

FIVE RIVERS DISTRICT

Mission Statement: To Cultivate Christian Growth

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From Our Bishop

Spiritual Purposes of Appointment-Making in
The United Methodist Church

By Bishop Scott J. Jones

How should we, as a body of Christian disciples, recruit, credential and send forth ordained clergy? Every Church faces this question and different denominations have different ways of performing these crucial tasks. Those differences tend to represent fundamental assumptions about the nature and mission of the church.

United Methodists are a missionary and connectional church. Those two adjectives define the deep realities about who we are and how we go about the task of serving Christ. The first one—missionary—says that we believe God has raised us up for a particular task. The modern version of that mission statement after recent action at General Conference reads “The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs.” Making disciples is a multi-stage process including evangelism, spiritual formation, worship, education and ministries of social action. Their goal is to participate in God’s saving activity to transform the world. Local churches are the most significant place where this missionary activity takes place. Each local church needs a pastor to preach the word of God, to administer the sacraments and to lead the activities of the congregation. He or she always does this in partnership with the lay leaders of the congregation.

We are also a connectional church. While each local church makes many decisions on its own about how best to fulfill its mission, many of our decisions are made together. Our doctrine and our core disciplines are determined by the General Conference. Our bishops are elected and deployed at Jurisdictional Conference. Our basic unit is the annual conference. It is there that the strategy for how best to serve Christ is worked out through committees, apportionments, and missional activities. The elders, deacons and associate members belong to the annual conference as a covenant community. It is their primary home. United Methodist clergy live in their annual conference. They make a sacred promise to serve wherever they are sent within the bounds of their conference. They are accountable to each other for their conduct. They are called to pray for each other and to support each other’s ministry. At the same time, the churches of the annual conference support the conference’s mission with payment of their apportioned share of the conference’s missionary budget. They receive as pastor whoever the conference sends them.

The way in which we deploy persons to carry out our mission is two-fold. *continued on pages 2 and top of 3*

Kansas East Conference
United Methodist Church



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The elders and deacons who are in full connection with the annual conference are responsible for credentialing the persons who will serve as pastors of local churches and members of the conference. District Committees on Ordained Ministry and the conference Board of Ordained Ministry play crucial roles in these matters, but the final decisions are left to the members of the conference in full connection who vote during the clergy session each year.

Once someone is licensed to preach or is a member of the conference, she or he is appointed by the bishop to serve in a certain place. The Bishop's authority in these matters is final. That is an awesome responsibility! For this reason, our *Book of Discipline* mandates that the Bishop consult with the cabinet, with the clergy, and with the local churches before appointments are made. District Superintendents consult with the clergy and local churches in various ways, sometimes in writing and at other times in face-to-face meetings.

Here is the process. I meet with each superintendent in January and discuss each local church in her or his district. We talk about strengths and weaknesses of the congregation, missional opportunities and challenges. We talk about the pastor's performance and her or his strengths and growing edges. Then this information is shared in summary form in late January with the whole cabinet. We call this inventory. At the end of inventory we have talked about all of the United Methodist churches in Kansas and for each pastor the district superintendent has recommended that she or he remain or move. Retirements or other changes in conference relationship are noted as well. Each District Superintendent is then invited to name two strategic churches in the district and we begin the appointment process with those congregations.

I have continued the practice of making appointments on an area basis. This is to ensure the largest possible pool of persons for consideration at each local church. The guiding question in each appointment is "what appointment will maximize the missional effectiveness of all the local churches in Kansas?" Secondly, but still importantly, we consider the personal needs of the clergy and their families.

For each church the process goes something like this. The District Superintendent discusses the church and its ministry including its context. The basis behind the recommendation is shared. Opportunities for new or growing ministries are noted. Then the DS leads all of us in prayer for wisdom in discerning the right pastor to be appointed there. After the prayer, DS's are invited to nominate as many persons as they wish. We then talk about each of the persons on the list. Sometimes, when we know there are several churches involved in a decision, we look at many appointments at the same time. We pray again and then each DS submits the name of one pastor they feel will be best to serve there. While each DS gets one vote, I get 12 votes. Each appointment is one for which I am ultimately responsible.

There are times when the cabinet and I get it wrong. We have made mistakes and will certainly make more in the future. However, I decided when I entered the United Methodist ministry that God works through the appointment process. Now that I am the bishop, that is pretty scary. After experiencing it from this position, I believe even more strongly that it is true. I also believe that this process serves women clergy better than congregational systems, and that it gives greater opportunity for cross-racial appointments as well.

When I was a pastor in Texas, three different Southern Baptist laypersons from three different congregations told me they wished they had a bishop. In one church they needed to fire the pastor for incompetence, but dared not do so because they liked his wife and worried he might not get another job. In another church the congregation was fighting with each other over whether to fire the preacher or not. (In that case, they wanted to blame someone outside of their church family!) In the third church, they had spent 18 months searching for a pastor and could not find one.

We United Methodists sometimes complain about the appointment process. Sometimes clergy and laity are upset with me and I cannot tell them all of the confidential reasons which led to my decision. But in general, I believe that the process of bishops appointing clergy to their places of service has helped United Methodism

Spiritual Purposes of Appointment-Making in The United Methodist Church ~ continued from pg. 2

be successful in its mission for over 200 years, and will continue to be the best way for a missional, connectional church to work in the future.

Loss Control In the Local Church ~ Top Ten Claim Losses by Sue Courtney

1. *Certificates of Insurance*

Anytime you hire out work, have the proper insurance certificates before the work begins. Act as a business.

Workmen's Compensation Insurance

Auto Insurance

Liability

Have a contract in place and signed before work begins.

2. *Ice and Snow Removal Log*

Document what is done for the churches protection. When snow was removed, what products are put down, quantity and time.

3. *Inspect enclosed water piping Before cold weather approaches*

Inspect all waterlines. Make sure all windows are closed. Check water lines above ceilings. Check out church, parsonage and/ rental property.

4. *Prevent Water Damage to Buildings*

Check all sump pumps to make sure they are working and are the correct capacity.

5. *Inspect Electrical and Heating Equipment Periodically*

Check for old aluminum wiring and replace if still existing.

Make sure there is no cracking on wiring. Use a qualified electrician to check heating equipment yearly.

6. *Immediate Investigation and Response if there is an issue*

Contact Insurance Company and DS immediately. Complete the paper

MARCH 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

March Events

March 1st	Clergy Meeting at Ottawa 1st 9 a.m.-Noon
March 3-4	Appointive Cabinet DS in Wichita
March 4	World Day of Prayer
March 9	Ash Wednesday
March 8-10	Appointive Cabinet DS in Wichita
March 13	Daylight Savings ~ Spring Forward
March 13	Transition Team Webcast (see pg 3)
March 15-16	Appointive Cabinet DS in Wichita
March 21-22	Appointive Cabinet DS in Wichita
March 24	Pastors Gathering at New Lancaster UMC 6:30 p.m. contact Rev. January Kiefer
March 25-26	Lay Speaker Training in Parsons deadline March 16, 2011
March 28th	District Committee on Ministry Wellsville UMC 9 a.m. -4:30 p.m.
March 29th	PAUMCS Meeting in Wichita
March 29-30th	Appointive Cabinet DS in Wichita

District Prayer Calendar

Mar. 6	Princeton Pastor Jada Hodgson
Mar.13	Iola Calvary-Salem Rev. Gene McIntosh
Mar.20	Humboldt-Big Creek Rev. Debby Dick
Mar.27	Lawrence Central Rev. Maria Campbell

Clergy Birthdays

Barb Clinger	March 2nd
Patrick Buss	March 13th
Donna Voteau	March 21st
Beth Hodgson	March 21st
Jim Hopwood	March 23rd
Glen Duderstadt	March 25th
Charles Russell	March 25th
Jada Hodgson	March 31st

“Great Plans for the Great Plains” is the theme adopted by the Nebraska-Kansas Episcopal Area Transition Team. There will be a live webcast with the latest report from the transition team, on **March 13, from 4-5:30 p.m.** Although you can view the webcast individually from any suitable internet connection, it is recommended that you gather as a group in one of several locations in our district so you can discuss the plans after the webcast. Please encourage members to attend this webcast so they are aware of the transition that will be happening in September 2012. Below are the district designated churches .

Iola Wesley UMC

301 E. Madison Ave. |
Iola, KS 66749-3423
(620) 365-2285

Eudora UMC

2084 N. 1300 Rd.
Eudora, KS 66025-0520
(785) 542-3200

***Stewardship Event ~ Creating a Culture of Generosity
April 2nd***

Chanute 1st UMC, 202 S Lincoln St, Chanute, KS 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Featuring Clif Christopher, author of “Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate: A New Vision for Financial Stewardship,” this Kansas East Conference event is co-sponsored by the Kansas Area United Methodist Foundation and the conference Board of Discipleship.

Based on I Timothy 6:18-19, the event will offer opportunity to explore what stewardship giving can mean for local church congregations.

Pastors and stewardship teams alike will benefit from this exciting day.

Registration is on the KE website

Coordinator: Gary A Beach gbeach@kansaseast.org

<http://www.kansaseast.org/events/detail/3408> copy and paste link.

**Real Families ~ Parenting Workshops
April 3, 10, 17 and May 1
6:30 to 8:00 p.m.**

4 Sessions, 4 Different Topics

Presenter: Laura Murphy of Real Families, Inc.

Fee: \$10/Session/Family or \$30/Family for all four

Childcare available. Please Register by phone 785-843-7066

Confidential fee scholarships available

Central United Methodist Church

1501 Massachusetts, Lawrence, KS

www.centralumclawrence.org ~ 785-843-7066

**Servant Leadership:
Personal and Professional
Self-Care Electronic Workshop**
Four Weekly 2-Hour Electronic Sessions
Free Workshop for Kansas clergy, clergy
spouses and church staff.

register online at www.healthfund.org
or call the District Office for a registra-
tion form.

Contact: Judy Johnston

Phone: 316-293-1861

E-mail: jjohnsto@kumc.edu

5 Rivers District Kansas East Conference

Leadership Opportunity

Small Church Leadership Institute
March 20-24 register by **March 1st**
Institute equipping laity and pastors with the
skills they need for leading their small
attendance church.
www.mountsequoyah.org 479-443-4531

Loss Control ~ Top Ten continued from page 3

7. ***Playground Inspection***

Check often for loose bolts, ground covering sufficiency.

8. ***15-Passenger Vans***

Nothing loaded on top. Experienced drivers. Check for other
transportation choices available when possible.

9. ***Monitor Activities***

Know what is covered by your policy.

Certain activities (example Moon Walk) or on site carnival equipment are
not covered and the policy the rental companies offer is substandard.

10. ***Maintain Parking Areas and Driveways***

Check for potholes, broken or uneven concrete and potholes.

Questions: ***Schifman, Remley & Associates*** ~ 800-304-9852

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