)

REGULAR REGISTRATION—\$189 PER PERSON
(Postmarked after Jan. 1, 2009)

REGISTRATION DEADLINE - January 15, 2009



**Bob Stromberg will be YSFC 2009
Keynote Speaker**



**Remedy Drive will be YSFC 2009
Praise Band**

For more information and to download applications please visit us at www.youthstrike.com

YSF Day at Adventureland — September 13, 2008

YSF (Youth Service Fund) Day at Adventureland is an annual event, held each year in September for Iowa United Methodist youth, youth groups and others interested in supporting youth ministry. \$2.75 from each ticket sold (at a reduced rate) using a coupon on this Saturday benefits the Youth Service Fund (YSF) - the UM mission fund that is raised by youth for ministry by, for and with youth. 1,219 people used YSF coupons at Adventureland in September, 2007. Total funds raised for YSF were \$3,352.25 This year YSF Day is September 13 and will include an opportunity to win a voucher for one full registration to Youth Strike for Christ (a \$159.00 value). Information about YSF Day and reduced price coupons were mailed to each church at the end of July. If you need additional YSF Adventureland Coupons, please contact DeeDee Sobotka at (515) 974-8912. For more information on the Youth Service Fund please see page 2.

ADVENTURELAND
New For 2008
Kokomo Kove
A Sensational New Aquatic Attraction.

United Methodist YSF Day
Saturday, September 13, 2008
ADVENTURELAND
Over 100 Rides, Shows & Attractions - Des Moines, IA
\$19.00 Per Person
(Proceeds From Each UM Ticket Purchased Benefits YSF)
Park Open 10:00am - 7:00pm
Youth Rally & Celebration - 11:30am Palace Theater
This coupon entitles up to 20 members of your youth group or family to this special discount price of \$19.00 per person tax included.
Valid only Saturday, September 13, 2008

The Countdown to Youth 2011 is on!

Youth 2011 is the youth gathering of the entire United Methodist Church. 10,000 youth and youth leaders are expecting at the *two* event sites. Yes, 10,000 youth and your leaders worshipping, growing, and hanging out together. You don't want to miss this!

- 5 thousand of your closest friends.
- 4 Days of worship, learning, growing, serving, and connecting with one another.
- 3 Years in the making
- 2 Sites

1 Awesome Event

The sites for this event will be announced by the end of summer. Check out the website at www.youth2011.org for information and to sign up for updates! You will also be able to sign up to help plan and organize the event by giving your suggestions and ideas and even applying to be on the "Dream Team" that will meet together to plan the event.

Making the Transition to College

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry offers some [tips](#) for local churches and campus ministries to help college transitions be as positive as they can be.